COMBINED FOCUS GROUP THEMES
Combined Focus Groups – November 9-10, 2010

1. Given the environmental context provided, what do you think that FAMU should look like one year from now in order to thrive in this environment? What will it look like in 3 years?

• FAMU is a guided by a strategic vision centered on students with a clear and focused agenda for the future.

• FAMU has restructured by focusing on high value, signature programs. While FAMU will have fewer employees and programs, it will now be able to focus on its distinctive brand and ensuring that its processes are streamlined and efficient.

• Although offering fewer overall programs, FAMU can now focus on key programs and recruit more students by leveraging its brand. FAMU will focus more on students in accord with its redefined strategic vision, but ensure that more students meet the defined requirements. FAMU will pursue enrollment growth in its key program areas, particularly in its graduate and professional programs.

• FAMU exemplifies customer service both internally and externally through a competent and supportive staff.

• FAMU is more focused on research in the future.

• FAMU is leveraging technology and making sure that distance education is available and built around the core programs.

• Focus on satellite campuses and creation of a dentistry program.

2. What are the strengths that FAMU needs to build on in order to excel in this difficult environment?

• FAMU can leverage its “brand” to actively recruit around signature programs.

• FAMU can use its brand to garner increased funding by further developing its donor network and stakeholder relations.
• FAMU can leverage its history and rich traditions.
• FAMU can leverage the knowledge and expertise of its faculty to help to improve the university.
• FAMU can develop and engage its students to help to improve the university.
• FAMU continue to build on its research and grant writing capabilities.
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3. **What are the barriers that FAMU will have to overcome in order to thrive in this difficult environment?**

• FAMU must focus more attention on student support services (including student preparation) and infrastructure.

• FAMU has to address the structure and quality of its management. There appears to be too high of a ratio of managers to workers. FAMU must also ensure accountability for outcomes including consequences for employee performance that is inconsistent with its goals and objectives (e.g. efficiency, customer service, etc.).

• FAMU has to address the workplace climate issues that affect worker performance and productivity

• FAMU has to deal with its organizational culture in order to bring about its new vision and overcome resistance to change.

• FAMU must focus more on improving customer service. Its processes must be efficient and responsive to its customers and must build on highly qualified and trained employees.

• There is a need for more teamwork, employee cross-training and communication. An expanded employee knowledge-base will prevent students from being shifted from place to place, which increases student frustration. (Editorial note: this was a very common sentiment expressed by participants that was not necessarily directly conveyed in the recorded information).

• FAMU needs to improve and better leverage technology. An Intranet is one tool that would help.

• FAMU should examine its pay and performance incentives to encourage the outcomes that it wants.
• FAMU must adjust to its new state funding reality.
• FAMU must invest in development and resource availability for faculty and staff.
• FAMU must focus more on external perceptions that affect annual giving.

4. **What benefits do you anticipate for FAMU by making these tough decisions over the next year? In the next three years?**

• Although this restructuring process will be difficult initially, if we make the tough decisions now, the university will be much better off in the future. We will see dramatic improvements in student outcomes, improved financial position despite budget cuts, better customer service, more efficient and effective processes, improved employee morale, improved communication both internally and externally, improved levels of competitiveness and increased national and international reputation, and more proactive leadership.