



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Board of Trustees

Item: SP: A-2a

Strategic Planning and Initiatives Committee

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A LEGISLATIVE BUDGET REQUEST (LBR) TO SEEK FUNDING FOR “LEVELING UP: FAU’S NATIONAL MODEL FOR INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN EDUCATION & RESEARCH”

PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION

The approval of the FY2025-26 Legislative Budget Request to seek funding for “Leveling Up: FAU’s National Model for Institutional Transformation in Education and Research.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Each year, in anticipation of the upcoming state legislative session, State University System (SUS) institutions are required to submit their operational legislative budget requests (LBR) to the Board of Governors (BOG) for review. *Leveling Up: FAU’s National Model for Institutional Transformation in Education and Research* is classified as a university-unique budget request. As stated in the attached LBR documents, the university is requesting \$46.5 million in recurring and nonrecurring funds to support its activities, including institutional growth, expansion of the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, development of R1 research infrastructure, and compensation support.

Few institutions across the nation – if any – have had the type of transformational decade that Florida Atlantic University just experienced. Building on the extraordinary support from the State of Florida and its visionary leaders, the university doubled its graduation rates, tripled research expenditures, and hit institutional records for student retention rates, philanthropic fundraising, and enrollments. Florida Atlantic did all of this while continuing to deliver measurable social mobility by providing noteworthy access to students coming from low-income backgrounds and to first-generation students. As a result, the institution has earned national recognition, including awards for institutional transformation and ascension to the Top 100 of multiple national ranking

systems.

Florida Atlantic is also preparing to lay the foundation for the university's next strategic plan, as our current plan, *The Race to Excellence*, is scheduled to sunset at the end of the next calendar year. The *Leveling Up* proposal serves as a bridge between the two plans, preparing the university for its next long-term journey and enabling the school to not miss a step as it continues to grow enrollments and the research enterprise.

In this request, Florida Atlantic University seeks \$46.5M in new allocations to sustain its progress and accelerate its work to become a new national model for public research universities. The following four goals outline the priorities for the request:

1. invest in both instructional and research faculty to sustain smart enrollment growth,
2. expand the medical school as the backbone for the university's professional health programs,
3. develop a world-class support structure to maintain status as a first-tier research institution,
4. and establish an innovative total compensation program to address compression issues that have evolved as a result of rapid, widespread enhancements across the system.

Each of the priorities set forth in this LBR represent long-term goals that the university has sought to achieve and have previously socialized with various constituencies, including this Board. From our *FAU100* goal of becoming a top 100 public research university, to growing enrollments within the College of Medicine, this LBR assembles several previously established university initiatives into a comprehensive request that will provide Florida Atlantic with the resources necessary to *Level Up*.

Since 2019, the Board of Governors has required that an institution's Board of Trustees must approve the university-unique LBRs and subsequently submit them to the BOG by a specified date. This year, the BOG has provided guidance that asks university boards to ensure that LBRs are board approved and submitted prior to July 31, 2024.

Implementation Plan/Date

Upon approval by the Board, the Provost's office will submit the attached LBR documentation and inform BOG staff that the Florida Atlantic Board of Trustees has reviewed and supports the request.

Fiscal Implications

See attached LBR for proposed budget estimates.

Supporting Documentation: State University System E&G 2025-26 Legislative Budget Request Form I & II (attached)

Presented by: Mr. Ryan Britton, Executive Director of Government Relations

Phone: 561-297-2583

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

University(s):	Florida Atlantic University (FAU)
Request Title:	Leveling Up: FAU’s National Model for Institutional Transformation in Education & Research
Date Request Approved by University Board of Trustees:	June 4, 2024 (pending)
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$39,839,099
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	\$6,695,080
Total Funds Requested:	\$46,534,179
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 accountability plan established by each university (include whether this is a new or expanded service/program). If expanded, what has been accomplished with the current service/program?

Few institutions across the nation – if any – have had the type of transformational decade that Florida Atlantic University just experienced. Building on the extraordinary support from the State of Florida and its visionary leaders, the university doubled its graduation rates, tripled research expenditures, and hit institutional records for student retention rates, philanthropic fundraising, and enrollments. Florida Atlantic did all of this while continuing to deliver measurable social mobility by providing noteworthy access to students coming from low-income backgrounds and to first-generation students. As a result, the institution has earned national recognition, including awards for institutional transformation and ascension to the Top 100 of multiple national ranking systems.

The university launched its ambitious Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, 2015-2025, which laid out the areas of focus for the university and aligns with the Board of Governors 2025 Strategic Plan (as illustrated in pages 17 to 21 of the FAU plan) and FAU’s 2024 Accountability Plan (reflected in the Statement of

Strategy and Enrollment Management sections on page 4 and page 8, respectively).

Within these various plans, the university highlighted its unique strengths and opportunities, such as its geography – with campuses and sites along more than 100 miles of coastline all located between the Atlantic Ocean and the Everglades. The institution, located in a metropolitan area with a population that is rapidly growing, committed to leverage these strengths in terms of its research and educational opportunities. In many ways, the university serves as a living laboratory for what institutions of higher education across the United States will look like in the very near future.

Florida Atlantic is also preparing to lay the foundation for the university’s next strategic plan, as The Race to Excellence is scheduled to sunset at the end of the next calendar year. This proposal then serves as a bridge between two plans, preparing the university for its next long-term journey and enabling the school to not miss a step as it continues to grow enrollments and the research enterprise.

In this request, Florida Atlantic University seeks \$46.5M in new allocations to sustain its progress and accelerate its work to become a new national model for public research universities.

The following four goals outline the priorities for this request: 1) invest in both instructional and research faculty to sustain smart enrollment growth, 2) expand the medical school as the backbone for the university’s professional health programs, 3) develop a world-class support structure to maintain status as a first-tier research institution, and 4) establish an innovative total compensation program to address compression issues that have evolved as a result of rapid, widespread enhancements across the system.

The spending plan is below, with subsequent sections elaborating on the goals:

Invest in Faculty for Smart Growth	\$17,436,250 recurring
Expand the Medical School	\$11,202,642 recurring
Develop Infrastructure for New R1 Status	\$6,695,080 non-recurring
Establish Innovative Compensation Program	\$11,200,207 recurring
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Total request for FY 2025-26	\$46,534,179

I. \$17,436,250 recurring - Invest in Faculty for Smart Enrollment Growth

The State of Florida and Florida Atlantic University now have a shared opportunity to build on a decade of success by investing in the university instructors and researchers of the future, further transforming the university into a testbed for creative and effective teaching methods.

The plan would add 145 new full-time faculty personnel lines (both world-class researchers & instructors) at competitive salaries (an average of \$92,500 base salary plus fringe benefits).

- These faculty members would primarily fall under STEM categories, which make up a substantial portion of the university's undergraduate and graduate student enrollments.
- A significant portion – roughly two fifths of the request – would also support the state's other broad areas of general education as well to ensure ongoing commitment to a comprehensive university-level academic experience. Importantly, investments in faculty are also investments in students through improved classroom instruction.

These investments would reinforce an institution that has never been stronger and has taken intentional steps to ensure it can sustain future development. To that end, additional faculty personnel lines would empower the university to grow its enrollments in a smart, strategic fashion as outlined in the Enrollment Management section of the 2024 FAU Accountability Plan. The focus of enrollment growth will be on sustainable revenues such as enhanced retention of sophomores and juniors, increased numbers of state college transfer students, and higher recovery rates of stop-out enrollments for both former FAU students who left higher education before graduating and local South Florida residents who may have some college but no degree in hand. The current projection, without additional investment, is for these components of the enrollment management plan to make up an average of 2 percent annual growth and 15 percent five-year total headcount growth. This request can accelerate that rate to increase undergraduate headcount by more than 5,000 more students over the course of the next five years.

On its path towards transformation, Florida Atlantic carefully studied the institutional infrastructure of its campuses, colleges, and programming, as well as the best practices at the nation's most innovative public research universities. Modeled after organizational development and change management practices in sectors such as healthcare and technology, the university brought together cross-functional teams to use applied data analytics to transform the collegiate experience and promote student success.

The institution served as better stewards of both tuition revenues and state investments by ensuring it promoted efficiencies and simultaneously improved efficacy. First, Florida Atlantic broke down organizational silos to become more efficient by standardizing its data governance process, launching a data warehousing approach for data utilization, leveraging widespread access of shared dynamic data dashboards, and ultimately using these improvements to introduce predictive analytics to promote student success. At the same time, the institution became more effective by convening executive decision makers alongside boots-on-the-ground members of the faculty and staff in weekly task force meetings review these dynamic reports and expeditiously apply these predictive analytics.

FAU's "team-based analytics" model worked, resulting in several strategies and tactics to support student success. The university launched initiatives to enhance its academic advising model, developed plans of study for each student, and implemented the technology platforms that support advising and those plans of study. Additionally, the institution overhauled the curriculum to promote flexibility, encouraged full-time enrollment through the introduction of a timely graduation policy, reinvented the career planning and professional development model for students, and removed bottlenecks to enhance the course registration experience for the academic progression of more students. Cumulatively, these interventions ensured that all students have clear paths toward student success.

Following these improvements, the university then launched additional cross-functional teams to push the "team-based analytics" model out throughout the institution. The colleges launched similar student success analytics task forces, and the executive leadership team and the council of deans convened their own version, along with a faculty-driven group to ensure grassroots support and engagement in these efforts.

At the direction of the faculty student success analytics task force, in 2023 the University embarked on an essential strategic exercise related to career planning and aligning FAU academic departments and their degree programs with workforce demands. Senior leadership visited every single academic department across the university to conduct active inquiry in the form of a listening tour, sharing what they have learned along the way in terms best practices and innovations related to career planning in other colleges, as well as a highlighting of existing technological, curricular, and pedagogical resources available to instructors through the Career Center. Early findings suggest that most of the best practices for faculty members who engage students in career planning have focused on 1 – high impact practices such as experiential learning, student involvement in clubs and organizations, internship opportunities, and undergraduate research (among other high impact practices), 2 – interdisciplinary collaboration and application of knowledge (e.g. the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters' new minor/certificate in arts

and performance entrepreneurship), and 3 – reflective exercises and personal goal setting as pedagogical tools for starting to get students to think about how they'll apply what they are learning. This is just one example of how cross-functional teams have focused and reinforced efforts on student success both in terms of timely graduation rates and post-graduation professional success.

In the following years, Florida Atlantic earned multiple external recognitions for its remarkable approach to transforming the institution. In addition to improving from an initial public school rank of 164 in 2018 (among national universities) to its current rank of 112 in US News & World Report's 2024 Best Colleges list, the institution is also now ranked 79 among public universities in Wall Street Journal's 2024 Best Colleges in America list and 46 overall (including both public and private universities) in Washington Monthly's 2023 National Universities list. Beyond ranking systems, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities awarded FAU the 2022 Degree Completion award, and in March 2024 the American Council on Education awarded FAU the ACE/Fidelity Investments Award for Institutional Transformation. These accolades speak directly to the university's commitment to the success of all its students and building an infrastructure and campus environment that reimagines what that success looks like.

Accordingly, the university has well positioned itself for the growth of its instructional and research faculty, so that the institution can ensure its essential operations of teaching and scholarship will keep pace with the rest of organizational development that has occurred over the past decade. Investments in faculty are mission critical and will ensure the university continues to improve in several outcomes related to student success.

II. \$11,202,642 recurring – Expand the Medical School

Florida Atlantic University's Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine Operations received \$5 million in recurring funding two sessions ago. The recurring funding is going towards integrating artificial intelligence into the curriculum of healthcare professions, including nursing, medicine, and the health sciences. As a newer medical school, the nimble aspects and novel approaches lend themselves well to innovative programs such as integrative AI. Healthcare worker shortages have reached a critical stage in Florida. The 2020 census revealed that the fastest growing states, including Florida, consistently rank lowest when it comes to health and healthcare. Specifically, Florida added 3 million residents and ranked 41st for overall healthcare in 2020. Due to the increased demand with the rising population and diminishing work force, the overall workforce shortage in healthcare in Florida is increasingly concerning. We propose using predictive analytics to determine which care can safely be administered outside of hospitals—in patients' homes and communities—to streamline processes which allow for the delivery of this optimized care, and to

train the healthcare workforce of the future in interprofessional settings on data driven care. We also propose adding medical practitioner capacity in the region.

Accordingly, FAU's College of Medicine will expand the number of high quality, well trained medical students graduating from our program to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding and aging population in Florida and address healthcare workforce shortages. Two years ago, we successfully received approval from the LCME to expand to 72 students for AY 2022-2023. With the \$5 million recurring operational funds received by the Florida Legislature last year, we expanded the class to 80 matriculated students for AY 2023-2024. The AY 2023-2024 program encompasses 272 medical students with projected growth to 392 trainees over the next five years. These students will not only aid in resolving our workforce needs in the state, but will also be educated with this new curriculum to provide data driven efficient healthcare in our communities. Additional faculty and staff resources as well as space will be needed to maintain the high-quality problem-based learning curriculum that develops critically thinking future physicians who learn team-based and interdisciplinary practices. Increasing research development and opportunities in our undergraduate medical education program will further engage and train our learners to be well positioned for the quickly evolving healthcare landscape. Expanding our curriculum to include innovative training in the key competencies that need to be obtained to optimize the use of AI in the healthcare system to improve outcomes and increase access will ultimately serve FL's ongoing concern regarding physician shortage and access to healthcare. Given our retention rates to date, this could provide a near doubling of new doctors in our Florida communities beginning in FY 2028-29. Of these, one third are expected to go into primary care.

This initiative is requesting \$11,202,642 of funding for 52.29 (FTE) for new faculty. This 52.29 FTE includes 70% at the Assistant Professor rank and 30% at the Associate Professor ranking. Consistently, studies show that an investment in people rather than buildings produces a greater return on investment. Increased faculty is needed to support the expansion of the medical school class size. In addition, targeting new hires in emerging areas of AI, data science, precision medicine, and population health will help to attract high quality students, provide new core competencies for 21st century medicine, and raise the national reputation of our multi-faceted academic programs. New faculty hires will also aid in the production of research to develop practical solutions for a new workforce that seeks to provide more personalized care to residents within our communities including non-traditional settings.

III. \$6,695,080 nonrecurring – Develop Infrastructure for New R1 Status

Florida Atlantic is approaching a major milestone in the institution's history. For more than twenty years, the institution has been on a path from its status as R2 High Research Activity toward a new status as R1 Very High Research Activity. As a result of the efforts designated under A Strategic Plan for the Race to

Excellence, 2015-2025, FAU established interdisciplinary pillars (each with an associated research institute) that hired highly productive research-focused faculty members, invested in core facility infrastructure to support them, and ultimately brought the institution from a baseline of \$21M in 2014-15 to \$77.6M in research expenses in 2022-23.

In 2025, FAU will officially take its place as an R1, top research tier institution. Effective with that year's classification, the Carnegie Classification System will define R1 institutions as universities with at least \$50M in total research expenditures as well as an annual total of 70 or more research doctoral degrees. By attaining \$77.6M in research expenditures (and plans to grow to \$100M in 2028) and awarding 125 research doctorates in 2022-23, FAU has consistently met this threshold for the five previous consecutive years. This is one of the major goals of the current strategic plan, and the reclassification will occur precisely in the final year of the plan as it sunsets.

The university accomplished this impressive growth through a deliberate cultivation of research-intensive faculty members and expanded infrastructure. Through the Stiles-Nicholson Brain Institute (and its new facility on the FAU Jupiter campus), the Institute for Sensing and Embedded Network Systems Engineering (I-SENSE), Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI), and the Institute for Human Health and Disease Intervention (I-HEALTH), the university has developed teams of senior faculty and postdoctoral fellows to work alongside them. These interdisciplinary and thematic clusters of researchers work closely with colleagues in the academic departments to produce significant grant proposals and annual grant awards.

Again, after nearly a decade of plans to bring a 3-Tesla (3T) GE SIGNA Premier magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) instrument to campus, FAU invested \$4M for instrument purchase and retrofitting space on the Boca Raton campus so that researchers can use an on-campus instrument rather than rent time from unaffiliated 3T MRI facilities adjacent to campus. This serves as a tremendous recruiting tool for faculty members, in addition to the recent purchase of a \$500K Thermo Scientific Orbitrap Exploris 240 high-resolution mass spectrometer. Clinical studies include brain imaging to monitor changes based on disease status and treatment effectiveness, as well as developing convenient analytical methods (such as blood tests) that correlate to imaging data. Diagnostic tools can then track disease initiation and progression, as well as contribute to the development of therapeutics. These investments further advance FAU's growing capabilities to perform clinical studies of brain disorders and treatments.

FAU has also expanded its partnerships in the research enterprise. In addition to longstanding relationships with the US Navy's Office of Naval Research, corporate partners, and biotechnology institutes throughout our service region such as UF Scripps and the Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience, FAU

also has growing clinical research plans with the West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System, the State of Florida Department of Elder Affairs, and multiple hospital partners that are part of our longstanding medical consortium.

To expand capacity and prepare FAU for expanded pre-clinical and clinical studies, the university proposes an additional one-time allocation of \$4,195,080 for an animal MRI instrument (\$2.6M base model, \$915K PET insert, \$580K CryoProbe kit, and \$69K warranty) another one-time allocation of \$2.5M for an 800 MHz nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) instrument. These investments will empower FAU to hire faculty members with expertise relevant to the proposed instrumentation – and more importantly, FAU will hire individuals who align with the strategic focus of its research institutes as outlined in its current strategic plan and what will surely be included in the next plan. Additionally, the enhanced infrastructure will enable FAU, its new faculty members, and its network of partners to bring meaningful therapies to market to accelerate the cure of incurable neurological diseases, including but not limited to Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and glioblastoma.

With a decade-long track record of sustained, steady growth in the research enterprise, as well as expansion of research-intensive teams of faculty researchers and the infrastructure to support their work, FAU is a reliable investment for these non-recurring funds from the State of Florida.

IV. \$11,200,207 recurring - Establish Innovative Compensation Program

To stay competitive and ready for continued growth, Florida Atlantic University proposes the establishment of an innovative compensation program that will address issues related to salary compression in the state and region. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2023 the cost of living in South Florida rose by 5.7% compared to the national rate of 3.4%. The latest 12-month average Consumer Price Index report shows drastic increases in housing costs: 5.4% nationally and 7.2% locally. These increases hit FAU's local metropolitan area particularly hard, adding to the higher baseline cost of living in one of the most expensive areas in the state. Without additional affordable housing options on the horizon, FAU's current employees are in effect being priced out of their living situations. In addition, the heightened costs of basic needs like living arrangements and transportation make it difficult to recruit new entry level and mid-level employees.

The university is attending to these concerns when feasible, given its recent growth in student credit hour production and associated increased revenues. Unfortunately, the growth in revenues is not accelerating at a rate that provides enough budgetary relief to divert significant new funds toward employee salaries and benefits. In July 2023, all eligible employees – including support personnel – received 4% base salary increases, followed by 2.5% one-time payments in December 2023. The university does not have the existing resources for a more

nanced approach that can handle some of the most serious salary compression issues as well as incentivize performance.

The major inhibitor for FAU to address this issue is a lack of parity in system-wide funding, even excluding preeminent universities and the smallest niche institutions in the State University System (SUS). For example, in Fiscal Year 2022-23, FAU was 17% below the 8-year SUS moving average in funding per student full-time equivalent (FTE). That amounts to \$1,756 less per FTE than the system average. At 25,513 FTE, that adds up to a \$44.8M shortfall.

Assuming a four-year state-funded plan to supplement operational spending at the university, the institution requests \$11,200,207 to push back against this downward economic pressure on the institution's workforce.

The following represents a comprehensive allocation of the \$11.2 million to analyze this topic further and work toward potential resolutions:

- **Salary Adjustment Pool:** At least two-thirds of this funding could set up a pool to address issues related to salary compression – ensuring that every employee receives equitable remuneration based on position, experience, and market rates within South Florida area.
- **Targeted Compression Increases:** The university would also use external consultation to perform a detailed examination of salary frameworks within the public higher education sector – as well as in areas of the private sector that might have transferrable practices to determine the areas of greatest compression and prioritizing them for adjustment.
- **Merit-Based Increases:** Similarly, an external evaluation could develop a method to identify employees with extraordinary performance who significantly contribute to FAU's mission. A permanent model for merit-based salary adjustments (rather than annual one-time incentives) could sustain ongoing success for these employees and the university.
- **Total Reward Framework:** The university would also explore methods for deploying these resources in ways that promote the health and wellness of its employees following all applicable statutory and regulatory guidelines and statewide best practices. Enhancing the workplace environment to promote employee satisfaction will also lead to decreased employee attrition and boosted productivity. The university would accordingly review its current total rewards system – including existing tuition assistance programs for employees and dependents, wellness benefits such as health center memberships, mental health services whether through existing employee assistance programs or otherwise, as well as other benefits.

By developing such an innovative compensation program, Florida Atlantic University can effectively use the newly allocated funds to attend to salary compression concerns while also enhancing the campus workplace environment and ultimately support the university's mission of excellence in education and research.

2. Describe any projected impact on academic programs, student enrollments, and student services.

Increased undergraduate student headcount with and without additional funding

Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026	Fall 2027	Fall 2028	5-yr Δ
Actual 23,462	Current target 23,962	Current target 24,624	Current target 25,512	Current target 26,287	Current target 27,004	As planned 15% (+3,542)
Actual 23,462	Current target 23,962	Funded growth 25,376	Funded growth 26,392	Funded growth 27,447	Funded growth 28,545	With funding 22% (+5,083)

The current projection, without additional investment, is for these components of the enrollment management plan to make up an average of 2 percent annual growth and 15 percent five-year total headcount growth.

This request can accelerate that rate to increase undergraduate headcount by more than 5,000 more students over the course of the next five years.

Increased MD student headcount with additional funding

	Actual 2023-24	Current target 2024-25	Funded growth 2025-26	Funded growth 2026-27	Funded growth 2027-28	Funded growth 2028-29
M1	81	80	88	96	104	104
M2	68	80	80	88	96	104
M3	67	68	80	80	88	96
M4	56	67	68	80	80	88
Total Students	272	295	316	344	368	392

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.

The following measures and the associated targets come from Florida Atlantic University's Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, 2015-2025 as well as the 2024 FAU Accountability Plan, all aligning with the 2025 BOG Strategic Plan.

The current projections reflect either internal guidance based on existing enrollment or outcome trends, as well as what the target could be if adequately funded according to the investments outlined in this proposal.

Student-faculty ratio	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	21:1	23:1	19:1

One key driver of student success is the experience that students encounter when they enter the classroom. More personalized instruction helps students to develop a sense of belonging on campus, as well as form the initial connections with faculty members who will serve as mentors or will have made lifelong impacts because they are now able to contribute a little more time in and out of the classroom, proportionately, to each student. The current projection, in light of flat trends of faculty rosters alongside enrollment growth plans, would result in an increased student-to-faculty ratio over the next five years. This investment would permit that enrollment growth while dropping the five-year target below 20 students per faculty member, which is a best practice in collegiate composition writing and several other disciplines that require individualized approaches to promote active learning and broader student success outcomes.

Full-time faculty (%)	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	87%	85%	90%

Without additional investments, the university will rely more frequently on adjunct and affiliate instructors who are an important part of the collegiate experience but do not have the same capacity for sustained student engagement that full-time instructors can maintain. This is an important indicator for the institution’s current and future institutional accreditor, as well as many program-level and discipline-specific accreditors and organizations. With this investment, the university will reverse the trajectory of this growing reliance on part-time faculty to deliver many of its academic degree programs.

Freshmen retention	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	84%	86%	90%

The university is coming off an institutional record for the retention of full-time, first-time-in-college students from the freshman to sophomore year. This trajectory is likely to level off in the coming five years, as the wraparound student services offered to students are operating at full capacity and there is a likelihood for regular turnover in terms of support staff without any innovative compensation plan to ensure steady advancement and lower staff attrition. With more faculty and better-paid staff members who are able to adjust to the continuously increasing costs of living in South Florida, students are more likely to continue on from the first to second year of undergraduate studies.

4-year grad rate	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	50%	54%	56%

FAU is also hitting institutional records for the timely four-year completion rate of full-time, first-time-in-college students. This trajectory has already leveled off over the last 3 years, following similar rationale as above. These investments could push the university beyond its current plateau and prepare it for continued increases in timely graduation for all students.

6-year Pell grad rate	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	66%	66%	70%

With a Pell graduation rate that is already at parity with respect to the overall 6-year graduation rate (also at 66%), Florida Atlantic will have the ability to position itself with a nationally competitive approach to social mobility. Both within the SUS and external to the State of Florida, the institution’s reputation will grow as it becomes better known as a place where students of all income brackets find success. This funding would significantly increase current projections, as opposed to the leveling off that is being predicted without additional investments in more faculty members and competitively paid staff members to provide student support services.

Employed/enrolled % (1 year after degree)	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	71%	73%	75%

Post-graduation student success is a longstanding focus for the university, as outlined in its annual accountability plans and the above illustration of current efforts to promote career planning and workforce alignment. This proposal will bring to the university a substantial number of new faculty members who will seek to innovate the experiential education approach that the university currently has (with expanded undergraduate research, internship opportunities, and engagement with more guest speakers and future employers in the classroom). As a result the university’s current projections for Metric 1 of the BOG’s performance funding model will increase to 75% of bachelor’s graduates employed at the state minimum threshold salary or enrolled in other higher education programs one year after degree conferral.

Research expenditures	Baseline (2022-23)	Current projection (2027-28)	Funded target (2027-28)
	\$77.6M	\$99M	\$125M

After a decade of steady growth in the research enterprise, FAU is well positioned to approach \$100M in the next five years. With a significant investment in faculty members – with a mix of junior faculty hires who will bring aggressive plans for building new research agendas as well as senior faculty hires who will bring existing awards and programs, the institution can see growth at a rate of more than a quarter of what total research expenditures would be otherwise. The research enterprise will likewise benefit from improved retention of existing faculty and staff through the proposed compensation plan, as well as the up-front investments in proposed research infrastructure.

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-wide: 145 FTE faculty includes 70% at the Assistant Professor rank (100 faculty members), 20% at the Associate Professor rank (30 faculty members), and 10% at the Professor rank (15 faculty members).

- 60% of the new hires will be in the STEM and health science areas, serving as instructors to the largest proportion of FAU’s undergraduate majors that fall under these areas.
- The remaining 40% of the new hires will serve as general education instructional faculty to enhance the classroom experience for all growing student populations. While the university has seen growth in strategic areas of emphasis for the State of Florida, the general education component must be front of mind to ensure all incoming students who need to meet the state’s requirements for delivering “broad foundational knowledge to help students develop intellectual skills and habits.” As such, this significant investment in faculty members will include personnel who deliver innovative instruction for college composition, high-quality social science and civics teaching, as well as other critical areas of the general instruction.

Medicine: 52.29 FTE faculty includes 70% at the Assistant Professor rank (36.6 faculty members) and 30% at the Associate Professor rank (15.7 members).

IV. Facilities (If this issue requires an expansion or construction of a facility, please complete the following table.):

	Facility Project Title	Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	Priority Number
1.	Health Sciences Training and Research Facility	2025-26	\$80,921,250	1
2.				



2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request
Education and General
Position and Fiscal Summary
Operating Budget Form II
 (to be completed for each issue)

University: Florida Atlantic University

Issue Title: Leveling Up: FAU's National Model for Institutional Transformation in Education & Research

	<u>RECURRING</u>	<u>NON-RECURRING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>Positions</u>			
Faculty	197.29	0.00	197.29
Other (A&P/USPS)	0.00	0.00	0.00
	-----	-----	-----
Total	197.29	0.00	197.29
	=====	=====	=====
Salaries and Benefits	\$39,839,099	\$0	\$39,839,099
Other Personal Services	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenses	\$0	\$6,695,080	\$6,695,080
Operating Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Electronic Data Processing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Financial Aid	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Category (Specific)	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	-----	-----	-----
Total All Categories	\$39,839,099	\$6,695,080	\$46,534,179
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