The Florida A&M University Mission Statement

The mission of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), as an 1890 land-grant institution, is to provide an enlightened and enriched academic, intellectual, moral, cultural, ethical, technological and student-centered environment conducive to the development of highly qualified individuals who are prepared and capable of serving as leaders and contributors in our ever-evolving society. The University seeks and supports a faculty and staff of distinction dedicated to providing outstanding academic preparation at the undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and professional school levels, with a particular emphasis on integrity and ethical conduct. FAMU is committed to inspirational teaching, exemplary research and meaningful public and community service through creative partnerships at the local, state, national and global levels. The University is also committed to the resolution of complex issues that will enhance humankind.

While the University continues its historic mission of educating African Americans, persons of all races, ethnic origins and nationalities are welcomed and encouraged to remain life-long members of the university community. The University, through its diverse faculty and staff, provides a caring, nurturing, collegial and respectful environment.

About The University

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, founded on October 3, 1887, as the State Normal College for Colored Students, began classes with fifteen students and two instructors. Its destiny - to become an institution of higher learning, striving toward even greater heights of academic excellence. Today, Florida A&M University is one of nine institutions in Florida's State University System, and excellence - "excellence with caring" - remains its goal.

Leading the State Normal College through its infancy were two distinguished citizens and educators. They were Thomas DeSaillie Tucker, an outstanding attorney from Pensacola who was selected as the college's first president, and Thomas Van Rennasaler Gibbs, a state representative from Duval County who was Tucker's top assistant. In 1891, the college received $7,500 under the Second Morrill Act for agricultural and mechanical arts education; thus, it became Florida's land grant institution for African-Americans. The college was moved from Copeland Street (now the site of Florida State University) to its present location, and its name was changed to the State Normal and Industrial College for Colored Students. It was at this new site that President Tucker initiated his plans for institutional growth and development.

In the 1900s, this young institution flourished under the leadership of Nathan B. Young. In 1905, management of the college was transferred from the Board of Education to the Board of Control. This event was significant because it officially designated the college as an institution of higher education. The name was changed in 1909 to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes (FAMC). The following year, with an enrollment of 317 students, the college awarded its first degrees. In spite of a setback caused by a tragic fire which destroyed Duval Hall (the main building which housed the library, administrative offices, cafeteria and other college agencies), progress was made when a gift of $10,000 was presented to the college by Andrew Carnegie for the erection of a new library facility-which held the distinction of being the only Carnegie Library located on a African-American land-grant college. President Young directed the growth of the college with limited resources and expectations, to a four-year degree-granting institution, offering the B.S. degree in education, science, home economics, agriculture, and mechanical arts.

Under the administration of John Robert Edward Lee, Sr., Florida A&M University acquired much of the physical and academic image it has today. Buildings were constructed; more land was purchased; more faculty was hired; courses were upgraded, and accreditation was received from several state agencies. In 1944, Florida A&M University had constructed 48 buildings, accumulated 396 acres of land, and had 812 students and 122 staff members. In 1949, under the guidance of William H. Gray, Jr., expansion, along with reorganization, continued; the college had obtained an Army ROTC unit, and student enrollment had grown to more 2,000.

Perhaps the greatest achievement under the presidency of Dr. George W. Gore, Jr., was the elevation of the school to university status. In 1953 the college's name was changed by legislative action from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. Obtaining university status meant restructuring existing programs and designing new academic offerings to meet the demands of producing quality students at the professional and graduate levels. Between 1953 and 1968 the Schools of Pharmacy, Law, Graduate Studies, and Nursing were created.

During the years 1950-1968, the university experienced its most rapid growth. Twenty-three buildings were erected with construction and renovation costs totaling more than $14 million. These facilities included the Dairy Barn, Faculty Duplexes, Law Wing of Coleman Library; Gibbs, Tucker, and Truth Halls; Agriculture and Home Economics Building (Perry Page), Student Union Building, Demonstration School Building and cafeteria; Health and Physical Education Building, Music and Fine Arts Complex, High School Gymnasium, Stadium, and Health and Physical Education Building. The hospital was completed and operative. The university staff increased by more than 500. At this time, the four-quarter plan was implemented, and the school became the first Negro institution to become a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Enrollment increased to more than 3,500.

With Dr. Benjamin L. Perry, Jr., at the helm, the 1970s brought further growth to the institution. FAMU experienced a decade of rapid transition during a time when federal laws were demanding a desegregated unitary system. His administration is credited with the preservation of FAMU's autonomy. In 1971 FAMU was recognized as a full partner in the nine-university, public higher education system of Florida. The program and academic areas within the institution were extended to include the Black Archives Research Center and Museum, established as a state repository for black history and culture; the Division of Sponsored Research; the Program in Medical Sciences, in conjunction with FSU and the University of Florida; the development of the School of Architecture; a Naval ROTC unit; establishment of the cooperative programs in agriculture; a degree-granting program in Afro-American Studies. Enrollment at FAMU
increased from 3,944 (1969) to 5,024 (1970). The University was reorganized into academic areas instead of
departments. The physical plants were improved by the construction of the Women's complex (apartment type
dormitory), Clifton Dyson Pharmacy Building, new poultry building and dairy cattle resting shed and renovation of
University Commons, Coleman Library, Tucker Hall and the FAMU Hospital was converted into the presently named,
Foote-Hilier Administration Center.

The 1980's served as a model for productive development of FAMU. Under the administration of Dr. Walter L. Smith,
the University grew to eleven schools and colleges, and a Division of Graduate Studies, Research, and Continuing
Education. In 1984, the University was granted the authority to offer its first Doctor of Philosophy degree, the Ph.D. in
Pharmacology. The '80s also saw the expansion of the Gaither Athletic Center, which includes the construction of a new
Women's Athletic Complex equipped with a track, an Olympic pool, men's and women's weight training rooms, and
softball and baseball fields. Bragg Memorial Stadium was renovated and expanded to provide seating for some 25,000
spectators, and a modern field house was erected. The old laundry was converted into the Industrial Education
Classroom-Laboratory. New facilities were constructed to housing the Schools of Allied Health Sciences, Architecture,
Business and Industry, and Nursing. Construction and renovation projects amounted to more than $34 million. Under
the leadership of Dr. Smith, the University launched the Centennial Celebration Fund for establishment of a university
endowment.

In 1985, construction of a new corridor of history was begun as Dr. Frederick S. Humphries became the eighth
president of FAMU. Under his leadership, FAMU has experienced significant growth and unsurpassed
accomplishments. President Humphries has the distinction of residing over the University's Centennial Celebration:
October 2, 1986-December 31, 1987. This commemorative event, which centered upon the theme, "A Legacy to
Preserve—A Future to Design," was initiated with the president's inauguration, highlighted with many activities (lectures,
concerts, convocation, etc.) and honors, and culminated with the burial of a time capsule.

Dr. Humphries' unique administrative initiatives have heightened the appeal for FAMU to high-school students, parents,
and other publics. Some of the achievements made during President Humphries' administration include the following.

The University has experienced record-breaking enrollment growth during years 1986 to present. In 1985, enrollment
was 5,100; and statistics for 1992-93 showed total enrollment at 9,551.

The University’s national ranking in enrolling National Achievement finalists has steadily climbed from fourth place in
1989 to first place in 1992, surpassing institutions such as Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. Through implementation of
innovative recruiting efforts, such as the Life-gets-Better, Excellence in Achievement, and President's Scholars Award
programs, more outstanding students have been admitted to the university.

FAMU successfully completed the requirements for establishing five Eminent Scholars Chairs through the State Major
Gifts Program: the Warner-Lambert Chair in the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; the Garth Reeves
and the Knight foundation chairs in the School of Journalism, Media and Graphic Arts, which were both filled during the
1992-93 academic year; and the Anheuser-Busch and Centennial chairs in the School of Business and Industry.

At the 1989 Spring Commencement Exercises, the University awarded its first Ph.D to Hyacinth Chi Akunne in the
College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. By spring 1992, nine students had been awarded the Ph.D in
pharmacy since inception of the doctoral program.

The FAMU Marching "100" Band, under the direction of Dr. William P. Foster, was invited by the French government to
participate in the Bastille Day Parade as the official representation from the United States. This event was held in
celebration of the Bicentennial of the French Revolution. The Marching "100" continues to perfect its legacy of
excellence, which has resulted in it being labeled as the "Best Marching Band in the Nation" by Sports Illustrated
(August, 1992). The band received national recognition in January 1993, when it performed in the 52nd Inauguration
Parade in Washington D.C. by invitation of President-Elect William "Bill" Clinton.

Five buildings--the William H. Gray, Jr. Center, Plaza, Lua Bartley Women's Athletic Complex, George W. Conoly
Greenhouse, Galimore-Powell Field house, and Maxwell S. Thomas Industrial Arts Laboratory--were officially named
and dedicated during the 1986-87 academic year. In 1989 construction of the President's residence was completed. In 1990,
much of the physical plant of the University was redesigned with a "new look". The completion of renovation of the
H. Manning Efferson Student Union Complex, Coleman Library, the Quadrangle, and the Perry-Paige Building was
officially completed in April, 1993. The total cost of designing, refurnishing, constructing, and renovating the facilities
was approximately $8,458,000.

FAMU can credit much of its present academic stature to the leadership of its ten distinguished presidents:

Thomas Desaille Tucker: 1887-1901
Nathan B. Young: 1901-1923
J.R.E. Lee: 1924-1944
William H. Gray: 1944-1949
George W. Gore: 1950-1968
Benjamin L. Perry: 1968-1977
Frederick S. Humphries: 1985-2001
Fred Ganiouris: 2002-2004
James H. Ammons: 2007-Present

For more than 120 years, Florida A&M University has served the citizens of the State of Florida and the nation through
its provision of preeminent educational programs. . programs which were the building blocks of a legacy of academic
excellence with caring. With the approaching dawn of the 21st century, FAMU, "Florida's Opportunity University," is
committed to meeting the challenges and needs of future generations.