

2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request
Beyond the Top 100:
Elevating Excellence | Inspiring Digital Transformation

DRAFT

**State University System
Education and General
2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	Florida A&M University
Request Title:	Beyond the Top 100: Elevating Excellence Inspiring Digital Transformation
Date Request Approved by University Board of Trustees:	
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$40 million
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	
Total Funds Requested:	
Please check the request type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique Request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I. Purpose – 1. Describe the overall purpose of the plan, specific goal(s) and metrics, specific activities that will help achieve the goal(s), and how these goals and initiatives align with strategic priorities and the 2023 University Accountability Plan established by your institution (include whether this is a new or expanded service/program). If expanded, what has been accomplished with the current service/program? 2. Describe any projected impact on academic programs, student enrollments, and student services. University of Distinction proposals should also address the requirements outlined in the separate guidance document.

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University requests \$40 million in recurring funding for strategic investments to support the implementation of the University’s five-year strategic plan – *Boldly Striking*.

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) continues its upward trajectory in the national public university rankings, currently positioned at No. 91 according to the esteemed U.S. News & World Report. Additionally, FAMU proudly holds the title of the No. 1 Public Historically Black College & University for the past four consecutive years. Renowned as a leading producer of African American graduates in STEM and health disciplines, FAMU stands as a vanguard of innovation and digital readiness within the State University System (SUS), prioritizing accessibility and affordability for first-generation and low-income students. These achievements underscore FAMU's pivotal role in addressing critical needs in Florida and the nation, preparing a diverse cohort of students for success in the digital age.

In alignment with its 2022-2027 strategic plan, FAMU sets forth ambitious goals aimed at further enhancing performance outcomes, rankings, and institutional profile. These objectives include ascending to the top tier of SUS institutions in Performance Based

Funding outcomes, achieving recognition as a Top 100 national public university, and attaining a coveted Carnegie R1 Research institution designation, currently classified as R2. To realize these aspirations, substantial and sustained investments are imperative to attract and retain high-achieving students, bolster support for faculty excellence, and fortify the University's signature academic programs, ensuring they are primed for the demands of the digital era.

The requested resources are pivotal in propelling FAMU toward these objectives. Key areas of focus include augmenting graduation rates and first-time licensure pass rates, amplifying degree production within Programs of Strategic Emphasis (PSE), cultivating a cadre of world-class faculty through strategic recruitment and development initiatives, and fostering increased research productivity. By prioritizing these strategic initiatives, FAMU solidifies its position as a trailblazer in innovation and digital preparedness, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and addressing the evolving needs of society in the digital transformation and the digital age.

In line with our commitment to digital transformation and operational efficiency, the allocated resources will be strategically directed towards key areas where AI integration can drive impactful outcomes:

- ***Elevating graduation rates and optimizing first-time licensure pass rates:*** FAMU is dedicated to leveraging AI-powered initiatives and support frameworks to bolster student success metrics. By deploying targeted interventions and harnessing digital tools, we aim to elevate graduation rates while ensuring our graduates excel in licensure examinations, thus enhancing their preparedness for the professional arena.
- ***Amplifying degree production in Programs of Strategic Emphasis:*** Embracing digital transformation, FAMU prioritizes the expansion of degree programs aligned with strategic objectives. Through the integration of AI-driven analytics and predictive modeling, we aim to identify and invest in areas poised for growth, facilitating the alignment of academic offerings with the evolving demands of industries and communities, thereby driving regional and national development.
- ***Cultivating a world-class faculty cohort:*** Attracting and retaining top-tier faculty members is paramount to FAMU's mission. By harnessing AI-driven recruitment platforms and optimizing operational processes, we are committed to assembling a diverse and dynamic faculty community. Through competitive compensation structures, personalized professional development pathways, and supportive digital ecosystems, we aim to create an intellectually stimulating environment conducive to groundbreaking research and transformative teaching practices.
- ***Fostering research excellence through digital innovation:*** As a trailblazer for HBCUs nationally in digital research methodologies, FAMU endeavors to fortify its position as a hub of innovation. FAMU will create a new academic department, Data Science and Innovation, housed in the College of Science and Technology. By harnessing AI algorithms for data analysis, investing in cutting-edge research infrastructure, and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations facilitated by digital platforms, we aim to enhance research productivity across diverse domains. This academic department will serve programs to align with workforce needs, university wide micro-credentialing and to provide a holistic approach not only propels the

frontiers of knowledge but also equips us to address pressing societal challenges with agility and efficacy.

Through the strategic investment of resources on these concentrated initiatives, FAMU is poised to amplify its already impressive achievements, and advance its legacy of impact within the State of Florida and across the broader national landscape.

A. Academic Excellence
(Total Recurring) \$20 Million

Academic Excellence for the Digital Age

FAMU Academic Excellence for the Digital Age legislative funding request aims to propel Florida A&M University (FAMU) into a new era of educational innovation and student success through the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) technologies. With this funding, FAMU seeks to establish pioneering programs that harness the power of AI and ML to revolutionize teaching, learning, and research. By leveraging these cutting-edge technologies, FAMU will enhance personalized learning experiences, optimize academic support services, and foster interdisciplinary collaboration across campus. Through strategic investments in faculty training, infrastructure development, and research initiatives, FAMU will position itself as a leader in preparing students for the digital workforce of tomorrow. This legislative funding request represents a bold step forward in advancing FAMU's mission of academic excellence, innovation, and diversity in the digital age.

Increasing Graduation Rates

Our current four-year graduation rate stands at 34%, a figure that falls short of our aspirations for student success. By investing in academic support services, such as tutoring programs and advising initiatives, we aim to raise this rate to 50% within the specified timeframe. This increase will not only benefit individual students by reducing the time to degree completion but also contribute to the economic prosperity of our state by producing a more educated workforce.

Enhancing Academic Progress

While our institution boasts an impressive academic progress rate of 82%, we recognize the importance of continuous improvement. Through targeted interventions and innovative teaching methodologies, we aim to elevate this rate to 90%, ensuring that students are not only progressing academically but also mastering key competencies necessary for success in their chosen fields.

Elevating Academic Standards

The average admitted GPA of our students currently stands at 4.00, reflecting the high caliber of individuals we attract to our institution. However, we are committed to raising the bar even higher by increasing the average admitted GPA to 4.25. Achieving this goal will require strategic investments in recruiting efforts, scholarship programs, and academic incentives to attract top-tier talent to our campus.

Strengthening College Readiness

A concerning statistic highlighted in our student profile is the low percentage of students who enter our institution fully prepared for college-level coursework in calculus. Less than 10% of our incoming students meet this criterion, posing a significant barrier to academic success in STEM disciplines. Through targeted interventions, including pre-college preparatory courses and early assessment programs, we aim to increase the percentage of students deemed calculus-ready to over 50%, ensuring that all students have the foundational knowledge necessary to excel in their chosen fields of study.

Fostering Academic Excellence through Digital Learning | Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

FAMU Academic Excellence for the Digital Age legislative funding request represents a multifaceted initiative aimed at advancing Florida A&M University's (FAMU) commitment to innovation and academic excellence. In addition to leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) technologies to revolutionize teaching, learning, and research, FAMU will strategically build new programs of strategic emphasis (PSE) that integrate AI and ML across disciplines. This expansion will significantly increase the number of programs, courses, and majors infused with AI and ML methodologies, ensuring that FAMU remains at the forefront of preparing students for the digital workforce. Moreover, FAMU will introduce micro-credentialing and certificate programs tailored to meet the evolving needs of industries impacted by AI and ML advancements, providing students with specialized skills and credentials to enhance their career prospects. By integrating AI and ML into the curriculum and offering targeted micro-credentialing opportunities, FAMU will empower students to thrive in the digital age and contribute meaningfully to their fields.

As we embark on this transformative journey, FAMU remains dedicated to recognizing and nurturing academic talent through programs like the National Merit Scholars and Florida Bright Futures Scholars, with the aim of cultivating a community of scholars poised to make significant contributions to our institution and beyond. With the necessary funding and resources, FAMU is poised to shape the future of education and empower students to excel in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

Furthermore, as part of the FAMU Academic Excellence for the Digital Age initiative, the university will establish the FAMU Center for Cyber-studies. This center will serve as a hub for interdisciplinary research, education, and outreach focused on cybersecurity, addressing the growing demand for skilled professionals in this critical field. Through collaborations with industry partners and government agencies, the center will develop cutting-edge solutions to safeguard digital infrastructure and combat emerging cyber threats.

Additionally, FAMU will introduce certificate programs in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), providing students with hands-on training and practical skills to thrive in the evolving workforce. These certificate programs will complement existing academic offerings, equipping students with specialized expertise and credentials that are highly sought after in today's job market. By

investing in the FAMU Center for Cyber-studies and certificate programs in AI and ML, FAMU demonstrates its commitment to preparing students for success in the digital age and driving innovation in key industries.

In addition to these quantitative metrics, we are also committed to recognizing and nurturing academic talent through programs such as the National Merit Scholars and Florida Bright Futures Scholars. While our current numbers fall short of our aspirations, we are confident that with the necessary funding and resources, we can cultivate a community of scholars who will make significant contributions to our institution and beyond.

College and School Academic Excellence Initiatives

As Florida A&M University (FAMU) continues its commitment to academic excellence, we recognize the paramount importance of embracing digital transformation to propel our institution into the future. Throughout our 14 colleges and schools, FAMU currently offers a comprehensive array of degree programs, spanning 54 bachelor's degrees, 29 master's degrees, three professional degrees, and 12 doctoral degrees. However, to ensure that our scholars remain at the forefront of their respective fields, we seek legislative support for strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing digital transformation within our academic landscape.

Strategic Needs:

1. As outlined in the Boldly Striking Strategic Plan, **FAMU Health** occupies a pivotal position, serving as a cornerstone for academic excellence, research innovation, and community engagement. To realize its full potential and achieve the ambitious goals set forth in the strategic plan, it is imperative to prioritize the enhancement of interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation within FAMU Health and the broader field of Integrated Health Sciences.

1a. Maximizing Health Research Impact: FAMU Health is uniquely positioned to lead groundbreaking research initiatives that address pressing health disparities and challenges facing underserved communities. By fostering interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers from an array of health backgrounds, including public health, nursing, pharmacy, and allied health sciences, we can leverage complementary expertise to tackle complex health issues comprehensively.

1b. Advancing Educational Excellence: The integration of interdisciplinary perspectives into academic programs within FAMU Health will enrich the educational experience for students and prepare them to excel in a rapidly evolving healthcare landscape. By offering experiential learning opportunities, we can cultivate well-rounded healthcare professionals equipped to address the multifaceted needs of diverse populations.

2. **Digital and Physical Infrastructure Enhancement:**

To meet the evolving demands of education, our first strategic priority involves fortifying both our digital and physical infrastructure. This encompasses enhancing our digital

capabilities by upgrading network infrastructure, ensuring widespread access to high-speed internet across campus, and implementing rigorous cybersecurity measures to safeguard valuable academic data. Furthermore, there is a critical need to expand and improve our physical facilities, including classroom and laboratory spaces, to accommodate a growing student population and facilitate cutting-edge research initiatives. These infrastructure elements will include utilizing front facing and rear strengthening ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software. By implementing processes with an ERP, programmatic changes put in place to reduce barriers that mitigate student success will assist with student interface in financial aid, student support and other factors. Additionally, enhancements to residential life and food spaces are essential to support student well-being and foster a vibrant campus community.

3. **Faculty Development in Digital Pedagogy:** To effectively leverage digital tools and technologies in the classroom, faculty members require specialized training and ongoing professional development. Funding will be allocated towards initiatives aimed at equipping faculty with the necessary skills and resources to integrate digital pedagogy seamlessly into their teaching practices.

3a. Faculty Recruitment for Digital Transformation: Recruiting and retaining high-quality faculty remains a critical need in support of the University's strategic plan goals to provide students with exceptional learning experiences, increase student success, increase research productivity, and ensure compliance with accreditation standards. FAMU intends to recruit and retain world-class faculty of excellence who will focus on high-level research engagement and extend research studies in science, engineering, health care, mental health, and social sciences. These areas of focus for faculty researchers align with the University's strategic plan and will allow the FAMU schools and colleges to market themselves as top producers of research and grant funding. This investment into highly productive faculty will reduce barriers associated with establishing solid research agendas by providing the ability to employ teaching assistants and research assistants to work with faculty and enhance their operational and academic outcomes.

4. **Accreditation Support Services:** This strategy aims to provide assistance to FAMU as we seek accreditation from our national accreditor. We will begin by offering personalized consultations to institutions to assess their readiness for accreditation and identify areas for improvement. Our team of experienced accreditation specialists to develop tailored action plans, provide guidance on documentation requirements, and offer training workshops to faculty and staff. Throughout the accreditation process, we will offer ongoing support, including mock site visits, feedback on self-study reports, and assistance with addressing any deficiencies identified by our accreditation review teams. Additionally, we will maintain open lines of communication with institutions, providing timely updates, resources, and best practices to ensure a smooth and successful accreditation experience. Through these efforts, we are committed to facilitating the accreditation process, promoting institutional excellence, and upholding the highest standards of quality assurance in higher education.
5. **Student Support Services for Digital Literacy:** In an increasingly digital-centric world, it is imperative that our students possess strong digital literacy skills to thrive academically and professionally. Legislative funding will support the establishment of student support

services focused on enhancing digital literacy, including workshops, tutoring, and access to online resources and tutorials.

6. **Library Enhancement, Research, and Innovation in Digital Technologies:** FAMU is committed to cultivating a culture of research and innovation in digital technologies spanning diverse disciplines. Funding will be allocated to bolster faculty-led research endeavors aimed at investigating the potential applications of emerging digital technologies across various fields. These include but are not limited to artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, and cybersecurity. Additionally, investments will be made to enhance library resources, ensuring that students and faculty have access to the latest digital tools and information necessary to drive research and scholarship.
7. **Faculty Research Excellence:** Research excellence among faculty is indeed imperative to increase capacity in each discipline. Faculty members who excel in research play a crucial role in advancing knowledge and contributing to the overall growth and development of their respective disciplines and add notable value to the institution and the state university system. FAMU will continuously invest in the faculty to allow opportunities to increase research capacity and teaching excellence. Faculty engaged in high-quality research bring their expertise and cutting-edge knowledge into the classroom. They can share the latest developments, real-world applications, and interdisciplinary perspectives with students. This enhances the learning experience and prepares students to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and future leaders in their fields.
8. **Infrastructure for Virtual/Online Learning Environments:** With the growing demand for flexible learning options, FAMU recognizes the need to invest in infrastructure to support virtual learning environments. Legislative funding will enable the development of state-of-the-art virtual learning platforms, interactive multimedia content, and virtual reality simulations to enhance the online learning experience for students.

In addition to creating a virtual learning structure, FAMU Online will offer a robust approach to creating pathways and increasing access to education for both undergraduate and graduate students. Launching a fully online academic unit at FAMU is an exciting initiative that will provide access and flexibility for individuals who want to pursue degrees without the barrier of brick and mortar.

Administrative Support Software and Personnel

- Administrative software for online tracking and monitoring processes for online curricular programs.
- Online enhancements for cybersecurity and internal and external controls for operational support.
- Manage day-to-day operations of the online academic unit.
- Coordinate scheduling, administrative tasks, and logistics.
- Assist with budget management and financial operations.
- Liaise with other departments and stakeholders within FAMU.

Online Success Coaches

- Provide guidance and support to online students throughout their academic journey.
- Assist students in setting goals and developing study plans.

- Monitor student progress and address any challenges they may face.
- Offer resources and strategies for online learning success.

Student Success Counselors

- Guide students in choosing appropriate programs and courses.
- Assist with course registration, transfer credits, and academic planning.
- Monitor academic progress and help students stay on track to meet their goals.
- Provide information on degree requirements and university policies.
- Trained in financial aid, data analysis, and career development.

Student Services Experts

- Offer comprehensive support services to online students.
- Assist with admissions and enrollment processes.
- Provide technical support for online learning platforms.
- Address student inquiries and concerns related to financial aid, scholarships, and other support resources

In addition to these roles, it would be beneficial to ensure that the team members have experience and knowledge of online education platforms, technology tools, and online pedagogy. They should also possess strong communication skills, empathy, and the ability to work effectively with diverse student populations.

By establishing this team, FAMU will be able to provide personalized assistance and support to online students, making their educational experience engaging, inclusive, and successful. This initiative will undoubtedly open doors for individuals across the state, including those with physical exceptionalities, to pursue advanced education at the top public HBCU in the nation.

By offering online programs, FAMU will be able to extend its educational offerings beyond the physical boundaries of its campus, increasing accessibility and providing a flexible and inclusive learning environment for students. This initiative will contribute to expanding the educational reach of FAMU and empowering a broader community of learners to benefit from the University's academic excellence and reputation.

By addressing these strategic needs through legislative funding, FAMU will be better positioned to achieve its mission of academic excellence while preparing our scholars to excel in an increasingly digitized world. We are confident that these investments will yield tangible returns in terms of student success, faculty innovation, and overall institutional competitiveness.

B. Student Success Initiatives **(Total Recurring) \$20 million**

FAMU seeks to continue to create pathways to bring social mobility to our graduates by promoting individual and societal advancement. College access and readiness produces higher education opportunities to ensure that students have unlimited opportunities to pursue their educational aspirations regardless of their socio-economic status. Student success and access to higher education, particularly

for Pell-eligible students, are vital for achieving excellence in a diverse and learned society.

By providing support and resources to high performing Pell-eligible students, we can bridge the gap between different socio-economic groups and promote social mobility. FAMU recognizes that Pell-eligible students often face additional challenges and barriers to higher education, including financial limitations, inadequate educational preparation, and lack of access to support systems. As we prepare for the future, FAMU has a laser-like focus on prioritizing student access and success to close the achievement gap that exists between different student populations; reducing disparities in educational outcomes; and promoting educational parity. By supporting the success of Pell-eligible students, we invest in our future leaders, professionals, and change-makers who will drive progress and innovation. This work and investment will further the work in our Office of Freshman Studies, First Year Experience, Office of Transfer Student Services, and other student support service areas.

Recruitment Scholarships

The University is dedicated to enhancing student success by aligning with target goals aimed at improving four-year graduation rates and first-time licensure pass rates, comparable to our State University System (SUS) peers (refer to Table 1). Analysis of both institutional and SUS data underscores a significant link between the academic credentials of incoming students and their achievement outcomes. To this end, the University must bolster ongoing initiatives to attract and retain high-achieving cohorts, including First-Time-In-College (FTIC), Associate of Arts (AA) transfer, and professional students.

Presently, the University allocates scholarships to FTIC students to assist in unmet financial need. STEM and Programs of Strategic Emphasis (PSE) undergraduate and graduate programs. Furthermore, this investment will assist with scholarships for pre-professional programs such as nursing, law, pharmacy, and physical therapy. To elevate recruitment and retention efforts, the University seeks \$10 million in recurring funding, facilitating the annual enrollment of high-achieving undergraduate, graduate and professional students specifically targeting those in PSE degree programs.

In alignment with SUS benchmarks, the University has delineated specific objectives aimed at elevating four-year graduation rates and first-time licensure pass rates. Rigorous examination of institutional and SUS data underscores the pivotal role played by the academic credentials of incoming students in determining success outcomes. To realize these objectives, the University is committed to fortifying existing endeavors in attracting and retaining high-achieving students across diverse categories, encompassing FTIC, AA transfers, and professional cohorts.

Student Enhancement Priorities

To enhance student success and strategic initiatives for student development, FAMU seeks an investment in student mental health services, student academic support services, and student experience study spaces. FAMU seeks to be competitive with the nation's top

universities and reconfigure learning spaces to meet the needs of current and future generations. FAMU seeks funding investments for redesigned study labs, student mental health facilities, and expanded student academic support areas accessible for FTIC, transfer, and non-traditional students.

Transfer Student Academic Support Initiatives

Florida remains the national leader in developing highly effective articulation agreements at the state and local levels between institutions. The University's Ignite Transfer Program goes beyond the traditional articulation agreement and provides increased University access for students who graduate with an AA degree from a Florida College System (FCS) institution.

The University currently has 2+2 articulation agreements with 20 FCS institutions. The importance of this initiative is reflected by the University's BOT Choice Metric in the Performance Funding Model, which targets increased degree production for FCS AA transfers. Achievement of the Performance Funding Metric goals will be facilitated by the expansion of the University's recently established Transfer Center, which is responsible for implementing a systematic approach to partnering with the FCS.

Recurring funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 is requested to equip the Transfer Center with appropriate staffing. Specifically, Transfer Specialists will be hired to work collaboratively with FAMU partner FCS institutions to create a seamless transfer process for prospective students and provide greater clarity regarding pathways to completing a bachelor's degree. The Transfer Specialists will be tasked with ensuring degree maps remain updated and current, articulating students' transfer options, monitoring student progress, facilitating intervention as needed, and assisting students with assessing the financial resources available to them. Transfer specialists will also be responsible for shepherding students from the initial point of contact through their application and enrollment to the University.

II. Return on Investment - *Describe the outcome(s) anticipated, dashboard indicator(s) to be improved, or return on investment. Be specific. For example, if this issue focuses on improving retention rates, indicate the current retention rate and the expected increase in the retention rate. Similarly, if the issue focuses on expanding access to academic programs or student services, indicate the current and expected outcomes. University of Distinction proposals should also address the requirements outlined in the separate guidance document.*

The FAMU Board of Trustees and Administration are fully committed to further improving institutional outcomes on the Performance Based Funding Metrics and other key performance indicators. The requested funding will support these efforts by enabling the University to strategically target resources and support to areas that will have the greatest impact on increasing student success.

Benefits to the State:

- Supports the SUS Strategic Priority to increase student success and access as identified in the 2024 Accountability Plan approved by the Board of Governors.

- Enables FAMU to be more impactful in enhancing the socioeconomic status of first-generation and low-income students. Notably, FAMU ranked No. 23 on the Social Mobility Index for the 2022-23 U.S. News & World Report.
- Addresses critical workforce needs in Florida and the nation.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Increase the four-year graduation rate from 35 percent to 57 percent for the 2024-2028 cohort.
- Increase in academic progress rate from 81.8 percent to 90 percent.
- Increase in degrees awarded to FCS AA transfers from 341 to 400.
- Increase total research expenditures from \$68 million to \$70 million.
- Increase in the number of professional programs that meet state/national benchmarks for first-time pass rates from 1 to 4 (nursing, pharmacy, law, and physical therapy).
- Increase in the percentage of freshmen in the top 10 percent of high school classes from 15 percent to 35 percent by Fall 2027.
- Increase in median wages of bachelor's graduates from \$42,500 to \$43,700.

The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University 2022-2027 Strategic Plan identifies several ambitious goals designed to elevate the University's performance outcomes, rankings, and profile. These goals include moving into the top tier of State University System (SUS) institutions in annual Performance Based Funding metrics, rising among the Top 100 public university rankings by U.S. World News & Report (currently #91), and being designated as a Carnegie R1 Research institution (currently R2).

As the nation's highest ranked public HBCU for the fifth consecutive year, and amongst the SUS leaders in providing access to higher education for first-generation and low-income students, FAMU remains focused on addressing the critical needs of Florida's citizens and the nation.

Specific focus areas of the "Boldly Striking" Strategic Plan include:

- Increasing retention and graduation rates, and first-time licensure pass rates.
- Increasing degree production in Programs of Strategic Emphasis (PSE's).
- Recruiting, developing, and retaining world-class faculty.
- Increasing research productivity.
- Ensuring long-term fiscal health and sustainability.
- Improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Positioning FAMU as a leader in healthcare education, research, and service.

III. Personnel – *Describe personnel hiring and retention plans, making sure to connect both plans to initiative(s) and goal(s) described in section I. State the amount of faculty FTE and staff FTE and estimated funding amounts used for retention and new hires in each category. In describing faculty hires, provide overall hiring goals, including academic area(s) of expertise and anticipated hiring level (e.g. assistant professor, associate professor, full professor. Please describe how funds used for faculty or staff retention will help the institution achieve its stated goals. University of Distinction proposals should clearly note how anticipated hires or retained individuals will help the institution elevate a program or area to national or state excellence.*

FAMU is known for its strong academic programs and commitment to research. Recruitment and retention of faculty, teaching assistants, research laboratory managers, technologists, and student support specialists indicate FAMU's dedication to providing quality education and fostering a supportive learning environment.

- Faculty members are responsible for teaching courses, conducting research, and providing academic guidance to students. They play a vital role in shaping the educational experience and contributing to the university's research endeavors. FAMU boasts 14 academic colleges and schools, and a need for increased faculty lines is imperative to move to R1 Carnegie Classification. Additional faculty lines will be provided for each school or college with specific emphasis on those that offer research doctoral degrees, STEM degrees, and programs of strategic emphasis.
- Learning Assistants support faculty members in teaching undergraduate or graduate courses. They often provide instructional support, facilitate discussions, grade assignments, and offer guidance to students.
- Research Laboratory Managers oversee the day-to-day operations of research labs. They are responsible for maintaining equipment, ensuring lab safety protocols are followed, managing research projects, and providing guidance to researchers.
- Technologists are skilled professionals who specialize in using technology and scientific equipment. They support research activities by maintaining and operating lab equipment, assisting with data analysis, and troubleshooting technical issues.
- Student Support Specialists work closely with students to provide guidance, resources, and assistance with academic and personal matters. They may offer academic advising, career counseling, mental health support, or help with navigating campus resources.
- With robust State investment, FAMU seeks to enhance its academic and research infrastructure, aiming to enhance the learning experience and provide students with a supportive environment. Academic Research and Faculty Support Specialists will contribute to the University's mission of academic excellence and innovation.
- Research Librarians possess specialized knowledge in locating and accessing relevant academic resources, including scholarly articles, books, databases, and other research materials. They are skilled in conducting comprehensive literature searches and can help students navigate complex research databases effectively. This expertise is invaluable for graduate students who need to find authoritative sources for their research projects.
- Administrative Personnel and Software Support
 - Manage day-to-day operations of the online academic unit.
 - Coordinate scheduling, administrative tasks, and logistics.
 - Assist with budget management and financial operations.
 - Administrative software for online tracking and monitoring processes for online curricular programs.

- Online enhancements for cybersecurity and internal and external controls for operational support.
- Liaise with other departments and stakeholders within FAMU.
- Online Success Coaches
 - Provide guidance and support to online students throughout their academic journey.
 - Assist students in setting goals and developing study plans.
 - Monitor student progress and address any challenges they may face.
 - Offer resources and strategies for online learning success.
- Student Success Counselors
 - Guide students in choosing appropriate programs and courses.
 - Assist with course registration, transfer credits, and academic planning.
 - Monitor academic progress and help students stay on track to meet their goals.
 - Provide information on degree requirements and university policies.
 - Trained in financial aid, data analysis and career development.
- Student Services Experts
 - Offer comprehensive support services to online students.
 - Assist with admissions and enrollment processes.
 - Provide technical support for online learning platforms.
 - Address student inquiries and concerns related to financial aid, scholarships, and other support resources.

IV. Facilities *(If this issue requires an expansion or construction of a facility, please complete the following table.):* **NOT APPLICABLE.**

	Facility Project Title	Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	Priority Number
1.				
2.				