



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & PUBLIC POLICY
DeVoe L. Moore Center

September 9, 2019

Dear friends,

Early this morning, I woke up to the fantastic news that Florida State University had cracked the US News & World Report top 20 [by climbing to the 18th spot](#) among public universities. We are also on the cusp of making the top 50 among all public and private universities. This feat is great testimony to the leadership of the university, including our president, provost, and board of trustees. It also caused me to reflect on the DeVoe L. Moore Center's role in helping FSU climb the rankings.

US News's chief data strategist says that FSU's improvement has come largely due to higher graduation rates, more faculty resources, and our enhanced reputation. I think the DeVoe L. Moore Center is an example of how we have assisted the university in moving up the rankings ladder.

- We are bringing the most current research and best practices to bear on public policy. [Our applied policy research](#) uses an evidence-based approach, informed by our market- and private-sector oriented lens, to promote transparency and accountability in public decision-making. We have set benchmarks for several policy initiatives, including public-sector performance by analyzing public spending on projects such as [Cascades Park in Tallahassee](#), regulation of commercial businesses, and by providing legislative testimony on film tax incentives as a statewide economic development policy (just to highlight a few).
- Our [extensive internship program](#) has grown to provide experiential learning opportunities to 121 undergraduate and graduate students since 2012.
- Led by eminent economics scholar Keith Ihlandfeldt, our [academic research](#) presented at symposia and research published in leading academic journals has greatly enhanced FSU's reputation in areas such as urban economics and policy, land-use regulation, and local government efficiency.
- Our experiential learning programs have become a critical gateway to our students' future:
 - 40% of our interns take jobs in the for-profit sector,
 - 38% go on to graduate school, and
 - 18% take jobs in the nonprofit private sector.
- Our experiential learning opportunities train future leaders to prepare for our market-oriented mission as well as [provide important insight and analysis for the community](#). I was reminded of this when reading an op-ed by Jordan Berry, a research intern for the center. In Monday's "Tallahassee Democrat," [she explains how entrepreneurship programs](#) have a proven track record for reintegrating criminal offenders back into mainstream society after completing their sentences.

- We have worked in partnership with the Dean's Office of the College of Social Sciences & Public Policy, the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Askew School of Public Administration, Department of Scientific Computing, and Department of English, among others, to create a rich, professional environment for FSU students in a unique academic setting.
- Our teaching in the classroom uses state of the art methods and practices to foster critical-thinking skills through interactive, student-centered learning. These "flipped" classrooms help students develop research, analytical, and presentation skills tailored to individual needs, building on their strengths and filling in the gaps necessary to be successful in the workforce and graduate school. These teaching approaches have meaningful impacts on student success, regardless of background and preparation, and contribute to FSU's high graduation rates.

While we are very focused on our mission as a market-oriented applied research center, we are also keenly aware of and attentive to the university's mission and strategic plan. The university has adopted a strategic plan with 25 goals and objectives. While some of these goals are better suited to other units of the university (e.g., student recruitment, facilities, defining "faculty of the future"), we believe the center's programming directly addresses 62% of the university's identified goals and objectives. We are currently aligned with almost all those that we can impact, and our goal is 100%.

When I first arrived at FSU in 2011, I wasn't thinking about university rankings. I was focused on building new programs, creating transformative classroom learning opportunities, and investing in meaningful Florida-focused market-centered applied policy research. What I have come to learn, and appreciate, is that I arrived at an unusual moment in FSU's trajectory as a public university.

I firmly believe that our innovative programming has established important foundations for us to continue supporting FSU's rise in the US New & World Report rankings. We measure success by contributing to superior student outcomes, enhancing the university's reputation in Florida and beyond, and in our investment in high-impact learning.

I welcome and encourage your ideas for how we can make our programming, teaching, and research more impactful. Please feel free to reach out to me at anytime at sstaley@fsu.edu.

Thank you for your support and commitment to our mission.

Sincerely,



Samuel R. Staley, PhD, Director