

Florida is at an inflection point. To maintain the excellent trajectory of our institution and our top-ranked State university system, it is essential that educators be afforded the academic freedom to craft our student-serving initiatives.

To those ends, we encourage the people of Florida to call their representatives and to urge elected officials to ensure our higher educational endeavors can continue to evolve absent threats and bullying.

We invite business and community leaders, donors and patrons, industry and international partners, and concerned individuals to join us in this effort.

In the Fall of 2020, the SUS Florida BOG embraced DEI efforts as central to the advancement of the State and to the eradication of injustice. As they put it:

The Board of Governors, responsible for the management and operation of the State University System, affirms that our state university communities are influential voices in Florida and have the wisdom and leadership to make a difference in our nation's continuing efforts to end incidents of racism and societal injustice. ("Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Strategic Priorities", October 2020, 1).

The BOG also mandated DEI and established it as a central and strategic priority for the state university system. They recognized that DEI initiatives were essential to providing a cutting-edge and unparalleled education that provides students with the knowledge, critical thinking skills, resources and aptitude essential to thriving in a globalized world. To emphasize the importance of integrating DEI into the curriculum they mandated the practices become enshrined in every SUS institution's strategic plan and institutional mission.

...Board of Governors is making a clear and steadfast commitment to prioritize and support diversity, racial and gender equity, and inclusion in the State University System and to hold each university accountable for policies, programs, and actions that will codify and operationalize the System's commitment. The Board will regularly collaborate with university administrators, students, and faculty on DEI initiatives and will provide: (a) clear expectations for specific, measurable outcomes; (b) opportunities to come together to learn and share best practices; and (c) connections to national DEI leaders to advance SUS initiatives ("Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Strategic Priorities", October 2020, 1).

...university's strategic plan and mission statement, should prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion and provide clear direction for the total integration of DEI initiatives through

51 for African Americans with master's degrees

53 for Hispanics with master's degrees

44 for total minority students with bachelor's degrees

60 for total minority students with master's degrees

Ranked by U.S. News and World Report #41 - Top Performers on Social Mobility

Recognized as a "Hispanic Serving Institution" by the U.S. Department of Education and Top 40 Degree Producer for Hispanics

Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award Recipient (2021, 2022)

Member of the Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network

It is important to note that FAU has been fiscally responsible in this work, having spent \$900,000 in total dollars of which \$640,000 came from E&G funds during the 2021-2022 academic year. These numbers represent less than 1% of our total and E&G budgets, respectively, and they indicate a significant return on investment given the recognition for FAU, grant funding awarded, and the positive impact to students.

In sum, we deliver a top-tier education in a cost-effective manner using practices embraced by nearly every respected institution, business and non-profit organization in the world.

