

10 Ways Your Department Can Improve FSU's National Ranking

1. Continue to reduce class section sizes, create new small courses, and promote student learning

U.S. News awards points for small undergraduate class section enrollment, as measured in the fall term, with most of the points awarded for sections under 20 students. Sections with 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49 still receive some points. Sections with 50+ receive no credit. Courses, where possible, should be reduced to under 20. Online, DIS, and thesis sections do not count. The Registrar's office can workshop with you on new course scheduling and space needs. FSU's standard meeting times allow for optimization of space and scheduling.

2. Make sure 1st year students come back for their 2nd year, and create an Engage 100 learning community

Help every 1st year student, particularly those who declared a major in your department, stay at FSU. Every six freshmen who don't return for their 2nd year reduces FSU's retention rate by 0.1 percentage points. Undergraduate Studies can assist you in supporting students and in creating an Engage 100 community (engage100.fsu.edu).

3. Improve the graduation rate of students, especially lower-income students who receive a Pell Grant

Every six freshmen who don't graduate in six years reduces FSU's graduation rate by 0.1 percentage point. Every 15 Pell Grant students who don't graduate in six years reduces FSU's Pell graduation rate by one percentage point. Partner with FSU's Center for the Advancement of Teaching to promote student success in the classroom, particularly to reduce disparities in completion rates in your gateway courses. FSU's Institutional Research Office can help you identify student attrition patterns, course capacity needs, and optimal academic maps.

4. Ensure new, instructional faculty, including specialized, have a terminal degree (Ph.D., MFA, etc.)

As a top research university, FSU expects new, full-time instructional faculty (all tenure-track and teaching faculty) to have a terminal degree. Exceptions should be rare and approved in advance by VP Janet Kistner.

5. Increase the percentage of your undergraduate alumni who donate (any amount) to FSU

Partner with the FSU Foundation to identify strategies to increase the annual participation of your alumni.

6. Help recruit high-achieving high school students to your department

10% of FSU's national ranking is determined by the selectivity of our freshman class (e.g., high SAT/ACT, students in the top 10% of their high school graduating class). Admissions can facilitate departmental recruiting efforts.

7. Reduce undergraduates' federal debt at graduation

U.S. News awards points for graduating students with less federal debt. Help students graduate with less debt by helping them graduate within four years and distributing scholarships to students.

8. Help university leaders across the country understand your department's, and FSU's, excellence

20% of FSU's ranking is determined by our reputation among other university presidents, provosts, and admissions directors. *U.S. News* surveys senior higher education leaders on FSU's "undergraduate academic reputation." Be sure to keep University Communications up to date on the great work of your faculty, staff, and students.

9. Grow externally funded research and graduate enrollment in strategic areas

U.S. News awards points for educational spending. Additional research funding and expanded graduate enrollment increase FSU's total expenditures and bolsters the university's reputation.

10. Help retain faculty members and improve our student-to-faculty ratio

Retaining/hiring faculty members improves academic continuity and FSU's student-to-faculty ratio. Partner with FSU's Faculty Development and Advancement Office to strengthen faculty support and engagement.