

**State University System
Education and General
2018-2019 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	Florida A&M University
Issue Title:	General Operational Enhancements (Enhancing Pathways to Degree Attainment)
Priority Number	
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$9,810,000
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	\$5,500,000
Total Funds Requested:	\$15,310,000
Please check the issue type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Issue	<input type="checkbox"/>
2018-2019 Non-Recurring Issue	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Issue for 2017-2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Description:

I. Enhancing Pathways to Degree Attainment

Increasing student success is our top priority. In support of the University's Mission to empower citizens and communities, FAMU enrolls a high percentage of low-income and first-generation students (65% of FAMU's undergraduates are recipients of Pell Grants, compared to a State University System average of 39%). These student populations often experience a multitude of unique challenges and obstacles on their way to successful degree completion. Funding is being sought to enhance the University's efforts to assist these students to excel in their studies, graduate on time and move on to fulfilling careers.

The FAMU Board of Trustees approved a new University Strategic Plan in June 2017, which outlines a series of aggressive and innovative initiatives designed to improve student success and strengthen the University's academic programs. These initiatives will facilitate the establishment of clear and visible pathways for students to graduate and achieve their ultimate career goals. However, every good idea and program, that have a significant impact on student success come

with considerable costs. FAMU's budget constraints are limiting the scale and effectiveness by which these initiatives can be deployed. To fully implement these initiatives, FAMU requires additional funding, which will be used to: 1) enhance academic support services to increase retention and graduation rates; 2) strengthen academic programs to increase degree production in areas of strategic emphasis; and 3) increase online course offerings to provide students with additional flexibility in scheduling courses to complete degree requirements. Through these efforts, FAMU will increase student success, improve outcomes on the Performance Based Funding Metrics (and other key performance indicators), and expand its capacity to address critical workforce needs for the state of Florida.

Increasing the number of students who gain employment in their field of study directly upon graduation is a key priority. Therefore, a comprehensive approach must be deployed to ensure coordination throughout the University. A combination of non-recurring and recurring funds are being sought to enhance the efforts underway that introduce students to a myriad of pre-employment opportunities designed to increase their overall marketability after graduation. The requested funding will be used to address the following: 1) streamlined communication; 2) coordinated outreach; 3) centralized data collection; and 4) increased employment (12 months after graduation).

A. Enhance Academic Support Services to Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

\$1,750,000

FAMU is requesting 25 Intrusive Advisors/Academic Coaches and 100 peer mentors/peer tutors. This funding will help FAMU make significant improvements on student outcomes by implementing national best practices that have proven to be successful in increasing retention and graduation rates of student populations similar to FAMU's.

Recurring:

Advisement

Intrusive Advisors and Academic Coaches will be employed to provide additional monitoring and support for at-risk students. This approach goes beyond traditional academic advisement approaches in that Intrusive Advisors and Academic Coaches take a proactive approach to identifying risk factors and providing students with more personalized attention. For example, students with GPAs below 2.4 will attend mandatory tutorial sessions and be required to meet with their Intrusive Advisor and Academic Coach two times per week. Advisors and Coaches also will provide students with career counseling. These approaches are proven practices in higher education that have led to significant increases in student success outcomes at institutions across the nation in recent years.

- 1) 25 Intrusive Advisors and Academic Coaches (25 x \$50,000/ea. = \$1,250,000)

Recurring:

Academic Support Services

FAMU's academic support services will be enhanced by expanding the use of peer-mentoring and peer-tutoring services in STEM and related disciplines, with a focus on high-failure rate courses. Proven approaches, such as using supplemental instruction and learning assistants, will be used to provide students with additional avenues for seeking assistance.

- 1) 100 Peer Mentors/Peer Tutors (100 x \$3,000/ea. = \$300,000)

- High achieving upper-division undergraduates and advanced graduate students will be employed to serve as Peer Mentors/Peer Tutors (\$1,500 each term as OPS employees)

Recurring:

Technology Enhancements

FAMU is requesting \$100,000 in recurring funds for an Early-alert System and \$100,000 in recurring funds for Predictive Analytics software that will be used for innovative technology solutions to facilitate enhanced student monitoring/tracking and increased use of data analytics to assist in predicting student outcomes.

B. Strengthen Academic Programs

\$10,060,000

FAMU has achieved distinction for its high production of graduates in several areas, including STEM and the health fields. In order for the University to continue to provide students with high quality learning experiences, and produce graduates with the requisite skills to address Florida's critical workforce needs, investments are needed to strengthen and expand academic programs in areas of strategic emphasis, particularly professional programs that have licensure pass rate requirements. Specific programs that have been targeted for enhancement include agriculture, cybersecurity, data science, health sciences (e.g. pharmacy, nursing, physical therapy), and core science and mathematics disciplines. These investments will allow the University to hire top-notch faculty and support staff, and upgrade outdated infrastructure in teaching laboratories and classrooms to provide students with relevant hands-on learning experiences and access to cutting-edge instrumentation.

Faculty Excellence

Employing high quality faculty is vital to sustain FAMU's ability to provide students with exceptional learning experiences and increase student success. FAMU is requesting recurring funds for 35 new faculty lines. The requested faculty lines will enable FAMU to address critical staffing shortages and reduce heavy teaching loads in several key programs, and develop new academic program offerings for our students in areas of strategic emphasis. The additional faculty will enhance FAMU's student success initiatives in several ways. New, high-performing faculty in professional programs that have licensure pass rate requirements, (pharmacy, nursing, physical therapy) will enable the programs to provide students with additional academic support, advising/mentoring, and assistance in preparing for licensure exams. New faculty hires in the core sciences and mathematics will help to reduce faculty teaching overloads and decrease the reliance on adjunct instructors in key gateway courses that have high failure rates. Additionally, new hires in areas such as cybersecurity and data science will support the goals of the new University Strategic Plan to develop cutting-edge academic programs for students in areas of high-demand for the state and nation.

Recurring:

- 1) 35 new faculty lines (35 x \$120,00/ea. = \$4,200,000)
 - 12 faculty lines in the health sciences
 - 10 faculty lines in mathematics and the basic sciences
 - Six faculty lines in cybersecurity and computer science
 - Four faculty lines in data science and business analytics
 - Three faculty lines in sustainability and environmental science

Non-Recurring:

- 2) Support packages for new and existing faculty (\$3,500,000)
 - Equipment and instrumentation are needed to support faculty instruction and research efforts.

Program Enhancements

High-quality academic programs must have state-of-the art learning environments, modern technology and sufficient staff support to provide students with the types of learning experiences and training that will enable them to be competitive for employment in high demand areas. FAMU is requesting non-recurring funds for instrumentation and technology upgrades to teaching laboratories and classroom spaces and recurring funds to hire six support staff to manage the learning facilities.

Non-Recurring:

- 1) Laboratory Instrumentation and Instructional Technology (\$2,000,000)
 - Instrumentation and equipment to outfit teaching laboratories and classroom spaces in programs of strategic emphasis

Recurring:

- 1) Support Staff (6 x \$60,000/ea. = \$360,000)
 - Staff to maintain teaching laboratories, research facilities and learning centers in the premier academic programs

C. Online Course Offerings

\$3,000,000

Expansion of Online Education is a top priority of the Florida Board of Governors as it focuses on transformative and innovative approaches to the delivery of higher education. Online Education allows FAMU to expand its portfolio of course offerings to meet the needs of its diverse student population. Online Education has been identified as a priority in the new University Strategic Plan, with a goal of enhancing pathways to degree attainment by increasing the availability of online course offerings to provide students with additional flexibility in enrolling in courses to complete degree requirements. Securing additional legislative support of Online Education will support FAMU's ongoing efforts to increase student success by increasing access to required courses and enhancing academic support services for online learners.

Online Education at most State University System (SUS) institutions is funded by assessing a Distance Learning Fee of up to \$50.00 per credit hour to the students enrolled in online courses. FAMU is currently not authorized to charge these fees, which places the University at a significant disadvantage because of the lack of recurring resources necessary to increase online capacity. FAMU needs recurring resources so that students can benefit from the flexibility of anytime, anywhere education that provides individuals with family or work obligations with many options for completing their education in a timely fashion with reduced debt.

In November 2015, the Board of Governors approved the State University System's 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education to guide the future development of online education in the State University System. The SUS 2016 Annual Report for Online Education, the first such report for online education in the System, reflects the progress universities have made in online education, in addition to their opportunities for further improvement.

- The average number of years to degree for full-time, first time in college (FTIC) baccalaureate students in 120-hour programs was **4.33** for students who took no distance learning courses, and **3.92** for students who took 41%-60% of their courses via distance learning.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) of SUS students took at least one distance learning course in 2015-16.
- System-wide, 24% of undergraduate credit hours in 2015-16 were taken in distance learning courses.

The SUS 2016 Annual Report for Online Education makes it clear that student demand for online education is increasing and time to degree is decreasing for students who take 41%-60% of their courses online.

Finally, the strategic direction for Online Education at FAMU utilizes Data Analytics to create dashboards and reports to identify and prioritize the conversion of high demand and barrier courses best suited for online delivery. The data indicates that General Education courses are in high demand at FAMU. Just as all of the other institutions in the SUS have done, FAMU must offer its General Education core courses online, as they are the key building blocks to develop a high impact, robust online capacity to improve student success and pathways to degree attainment. FAMU also has an opportunity to significantly increase its online course offerings during the summer session. Over the past two years, over 900 students have taken transient courses at other institutions.

FAMU achieved significant progress in online education as a result of the 2014-2015 non-recurring appropriation provided by the Legislature. This investment in faculty, infrastructure, technology resources, support staff and professional development enabled FAMU to establish a robust online learning environment and positioned the University to implement an effective distance-learning foundation. Specifically, since the 2014-2015 appropriation, more than 11,000 enrollments have occurred in the online courses that were developed with the non-recurring funds. However, limited funding has inhibited FAMU from meeting the goals as outlined in the Florida Board of Governors Strategic Plan for Online Education. The \$1,000,000 non-recurring appropriation by the Legislature for 2017-2018 will enable us to increase our general education online course offerings. However, additional funds are still needed to allow FAMU to further increase its online course offerings to meet the demanding needs of its students by accommodating their flexible work schedules, decreasing their debt and reducing their time to degree.

A sustained investment is necessary for FAMU to ensure that the components required to effectively deliver online education are in place. FAMU is requesting a total of \$3,000,000 in recurring funds to develop and offer online courses in areas of strategic emphasis with a focus on the STEM disciplines, increasing access, lowering the cost of education and improving student outcomes through high quality online education. Moreover, the funds will be utilized to enhance the Online Faculty Training and Development Program by providing faculty with technology resources necessary to build high quality online courses. Eight Instructional Designers at \$100,000/ea. for \$800,000 in recurring funds to work with the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to convert courses by designing and developing them for online delivery and two Graphic Designers at \$100,000/ea. for \$200,000 to serve as the graphic artists to create the storyboards

and edit the video and content for the online courses. These additional funds will also allow the University to provide online student support services that mirror traditional student support services to provide the greatest probability that our students will have successful outcomes. These services include:

- Seven support staff at \$85,000/ea., consisting of four (4) functional and three (3) technical team members at \$595,000 in recurring funds who will assist with admissions, registration, financial aid;
- Ten Faculty members at \$100,000/ea. for the sum \$1,000,000 to provide instruction for online delivery of general education and high demand courses;
- Faculty Training and Professional Development to allow faculty to continuously enhance their skills for delivering high quality online instruction (\$100,000 in recurring funds); and
- To maintain the online program, the sum of \$300,000 in recurring funds is needed for Technology Hardware and Software

II. Return on Investment

The requested funding will allow FAMU to significantly increase student success outcomes, improve on key performance indicators, and expand capacity to meet Florida's workforce needs. Specifically:

- Increase in four-year and six-year graduation rates
- Increase in the percentage of degrees awarded in programs of strategic emphasis
- Increase in starting salaries of graduates
- Reduction in time to degree
- Enhanced institutional capacity to offer online courses and programs
- Reduce excess credit hours
- Reduce student debt