

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Senator Harrell, Chair
Senator Bradley, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, October 15, 2025
TIME: 11:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m.
PLACE: James E. "Jim" King, Jr Committee Room, 401 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Harrell, Chair; Senator Bradley, Vice Chair; Senators Bracy Davis, Burgess, Calatayud, Davis, and Leek

		BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	
TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER		COMMITTEE ACTION
1	State University System Budget Request and Strategic Plan Update		Presented
Other Related Meeting Documents			



Senate Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

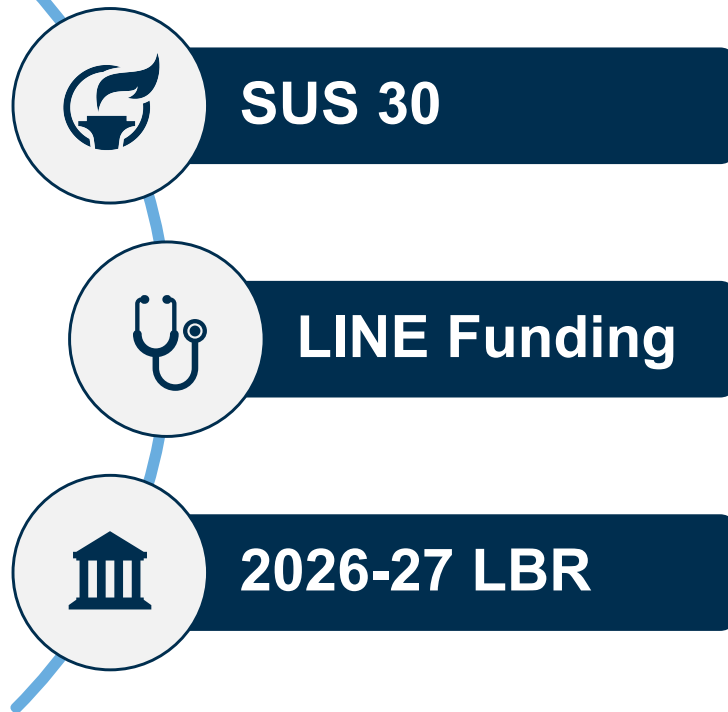
flbog.edu

Emily Sikes, Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs

•————•
Sarah deNagy, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration



Overview



SUS30



**STATE UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM OF FLORIDA**

Making an Extraordinary Impact



#1 State for Higher Education

- Since 2017
- 7 universities ranked in the Top 100

#1 in Affordability

- Lowest state in the country for in-state tuition
- 77% of Florida resident undergraduates without loans

Focused on Student Success

- 4-year graduation rate of 64%
- SUS graduates earning \$50k

Aligning Degrees with Florida's Needs

- Programs of Strategic Emphasis aligned to Florida's most critical needs

Advancing Research & Innovation

- \$3B in research expenditures
- More research collaboration across the System

2030 Strategic Plan Timeline

May 2024 – January 2025



May 8, 2024
Board Meeting

Mission & Vision

June 27-28, 2024
Board Meeting

Strategy Session

Summer
Steering
Committee

Sept 17-18, 2024
Retreat &
Board Meeting

Strategy Session

Oct 16, 2024
Board Workshop

Review Strategies

Oct 29-30, 2024
Board Meeting

Areas & Initiatives

November
Stakeholder
Review

Metrics & Goals

Dec 19, 2024
Board Meeting

Metrics & Goals

Jan 30, 2025
Board Meeting

 **2030 Strategic
Plan Approval**

5 Priority Areas



ONE SUS



ELEVATING STUDENT SUCCESS



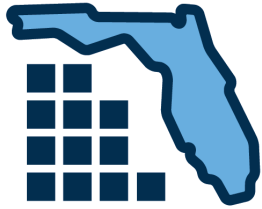
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE



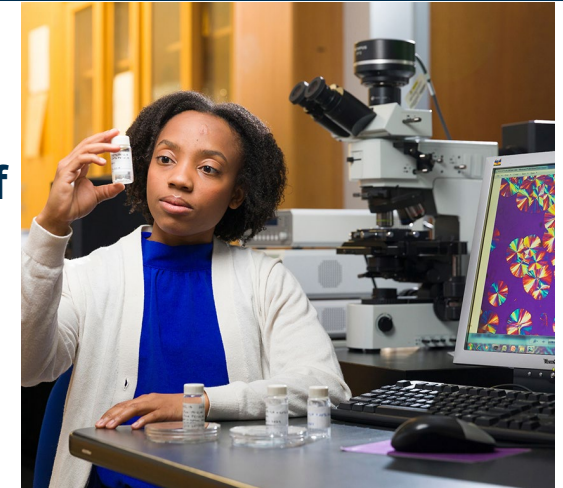
WORLD-CLASS TALENT



**INNOVATIVE RESEARCH & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**



The System is comprised of 12 distinct universities, each with renowned areas of expertise, all collaborating as **One SUS**



OBJECTIVES

Reputation

Collaboration

Areas of Expertise



Reputation

U.S. News & World Report: 2026 Best Colleges Rankings



🔥 **Record-breaking 7** universities in the **top 100**

🔥 **4** universities in the **top 50**

🔥 **7** universities in the **top 100** Best Public Colleges for **Veterans** nationwide

🔥 FAMU **#1 Public HBCU** for 7 consecutive years

🔥 FIU **#1** in the nation for **Upward Economic Mobility**

🔥 Florida Poly **#1 Best Regional Public Colleges in the South** for 5 consecutive years





Collaboration SUS Safety Summit



🔥 Held at the University of Central Florida on October 8, 2025

🔥 Attended by senior leadership from 12 SUS institutions & 28 FCS institutions

Building Hardening

- Strengthen campus safety measures
- Protect campus communities
- Enhance campus security

Threat Assessment

- Review existing threat prevention strategies
- Identify areas of improvement to mitigate future risks

Communication

- Prioritize effective crisis communication
- Foster collaboration between SUS & FCS
- Implement effective emergency notification systems



Areas of Expertise

Proposed Fall 2025



- Each state university will elevate areas of expertise & intentionally prioritize resources to lead the state and nation in those areas. Differentiating & excelling in these areas will bolster the reputation of the System & Florida.

Purpose

- Bolster the success of acclaimed students, faculty, & research
- Establish world-class outcomes & goals
- Contribute to Florida's economic development

Framework

- Reflect quality outcomes
- Areas that are existing strengths & what the university will be known for nationally

Goals

- Be recognized within Florida & nationally
- Develop shared Centers of Distinction to foster collaboration across the System

Elevating Student Success



Our System serves as a
national model of excellence for
student success
while providing high-quality education
that is affordable & accessible



OBJECTIVES

Modelling Excellence

Access & Affordability

High-Skilled Grads



Elevating Student Success

METRIC	2025	2030
4-Year Graduation Rate	62%	70%
Academic Progress Rate	89%	92%
% of Bachelor's Grads Enrolled or Employed at \$40K	74%	85%
Median Wages of Bachelor's Grads	\$50,000	\$60,000
FCS AA Transfers 3-Year Graduation Rate	62%	72%
Licensure Exam Pass Rates	31 of 39 Above	Top Decile/ Top in FL
New Undergrads Participating in Internships or Experiential Learning	29%	40%
New Undergrads without Student Loans	77%	85%

Elevating Student Success

2025 Accountability Plans: System Highlights



PRIORITIZING STUDENT SUCCESS

64%

4-Year
Grad Rate

↑ 7 pts

5-Year Trend



IMPROVING PELL STUDENT OUTCOMES

60%

Pell 4-Year
Grad Rate

↑ 8 pts

5-Year Trend



INCREASING GRADUATE SALARIES

\$51k

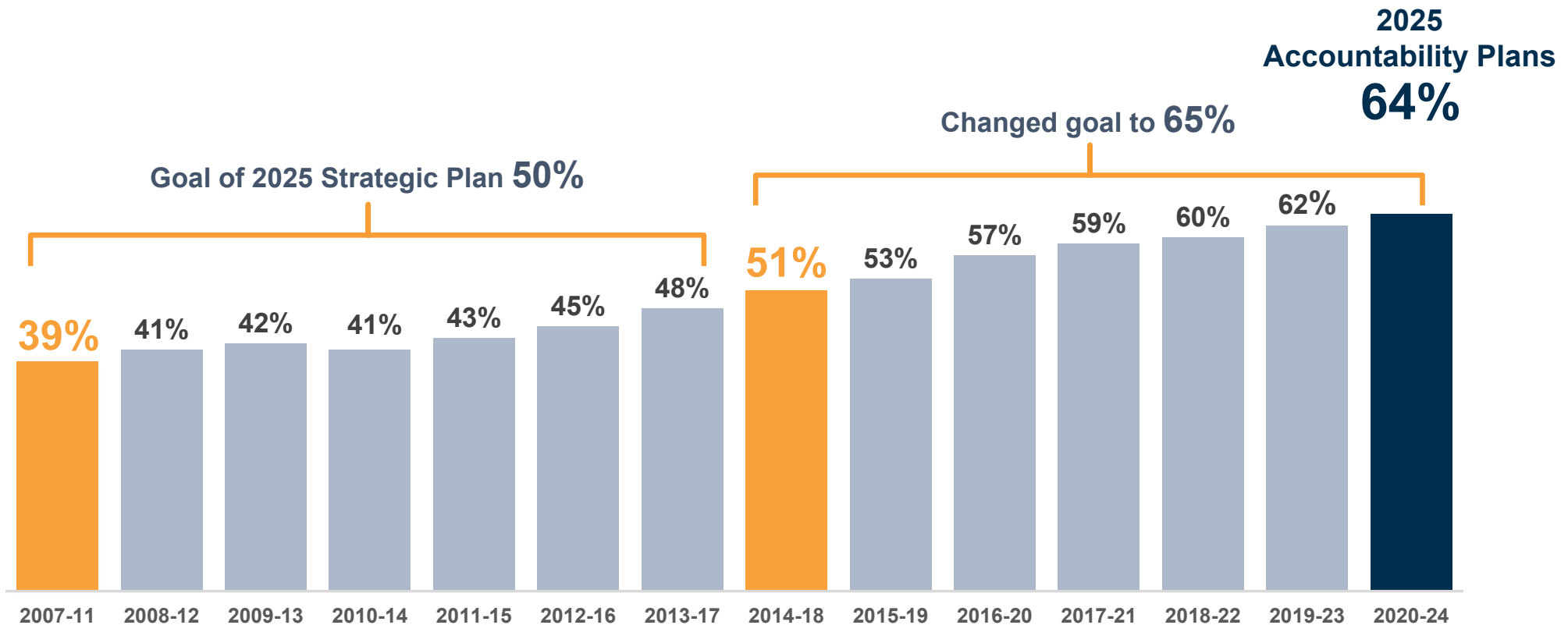
Median Salary

↑ \$9k

5-Year Trend

FTIC 4-Year Graduation Rate

The System has improved 25% pts since 2011



Licensure Exam Pass Rate

2025 Summary



Excellence in Licensure Exam Performance

100% Pass Rates

Nursing



Medicine



Dentistry



Pursuing Excellence

Goals for 100% Pass Rates

Nursing



Physical Therapy



Medicine





Programs of Strategic Emphasis



- In 2023, the Board identified Programs of Strategic Emphasis focused on the most critical workforce needs of Florida that provide students a strong return on investment
- Performance-Based Funding (PBF) metrics 6 & 8 target the percentage of degrees awarded at the bachelor's & graduate levels in these programs

Current List

Degree Level	Total	Active
Bachelor's	95	73
Master's	75	66
Doctoral	57	54



Programs of Strategic Emphasis



STATE UNIVERSITIES



- Provides a planning tool to produce graduates for Florida's workforce shortages
- Incentivized through Performance Based Funding

FLORIDA

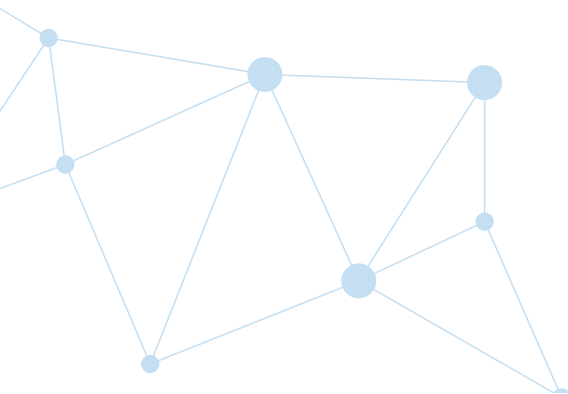


- Supplies critical talent to support Florida's economy
- Supports future growth for emerging fields

STUDENTS



- Ensures a positive return on investment for the degree
- Identifies fields with workforce shortages



Operational Excellence



Our System is committed to being exceptional stewards of state resources & upholding the **highest standards of integrity** by continually identifying best practices & areas for improvement



OBJECTIVES

Financial Health & Integrity

Optimizing Funds

Operational Excellence Metrics



Financial Metrics

- 🌐 Cash to Debt Ratio
- 🌐 Days Cash on Hand
- 🌐 Net Operating Revenues Ratio
- 🌐 Age of Plant Ratio
- 🌐 Return on Net Assets Ratio
- 🌐 Bond Program Ratings

Efficiency Metrics

- 🌐 Shared Initiatives Savings
- 🌐 Percent of Employees in
Instruction/Research & Administration
- 🌐 Number of Faculty & Administrators
- 🌐 Space Utilization

World-Class Talent



Our System boasts
top-tier faculty
who relentlessly pursue knowledge & produces
world-class graduates
who secure positions at iconic
companies around the globe



OBJECTIVES

World-Class Faculty

World-Class Graduates



Our System conducts
innovative research
that tackles crucial, life-altering challenges,
transforms communities, & serves as an
economic driver
for our state



OBJECTIVES

Leaders in Research

Innovation Transforming
Florida's Economy

National Comparison



Tracking Excellence

METRIC	2025	2030	Ranking	
			Current	2030
4-Year Graduation Rate	65%	70%	#5	#1
4-Year Graduation Rate for Pell Students	60%	70%	N/A	#1
Total Research Expenditures	\$3B	\$3.75B	#5	#3
Undergrads without Student Loans	78%	85%	#3	#1

These metrics will be used in the future for comparisons amongst peer universities.

Tracking Progress of SUS 30



June
2025

Update on implementation to the BOG

Nov
2025

BOG discusses how to incorporate SUS 30 goals into PBF

June
2026

SUS 30 metrics & new Programs of Strategic Emphasis list will appear in the **2026 Accountability Plan**





LINE Funding

Allowable Uses of LINE Funds

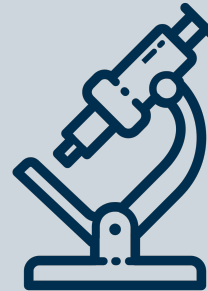
Section 1009.8926, Florida Statutes



Student
Scholarships



Faculty
Recruitment



Equipment



Simulation
Centers

Funds may **not** be used for the construction of new buildings

LINE Timeline

July



July - August

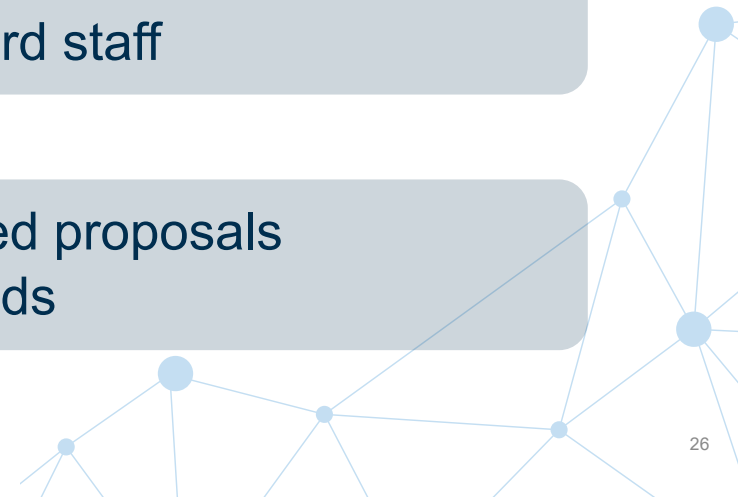


September

- Legislative appropriation
- Board office receives university proposals

- University BOTs approve proposals
- Proposals are reviewed by Board staff

- BOG approves all recommended proposals
- Universities begin receiving funds



Overview of 2025-26 LINE Funding Requests



**The Florida
Legislature allocated
\$6 million for the
LINE Program
in 2025-26**



**As of September 11:
24 proposals from
10 universities**



**Total requested:
\$6,000,000**

**Total remaining:
\$0**

SUS Nursing: Key Takeaways



The State University System offers high-quality nursing programs that produce successful graduates



Record high number of
pre-licensure nursing
graduates

Over 1,900



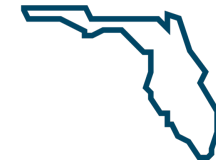
Expanded capacity in
nursing programs

**More than 1,000
new slots since
2014**



LINE funding provided
opportunities for

**201 new
nursing students
& 315 scholarships**



Graduates are employed
at high rates

**addressing Florida
workforce shortages**

2026-27

SUS Legislative Budget Request

Summary 2026-2027 LBR

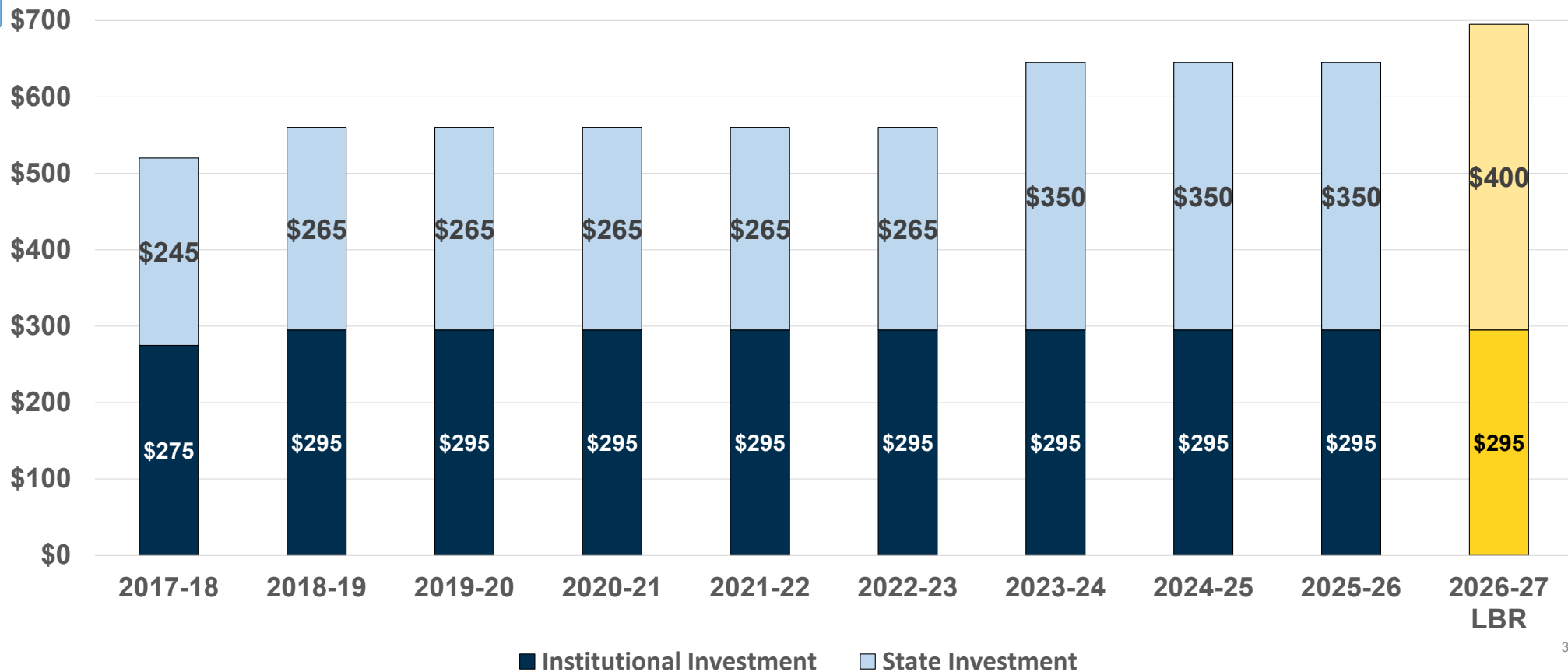
Education & General



Performance-Based Funding – State Investment	\$400,000,000
Performance-Based Recruitment & Retention Initiative	\$100,000,000
Preeminence Funding	\$125,000,000
UF-IFAS Extension Workload	\$6,390,199
State Fire Marshal Inspections	\$3,124,310
LBR Total	\$634,514,509

Performance-Based Funding – \$695M

Increase of \$50 Million



PBF Metrics



#	Metric
1	% of Bachelor's Graduates Employed/Continuing their Education
2	Median Wages 1 Yr after Graduation
3	Net Tuition & Fees per 120 credit hours
4	4-Year Grad Rate
5	Academic Progress Rate
6	Bachelor's Degrees in Areas of Strategic Emphasis
7	University Access Rate
8	Graduate Degrees in Areas of Strategic Emphasis
9a	3-Year Grad rate for FCS Transfer Students
9b	6-Year Grad rate for Students awarded Pell Grant in 1st Year
10	BOT Choice Metric



Performance-Based Funding

Expenditures



STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

- Scholarships
- Academic advising
- Enhanced recruitment
- Career readiness
- Enhancing STEM success
- Graduate student support
- Mental health counselors



FACULTY

- Invest in highly skilled faculty
- Adjuncts & visitors
- Deliver high-demand courses
- Expand academic programs in strategic areas
- Nationwide faculty recruitment



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Safety & security enhancements
- Library resources
- Technology and classroom upgrades
- Software products to enhance student retention and graduation success

Preeminence Funding – \$125M

Section 1001.7065, Florida Statutes



- Must annually meet at least 12 of the 13 metrics
- Each preeminent state research university receives an equal amount of funding

MEASURE	BENCHMARK
1 Average GPA and SAT Score (incoming freshman)	4.0 GPA & 1200 SAT
2 National University Rankings	Top 50 in 2+ publications
3 Freshman Retention Rate	≥ 90%
4 4-year Graduation Rate	≥ 60%
5 National Academy Memberships	6
6 Total Annual Research Expenditures (\$M)	≥ \$200M
7 Total Annual R&D Expenditures in Non-Health Sciences (Science & Engineering only)	≥ \$150M
8 National Ranking in Research Expenditures	5 in Top 100
9 Patents Awarded (over 3-year period)	≥ 100
10 Doctoral Degrees Awarded	≥ 400
11 Post-Doctoral Appointees	≥ 200
12 Endowment Size	>\$500M
13 Total Annual Science & Engineering Research Expenditures	>\$50M

Preeminent Research University Performance

2025 Summary



All 13 Preeminent Benchmarks Met

FSU

**Increased Endowment
to over \$1B**

UF

**Growth in Average
GPA to 4.6**


**UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH
FLORIDA**

**Growth in Total Research
Expenditures to over
\$500M**

FIU

**Growth in the # of
Post-Doctoral Appointees
to 274**

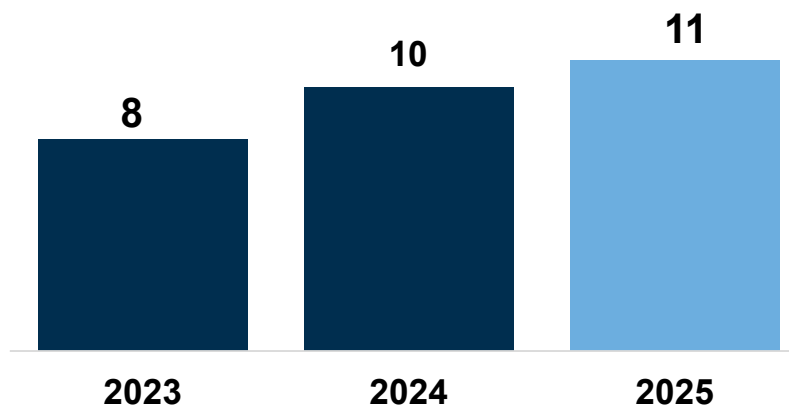
**12 Preeminent
Benchmarks Met**

Emerging Preeminent University Performance

2025 Summary



Must meet 12 of 13 Preeminence benchmarks



**4-Year
Graduation
Rate**

58.7%



4.5% pts
1-year change

Distance to goal: **1.3% pts**

On pace to meet
Preeminence goal $\geq 60\%$

Performance-Based Retention & Recruitment Initiative – \$100M



2024-25 General Appropriations Act:

- **\$100,000,000** for the State University System **Performance-based Excellence Recognition Program**
- Funds allocated based on the Performance-based Funding Model maximum number of excellence points, using the data from the 2024 Accountability Plan, weighted by the number of full-time faculty and researchers employed in Programs of Strategic Emphasis

Retain existing university
full-time instruction and
research personnel

Recruit new university
full-time instruction
and research personnel

Recognize and honor
exceptional
achievements of full-
time instructional and
research personnel

Performance-Based Recruitment & Retention Expenditures



\$44M

Recruitment

- Competitive Start-up Packages
- Infrastructure and Equipment to recruit new faculty
- Relocation Allowances
- New Faculty Salaries

\$56M

Retention

- Performance Bonuses
- Post-tenure Review Recognition
- Faculty Overloads
- Instructional Support

Other System Initiatives – \$9.5M

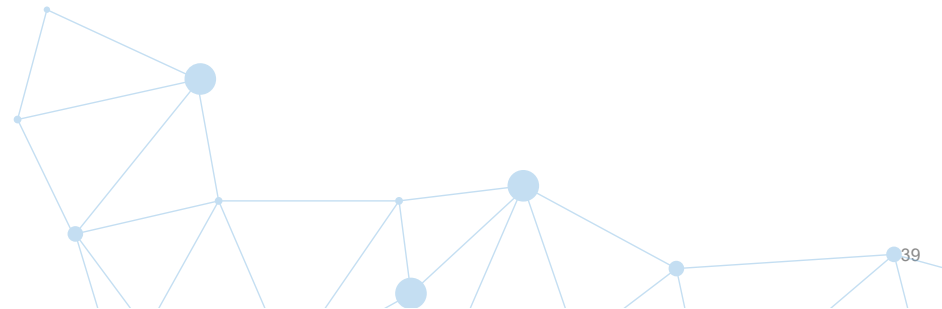


- **UF-IFAS Extension Workload – \$6.4M**

- Support educational materials, public consultations, and research materials for the Extension Offices located in all 67 Florida counties

- **State Fire Marshal Inspections – \$3.1M**

- Fund the costs associated with the inspections by the State Fire Marshal of state-owned and high-hazard buildings throughout the SUS (Requested pursuant to Section 633.218, Florida Statutes)



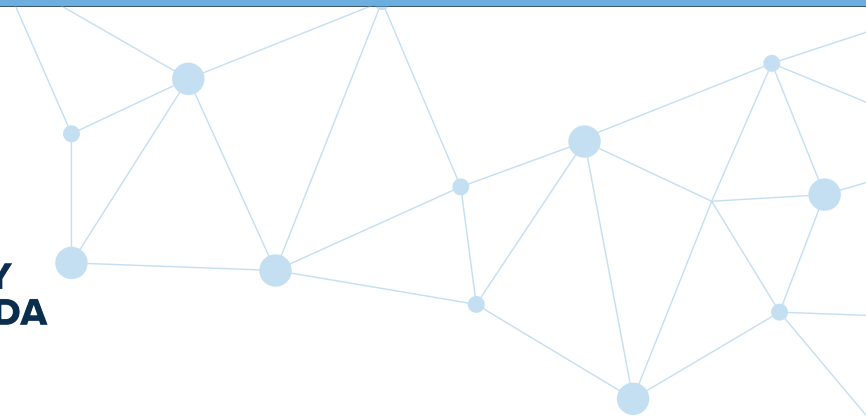


SUS 30

EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT



STATE UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM OF FLORIDA



October 15, 2025

Meeting Date

Approps

Committee

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Senate Approps

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Emily Sikes

Phone 850-245-9702

Address 325 W. Gaines Street

Email Emily.Sikes@flbog.edu

Street

Tallahussee

City

FL

State

32399

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☒ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf](#) [flsenate.gov](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

October 15, 2025

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The Florida Senate
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Bill Number or Topic

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Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Sarah Denagy

Phone 850.245.9702

Address 385 W. Gaines Street

Email Sarah.Denagy@flbog.edu

Tallahassee

FL

32399

City

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Zip

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S-001 (08/10/2021)



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

COMMITTEES:
Commerce and Tourism, *Chair*
Appropriations Committee on Higher Education
Appropriations Committee on Transportation,
Tourism, and Economic Development
Community Affairs
Fiscal Policy
Health Policy
Judiciary

JOINT COMMITTEE:
Joint Administrative Procedures Committee

SENATOR TOM LEEK
7th District

October 13, 2025

The Honorable Gayle Harrell
Chair of Appropriations Committee on Higher Education
201 The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Honorable Chair Harrell:

Please Excuse my absence from the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education, scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025.

Thank you for understanding, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Leek", written over a horizontal line.

Sen. Tom Leek
Florida Senator, District 7

CC: Tim Elwell, Committee Staff Director
Regina Alsarou, Committee Administrative Assistant

REPLY TO:

- ☐ 4475 US 1 South, Suite 404, St. Augustine, Florida 32086 (386) 446-7610
- ☐ 310 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5007

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

BEN ALBRITTON
President of the Senate

JASON BRODEUR
President Pro Tempore

CourtSmart Tag Report

Room: SB 401

Case No.:

Type:

Caption: Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

Judge:

Started: 10/15/2025 11:00:26 AM

Ends: 10/15/2025 11:55:38 AM

Length: 00:55:13

11:00:26 AM	Sen. Harrell (Chair)
11:02:36 AM	TAB 1 - State University System Budget Request and Strategic Plan Update
11:02:48 AM	Emily Sikes, Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs
11:24:18 AM	Sen. Davis
11:24:47 AM	E. Sikes
11:25:46 AM	Sen. Davis
11:26:15 AM	E. Sikes
11:26:56 AM	Sen. Harrell
11:28:03 AM	E. Sikes
11:28:42 AM	Sen. Calatayud
11:30:06 AM	E. Sikes
11:32:23 AM	Sen. Calatayud
11:32:54 AM	E. Sikes
11:33:38 AM	Sen. Calatayud
11:33:50 AM	E. Sikes
11:34:37 AM	Sen. Bracy Davis
11:35:18 AM	E. Sikes
11:36:37 AM	Sen. Bradley
11:37:29 AM	E. Sikes
11:38:22 AM	Sen. Harrell
11:39:12 AM	E. Sikes
11:41:12 AM	Sen. Harrell
11:41:21 AM	E. Sikes
11:44:36 AM	Sen. Harrell
11:44:49 AM	Sen. Davis
11:45:21 AM	Sen. Harrell
11:45:57 AM	Sarah Denagy, Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration
11:53:42 AM	Sen. Harrell