

Approved Institutional Description for Specialized Accreditation Documents

Use for 2026 Calendar Year Only

Purpose: Florida State University (FSU) is a public research university with an established international reputation for high-quality educational programs, cutting-edge research, and student success outcomes that are among the best in the nation. In Fall 2025, FSU enrolled over 44,000 students representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 139 other countries. This figure included 32,356 undergraduate students, 10,711 graduate students, and 1,241 non-degree students. FSU is recognized among the top public universities in the nation, including 11th in the Niche rankings and 21st in the U.S. News and World Report rankings for 2025. In the 2025 fiscal year, FSU had \$487 million dollars in research expenditures to support discovery and innovation. FSU Health is advancing a health care ecosystem poised to transform healthcare delivery in North Florida, including new clinical facilities in Tallahassee and Panama City. Additionally, FSU is known for its undergraduate student success as evidenced by its most recent 97% first-year retention rate and 85% six-year graduation rate.

The FSU main campus is in the state capital of Tallahassee in the Florida Panhandle. FSU's physical plant includes approximately 400 buildings on 1,716 acres, including the Tallahassee main campus of 486 acres. The university has branch campuses in Panama City, Florida, and Panama City, Republic of Panama. The FSU Ringling Center for Cultural Arts in Sarasota, Florida, features the State Art Museum of Florida, the historic Ca' d'Zan mansion, Circus Museum, the Historic Asolo Theater, and Bayfront Gardens. The university has a strong history of international education and maintains year-round study centers in Florence, Italy; London, England; Panama City, Republic of Panama; and Valencia, Spain.

Florida State University's mission and vision statements embrace the institution's legacy and propel it into its future.

Mission: Florida State University preserves, expands, and disseminates knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the traditions of the liberal arts. The university is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, creative endeavors, and service. The university strives to instill the strength, skill, and character essential for lifelong learning, personal responsibility, and sustained achievement within a community that fosters free inquiry and diverse viewpoints.

Vision: Florida State University will be among the nation's most entrepreneurial and innovative universities, transforming the lives of our students and shaping the future of our state and society through exceptional teaching, research, creative activity, and service. We will amplify these efforts through our distinctive climate—one that places a premium on interdisciplinary inquiry and draws from the rich intellectual and personal experiences of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. These three forces—entrepreneurship, interdisciplinarity, and experiential breadth—deepen FSU's impact and result in a powerful return to our students and the people of Florida for their continued support and trust.

Governance: FSU is part of the State University System of Florida, which is governed by a 17-member Board of Governors. The FSU Board of Trustees (BOT) has statutory responsibility for governance of the university. The 13-member BOT develops the university's strategic plan, submits an annual institutional budget, accounts for expenditures of all funds, and sets policy for the institution. The university president serves as chief executive officer with delegated authority from the BOT in areas such as university budgeting, planning, developing new degree programs, and strategic planning.

Programs: FSU is composed of seventeen colleges that grant undergraduate and graduate/professional degrees. As of November 2025, this included 98 bachelor's degree programs, 102 master's degree programs, 6 specialist degree programs, 64 doctoral degrees, and 4 professional degrees. The complete list of FSU's academic programs is available on the university's website. In the 2024-25 academic year, the university conferred 14,163 degrees, including 10,022 undergraduate degrees and 4,141 graduate and professional degrees.

Degrees: Florida State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. Florida State University also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Florida State University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on **SACSCOC's website: <https://www.sacscoc.org/>.**

Diplomas: Upon completion of coursework and clearance by the appropriate university administrators and faculty, the university issues diplomas to students who meet the academic requirements for an educational credential.

Certificates: The University defines a college credit certificate program as “an organized curriculum of college credit courses offered as a distinct area of study that leads to specific educational or occupational goals, and for which the university awards a certificate, diploma, or similar form of recognition upon completion.” College credit certificates are noted on a student’s transcript as an official credential of the university.

Personnel: The institution has qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to lead their respective areas of responsibility within the institution. The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its employees on a regular basis. The institution employs competent faculty members who are qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the university. Faculty members at FSU must be academically and/or professionally qualified to ensure the quality and integrity of FSU’s academic programs. Qualifications are documented by academic degrees or substantial work experiences that contribute to and enhance quality program instruction. In Fall 2025, Florida State University had 7,605 full-time employees, including 2,316 full-time faculty.

Finances: The financial condition of the institution is strong, with key financial measures and operational results consistent with the institution’s strategic goals and objectives. The operating budget from 2024-2025 was \$3 billion. Roughly 40% was allocated to educational and general expenses, 19% to restricted, 14% to auxiliary, and 17% to capital projects. FSU has regularly maintained a very high bond rating and continues to be a strong investment, according to the most recent credit ratings released by S&P Global, Fitch, and Moody’s.

Constituents: FSU, one of the largest and oldest of the twelve public institutions in the State University System of Florida, had its beginning as early as 1823 when the Territorial Legislature began to plan a higher education system. The university is designated by the Florida Legislature as a Preeminent State Research University. Today FSU has an alumni base of approximately 453,000 in the U.S. and around the world.