



*Professional & Graduate Degree  
Excellence Program Report*  
January 2019

Board Approved  
01/31/19



# SUMMARY OF STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM of FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL & GRADUATE DEGREE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM January 2019

## INTRODUCTION

The Legislature established the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program to support the efforts of the State University System (SUS) institutions to enhance the quality and excellence of professional and graduate schools in the areas of medicine, law, and business. In addition, the Program is intended to expand the economic impact of state universities. Section 1004.6498, *Florida Statutes*, requires the Florida Board of Governors to summarize and submit information from the State University System institutions on the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program by March 15 each year. Statute requires that the report include information on program expenditures; first-time pass rates on the United States Medical Licensing Examination; first-time pass rates on the Florida Bar Examination; the percentage of graduates enrolled or employed that reflects the added value of a graduate-level business degree; the advancement in the rankings of medicine, law, and graduate level programs; and the added economic benefit of the universities to the state.

The Legislature provided funds to SUS institutions for the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program in fiscal years 2017-18 and 2018-19. However, section 1004.6498, *Florida Statutes*, which established the Program and the reporting requirements, was not signed into law until March of 2018. As a result, this initial report provides baseline information on how the SUS institutions spent funds to date and how they intend to spend funds through the end of FY 2018-19. Recruiting faculty and research scholars can often take longer than a year and the timing of hiring of individuals may depend on a variety of factors. Other metrics such as exam passage rates, employment outcomes, rankings, and economic benefit to the state often take a few years to demonstrate improvements as data collection and reporting timeframes may lag a year or two behind the academic year.

The State University System includes six medical schools, four law schools, and ten institutions with graduate level business programs.<sup>1</sup> These institutions received funding based on prior performance on indicators such as licensure exam pass rates, employment outcomes, and number of graduates. In 2017-18, SUS institutions awarded 698 medical degrees, 793 law degrees, and 4,676 graduate level business degrees. Appendix A provides details of these awarded by institution.

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<sup>1</sup> New College of Florida and Florida Polytechnic University did not receive any allocations for this program as neither has a college of medicine, law, or graduate level business program.

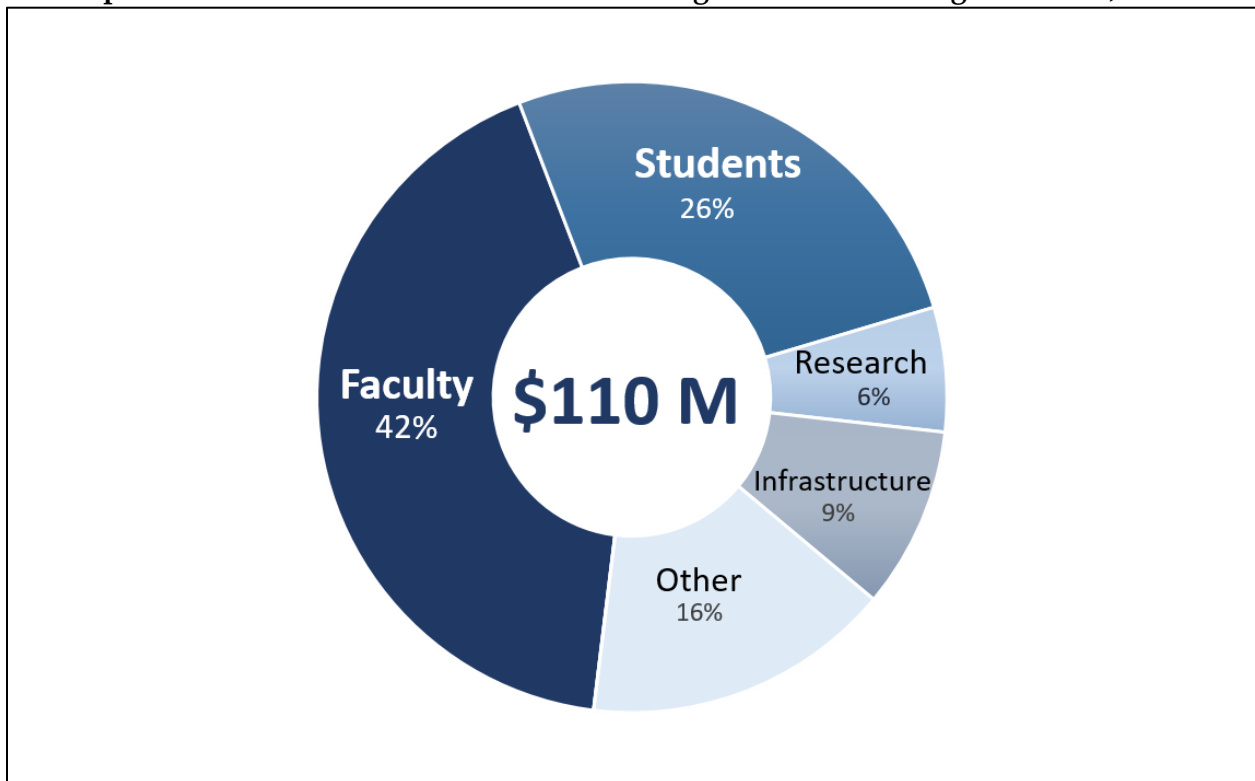


## EXPENDITURE INFORMATION

Most of the funds from the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program were used to recruit and retain faculty and support student success initiatives. Over the last two years, the Legislature allocated \$110 million to the SUS institutions to support the Program. Of this total, 42% was used to recruit and retain faculty and 26% was used to support students through a variety of mechanisms. Some examples of the student support activities include: financial aid, licensure examination preparation, career placement, and advising. Other activities varied across the medicine, law, and business categories. Exhibit 1 provides an overview of how SUS institutions spent or allocated the funds for the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program in both FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19. Since FY 2018-19 does not end until June 30, institutions reported some funds as obligated in certain categories rather than expended. For example, several institutions are still in the process of hiring and recruiting faculty, which can often take longer than a year.

### Exhibit 1

#### SUS Expenditures of Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program Funds, 2017-2019



Source: Board staff analysis of SUS submissions on Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program received fall 2018.

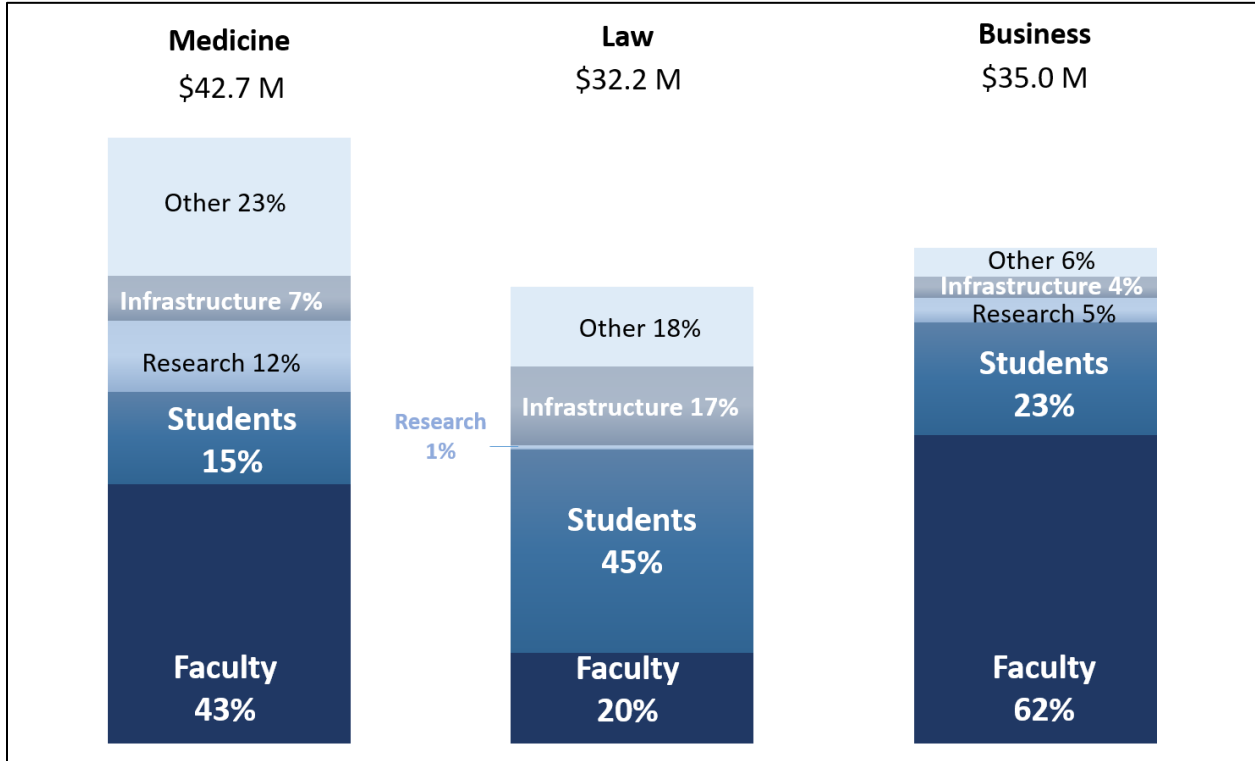


When examining the funds across the program areas of medicine, law, and business, the majority of the funds supported faculty and students. Exhibit 2 provides an overview of how the funds were spent over the last two fiscal years (2017-18 and 2018-19).

- **Medicine:** Over the last two years, SUS institutions spent more than \$40 million to support graduate education in medicine. A majority of the funds (58%) supported faculty or students and 23% supported other initiatives such as expanded outreach efforts in medical school pipeline programs, IT expenses, and support staff. Due to the timing of this report, some institutions have obligated funds, but not yet spent funds, to support faculty start-up packages and recruitment efforts necessary to attract and retain exemplary faculty and student scholarships.
- **Law:** SUS institutions spent approximately \$32.2 million on law schools. Almost two-thirds of these funds were spent on faculty and students, while remaining funds were devoted to student success initiatives to increase bar passage rates, IT expenses to support improved student learning, and other enhancements to existing learning environments.
- **Business:** SUS institutions spent approximately \$35 million on graduate business education. Most of these funds (85%) were spent on faculty and students, while remaining funds were spread evenly across graduate student stipends, advising, and expenses for a master's of logistics program. Due to the timing of this report, some institutions have obligated funds, but not yet spent funds, to support faculty start-up packages and recruitment efforts necessary to attract and retain exemplary faculty and student scholarships.



**Exhibit 2**  
**SUS Expenditures for Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence by Program Area 2017-2019**



Source: Board staff analysis of SUS submissions on Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program received fall 2018.



## ELEVATING THE NATIONAL COMPETIVENESS OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

The intent of the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program is to enhance the quality and excellence of professional and graduate schools in the SUS. While it is still too early to see how this Program has impacted metrics, baseline information, where available, is provided below.

### Exam passage rates

SUS medical school graduates do very well on the series of medical licensing examinations. As a system, most graduates meet or exceed national benchmarks on these exams.

#### Exhibit 3

#### Summary of U.S. Medical Licensing Exam Performance for the SUS

U.S. Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE)-Step 1 (2 <sup>nd</sup> year of medical school)								
Year	FAU	FIU	FSU	UCF	UF	USF	SUS	Benchmark
2015	97	99	92	100	95	96	97	96
2016	97	99	97	100	96	94	97	96
2017	97	99	93	97	95	92	96	96
U.S. Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE)-Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (4 <sup>th</sup> year of medical school)								
Year	FAU	FIU	FSU	UCF	UF	USF	SUS	Benchmark
2014-15	100	96	97	99	98	97	98	95
2015-16	100	94	94	100	99	99	98	96
2016-17	100	97	98	98	94	95	97	96
U.S. Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE)-Step 2 Clinical Skills (4 <sup>th</sup> year of medical school)								
Year	FAU	FIU	FSU	UCF	UF	USF	SUS	Benchmark
2014-15	100	98	92	100	98	96	97	96
2015-16	100	98	99	99	99	97	97	97
2016-17	97	97	96	97	97	96	97	96

Source: State University System Accountability Plan, 2018.



SUS law school graduates perform well on the Florida Bar exam. Four of the five law schools exceed the benchmark for all exam takers in Florida. Florida A&M University reported using funds from the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program to improve graduate passage rates on the Florida Bar Exam in future years.

**Exhibit 4**  
**Passage Rates on the Florida Bar Exam**

Year	FAMU	FIU	FSU	UF	SUS	Benchmark
2015	66	84	80	87	81	69
2016	54	87	78	77	76	66
2017	50	87	81	76	75	69

Source: State University System Accountability Plan, 2018.

**Employment Outcomes: Graduate-Level Business Degree**

Section 1004.6498, *Florida Statutes*, also requires the Board of Governors to report on employment outcomes for graduate-level business programs. Exhibit 5 provides an overview of the percentage of master’s degree graduates earning more than \$40,000 in the year following graduation. This exhibit reflects 2015-16 graduates who were found employed in Florida and is baseline data for this report. Due to timing of workforce data collection, it may be a few years before salaries for graduates increase.



**Exhibit 5  
Employment Outcomes for Graduate-Level Business Degrees, 2015-16 Graduates**

SUS Institution	2015-16 Graduates*	Job Placement of Graduates Earning more than \$40K in Florida or enrolled**	
		Number of Graduates	%
FAMU	46	15	33%
FAU	424	269	63%
FGCU	57	39	68%
FIU	1,146	685	60%
FSU	230	115	50%
UCF	367	225	61%
UF	801	378	47%
UNF	126	83	66%
USF	377	229	61%
UWF	112	46	41%
<b>System</b>	<b>3,686</b>	<b>2,084</b>	<b>57%</b>

\*Includes graduates with valid SSN.

\*\* Also includes continuing education. The percentage employed includes only those employed in Florida.

Source: FLDOE Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) data, provided 2019-01-24.

The full-time wage determination was staggered by fiscal quarter to provide an entire year for graduates from different terms (summer, fall, spring) within the same academic year. Florida U/I wages for summer grads were based on 2016-FQ3; fall grads were based on 2016-FQ4; spring grads were 2017-FQ2. The threshold for the annualized full-time wage was \$16,744 (based on FL's \$8.05 hourly minimum wage). Wage data has been rounded to the nearest tens digit. Doctoral recipients were not included due to the qualitatively different nature of their education.





## National Rankings

In national rankings, the System continues to be recognized by U.S. News & World Report for excellence in higher education. For the second year in a row, the publication recognized Florida as the best state for higher education. In September 2018, U.S. News and World Report also ranked five SUS institutions in the top 100, with University of Florida ranked 8<sup>th</sup> and Florida State University ranked 26<sup>th</sup>. In addition, New College of Florida is ranked as the 4<sup>th</sup> best public liberal arts institution in the country and Florida A&M is ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best public historically black college and university in the country.

Specific to medicine, law, and graduate business, SUS institutions also rank high in the U.S. News and World Report rankings for these areas. Exhibit 6 provides an overview of national rankings compared to all other private and public institutions. U.S. News and World Report does rank specific individual programs within these areas, such as Global MBA, however the rankings provided in Exhibit 5 are the only ones readily available to the public.

### Exhibit 6

#### U.S. News & World Report 2019 Rankings, Specific Graduate Programs

SUS Institution	Medicine (Research)	Law	MBA (full-time)
UF	41	41	34
FSU	Unranked	47	Unranked
USF	55	n/a	Unranked
UCF	86	n/a	Unranked
FIU	Unranked	101	Unranked

Note: These rankings represent only those publicly available.

Source: U.S. News & World Report Best Medical Schools, Best Law Schools, Best Business Schools, 2019.

## Economic impact

The State University System is currently awaiting a report on the economic impact of the system to the state that is scheduled to be released in early 2019. This report will provide an update to a prior report that found the total economic contributions of all SUS-related entities in 2014-15 were estimated at \$79.93 billion in output or revenues, \$49.25 billion in value added (GDP), and 769,000 jobs. Employment contributions of the SUS represented 7.1 percent of the total state workforce (10,791,031 jobs), and the total value added contributions represented 5.9 percent of the State’s Gross Domestic Product (\$833.33 billion) in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Economic Contributions of the State University System of Florida in 2014-15*, University of Florida-Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS), Food & Resource Economics Department, Florida State University, Center for Economic Forecasting and Analysis (FSU-CEFA).



Additionally, the Board maintains a research dashboard that includes a metric calculating return on investment. As reported in March 2018, the system is 2<sup>nd</sup> (compared to the ten largest states) in return on investment of NIH funding and produce the most jobs per \$1M of NIH funding compared to the ten largest states. This is just one example of how the State University System is a good return on investment.

## **Conclusion**

While the full effects of the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program are not yet known, the Program has provided an opportunity for SUS institutions to support and enhance professional and graduate education in the state.



## APPENDIX A

In 2017-18, SUS institutions awarded 698 medical degrees, 793 law degrees, and 4,676 graduate level business degrees. While degrees awarded in medicine and law have remained relatively stable, the total graduate degrees awarded in business has increased by 13% in the last two years. Tables 1-3 provide additional detail of the awards by institution for the last three academic years.

**Table 1**  
**Total Graduate Degrees Awarded in Medicine (MD)**

Institution	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
FAU	61	62	64
FIU	108	114	114
FSU	120	116	109
UCF	94	113	116
UF	133	133	137
USF	172	162	158
<b>Total MD</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>698</b>

Source: Board of Governors, Office of Data Analytics, 2019.

**Table 2**  
**Total Graduate Degrees Awarded in Law**

Institution	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
FAMU	115	106	127
FIU	157	154	145
FSU	190	213	197
UF	323	323	324
<b>Total Law</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>793</b>

Source: Board of Governors, Office of Data Analytics, 2019.



**Table 3**  
**Total Graduate Degrees Awarded in Business**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
<b>FAMU</b>	46	49	58
<b>FAU</b>	449	469	559
<b>FGCU</b>	57	60	53
<b>FIU</b>	1,334	1,339	1,345
<b>FSU</b>	243	277	322
<b>UCF</b>	378	407	491
<b>UF</b>	870	918	960
<b>UNF</b>	150	137	177
<b>USF</b>	496	491	562
<b>UWF</b>	131	107	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,154</b>	<b>4,254</b>	<b>4,676</b>

Source: Board of Governors, Office of Data Analytics, 2019.