

1 ABSTRACT (Limit to one page or less).

Describe the proposed change, the location, the projected implementation date and factors affecting the implementation date, and the organizational structure of the current institution. The implementation date in the prospectus shall be the official effective date of change approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. This date should take into consideration the proposed date of approval by the Commission's Board, the date of approval by the institution's governing board, and USDE reporting timelines affecting Title IV funding. For merger/consolidation or acquisition, designate the lead institution.

This prospectus proposes to consolidate, under a single SACSCOC accreditation, the three SACSCOC accredited institutions that currently form the University of South Florida System: the University of South Florida in Tampa, FL, the University of South Florida St. Petersburg in St. Petersburg, FL and the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee in Sarasota, FL, which hereinafter will be referred to as USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M, respectively. Pending SACSCOC Board approval of this consolidation prospectus during its meeting on June 8-11, 2020, the newly consolidated university will be a Level VI institution and will be referred to as the University of South Florida (or USF, with no letters after it). The consolidation implementation date will be July 1, 2020, as required by the *Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018* (i.e. Senate Bill 4) [1]. The main (or parent) campus will be in Tampa. The St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee campuses will become branch campuses.

Prior to earning separate SACSCOC accreditations, USF SP and USF S-M were regional campuses operating under the accreditation of USF T. In 2001, the State of Florida required USF SP and USF S-M to seek separate SACSCOC accreditations. Because all three campuses were operating as parts of a single institution, it was decided that many functions and services would remain centralized under a single organizational umbrella (i.e., the USF System) even after USF SP and USF S-M earned separate SACSCOC accreditations in 2006 and 2011, respectively. Thus, the current consolidation will be less complex than it might have been.

Currently, USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M share one governing board, one president, and one set of USF system-wide policies and regulations [2]. In addition, many functions and services are coordinated centrally by the USF System, including: advancement; audit and compliance; capital/facilities planning; collective bargaining; diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity; financial aid; financial management; government relations; human resources; information technology; intercollegiate athletics; international education; legal services; Ombud's services; and research support. Complexities that arise in many SACSCOC mergers or consolidations due to the need to reorganize how Title IV funding is received and distributed will not arise in this case, because the USF System continued operating under one financial aid office when USF SP and USF S-M earned separate SACSCOC accreditations. Title IV funding has always been, and will continue to be, coordinated centrally under one OPEID.

With one governing board, one president (who is the CEO of USF T and will become the CEO of the consolidated USF), one set of USF System-wide policies and regulations, and numerous functions and services coordinated centrally, our primary focus has been on defining the post-consolidation roles and responsibilities of the Regional Chancellors (RCs), who currently serve as CEOs of USF SP and USF S-M; the level of autonomy the branch campuses will have after consolidation; and aligning, where appropriate, currently decentralized functions, programs, and services that evolved in different ways after USF SP and USF S-M earned separate SACSCOC accreditations. These primarily relate to academics, student affairs, and student success, including curricula alignment, faculty governance, tenure and promotion, student government, and student fees.

[1] [Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018 \(page 12\)](#)

[2] [Org Chart - Current - USF System](#)

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the institution's mission and goals. Provide evidence of the legal authority for the change (if authorization is required by the governing board or the state); if no governing board or state authorization is required, explain that in the narrative.

Nature and Purpose of Consolidation in the Context of Institutional Mission & Goals

In June 2016, the Board of Governors (BOG) of Florida's State University System (SUS) designated USF T (the oldest and largest of the three institutions in the USF System and the only Level VI institution) an *Emerging Preeminent State Research University*. The BOG reaffirmed the *Emerging Preeminent* designation in June 2017, thereby setting the stage for USF T's designation as a *Preeminent State Research University* in 2018, at which time USF T became one of just three of the state's 12 public universities earning this distinction. Both the *Emerging Preeminent* and the *Preeminent* designations resulted in increases in recurring state funding to USF T's base budget. As separately accredited institutions, USF SP and USF S-M receive separate appropriations through the legislative process and thus were not able to share with USF T either the funding earned through preeminence or, perhaps more importantly, the accompanying prestige. The inability of their students to graduate from a *Preeminent* university, and their inability to share in new institutional investments through preeminence funding, led members of the Florida State Legislature to question the benefits (or lack thereof) of maintaining separate accreditation for USF SP and USF S-M, the two younger and smaller institutions in the USF System, which are both Level III institutions. Following careful deliberations, the legislature passed the *Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018* [1], which mandated consolidation of USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M under a single SACSCOC accreditation. This legislation was signed into law by Florida's governor on March 11, 2018.

The intent of the legislation mandating consolidation of SACSCOC accreditations is reinforced in a letter from Representative Sprowls and Senator Brandes to the Chair of the USF Board of Trustees [2], which urges that students at USF SP and USF S-M benefit from USF T's designation as a *Preeminent Research University*. Thus, consolidation was not conceived - and is not perceived - as a way to reduce costs, cut budgets, close a campus, fire campus leaders, or execute any actions that SACSCOC may sometimes question when reviewing proposals to merge or consolidate. To the contrary, the legislative intent is to expand access and opportunities for students on the USF SP and USF S-M campuses by increasing the resources that flow to those campuses while, as subsequent legislation passed in 2019 [3] makes clear, providing those campus leaders the requisite level of autonomy expected of branch campuses.

Following passage of the *Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018* [1], the USF Board of Trustees, which is the governing board for all three separately accredited institutions in the USF System, established a Consolidation, Accreditation, and Preeminence (CAP) Committee (CAPC) [4] to develop principles to guide consolidation planning and to create an implementation plan and timeline as mandated by the legislation. On April 23, 2018, the CAP Committee approved seven *Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation* [5], informed by language in the legislation, by guidance provided in the letter from Representative Sprowls and Senator Brandes, and by the Board's vision for a consolidated USF. The *Guiding Principles* provided a framework for the creation of a new mission statement and set of goals for the consolidated USF, which were adopted by the USF Board of Trustees on **December 3, 2019**.

New Mission

Led by outstanding faculty and professional staff, the University of South Florida conducts innovative scholarship, creative activity, and basic and translational research, and delivers a world-class educational experience promoting the success of our talented and diverse undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. As a public metropolitan research

university, USF, in partnership with our communities, serves the people of Florida, the nation, and the world by fostering intellectual inquiry and outcomes that positively shape the future - regionally, nationally, and globally.

New Goals

1. To promote the lifelong success of well-educated, highly skilled, and adaptable **alumnae/alumni** who lead enriched lives, are engaged citizens, and thrive in a dynamic global market.
2. To conduct high-impact research and innovation to advance frontiers of knowledge, solve global problems, and improve lives.
3. To be a major social and economic engine creating robust global, national, and regional partnerships to build a prosperous and sustainable future for our regional communities and the State of Florida.
4. To provide a safe, inclusive and vibrant community for learning, discovery, creative activities, and transformative experiences enabled through adaptive design of physical, social, and digital environments.
5. To practice continuous visionary planning and sound management throughout USF to ensure a strong and sustainable financial base, and to adapt proactively to emerging opportunities in a dynamic environment.

USF's mission and goals will be further considered during an extended and broad-based strategic renewal process to be launched in early 2020.

The consolidation of USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M is not expected to materially increase or decrease student enrollments, the number of faculty or staff, or the inventory of facilities and physical assets on any campus. Nor is it expected to reduce the types and delivery locations of existing degree programs or the quality of support services currently provided to students. To the contrary, there is an expectation that student support services will be enhanced on the branch campuses along with an expansion of graduate education and research opportunities (the branch campuses are currently regional Master's institutions), as additional resources become available for programmatic expansion. In the near term, no cost savings or increases are expected and the net assets of all three institutions will be combined. All current students will be "held harmless" from any consolidation-related changes made and will likely benefit from those changes focused on raising the student success rates on the regional campuses to the levels that currently exist at USF T. While the job descriptions of some employees will change, employees are not expected to be laid off or terminated due to consolidation.

Legal Authority for the Consolidation

The *Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018* [\[1\]](#), signed into law on March 11, 2018, created two new sections, Section 335 and Section 341, in Chapter 1004 of the Florida Statutes. Section 335 [\[6\]](#) details the process, timeline, and requirements for the accreditation consolidation of the three separately accredited USF System institutions. An amendment, enacted in 2019, updated Section 335 to specify that the two smaller and younger institutions in the USF System will become branch campuses, as SACSCOC defines "branch campus" [\[3\]](#).

Chapter 1004, Section 341 of the Florida Statutes [\[7\]](#), also created by the *Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018*, specifies that USF SP and USF S-M will each have a campus board and a Regional Chancellor; defines the membership and powers and duties of the campus boards and obligations imposed on the Board of Trustees of the consolidated USF; and specifies that the faculty and students at each campus shall be represented in the academic and student governance structures of the consolidated University of South Florida as determined by the Board of Trustees. Section 341 was not amended in 2019.

The consolidation of accreditations being proposed is required by Chapter 1004, Section 335 of

the Florida Statutes [8], which provides that USF's Board of Trustees will terminate the separate accreditations of USF S-M and USF SP and operate all three USF System institutions under a single SACSCOC accreditation. The statutory direction to the Board of Trustees to carry out consolidation is consistent with the duties and powers generally conferred on University Boards of Trustees in Florida by Article IX, Section 7 of the Florida Constitution [9], which provides that each Board of Trustees will administer each state university under the overall governance structure of the Florida Board of Governors (BOG). The necessary powers to carry out the realignment of programs, resources, facilities and personnel inherent in consolidation are fully contained in BOG Regulation 1.001 [10].

As discussed in more detail in Section 4 of this prospectus, the statute does not change the overall governance structure of USF; that is, the Board of Trustees is the governing board for the separately-accredited institutions and will remain the governing board for the consolidated institution, which is operated by a single university president who is at all times accountable to the Board of Trustees. For example, USF S-M and USF SP each have statutorily created campus boards, but those campus boards are and will remain purely advisory and will not have a direct conduit to the governing Board of Trustees.

As amended in 2019, Chapter 1004, Section 335 [3] requires that the USF S-M and USF SP campuses be designated branch campuses, which the legislation defines as SACSCOC does; however, the single accreditation requirement remains in place [8]. In effect, this means that USF's governance structure will recognize USF SP and USF S-M as branch campuses with sufficient autonomy to align with a branch campus designation, but not to a level that would prompt or require either campus to seek or obtain separate accreditation, which would be contrary to the plain language and purposes of Chapter 1004, Section 335 of the Florida Statutes.

- [1] [Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018 \(pages 10-14\)](#)
- [2] [Letter from Legislators to BOT Chair](#)
- [3] [Florida Statute 1004.335 with Branch Campus highlights](#)
- [4] [BOT Discussion about CAP Committee](#)
- [5] [Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation](#)
- [6] [Florida Statute 1004.335 - 2018](#)
- [7] [Florida Statute 1004.341](#)
- [8] [Florida Statute 1004.335 - 2019](#)
- [9] [Florida Constitution, Article IX, Section 7](#)
- [10] [Florida BOG Regulation 1.001](#)

3 ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND PROGRAM PLANNING/APPROVAL

Briefly discuss the rationale for the change, including an assessment of need; evidence of inclusion of the change in the institution's ongoing planning and evaluation processes; and documentation that faculty and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the change, where appropriate.

Rationale for Consolidation

The aforementioned *Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018* [1] does substantially more than mandate the consolidation of the three separately accredited institutions in the USF System under a single SACSCOC accreditation. The bill includes several provisions designed to elevate the national and international standings of Florida's public universities. Thus, consolidating the separately accredited institutions in the USF System under a single SACSCOC accreditation can be seen as part of a broader effort by the state legislature to raise the stature of Florida's universities by strengthening the existing relationships between the one *Preeminent* university in the USF System and the two smaller, younger, regional Master's

institutions, and to motivate the consolidated USF to strive for excellence across all campuses.

Assessment of Need

In the State of Florida, most new state funding for public universities is tied to performance metrics (Performance-Based Funding and Preeminence) that focus heavily on student access, affordability, and success, and research productivity [2]. Years of planning and coordination by USF T to boost performance metrics resulted in increased funding and a designation by the State of Florida as a *Preeminent State Research University*. Between 2014 and 2018, USF T boosted its four-year graduation rate for FTICs (first time in college undergraduates) from 44.3% to 60.5%, which put it over the 60% threshold required to be designated *Preeminent*. However, the USF System-wide four-year graduation rate for FTICs in 2018 was only 58.6%, which means the four-year graduation rates for students enrolled at the current regional institutions (i.e., the future branch campuses) will have to be improved significantly for the consolidated USF to maintain its *Preeminent* designation beyond the 2021-22 academic year, given that consolidated data will be used to determine eligibility for *Preeminence* beginning July 1, 2022.

While the four-year graduation rate is based on full-time students only, the six-year graduation rate includes part-time students. As with the four-year rate, the six-year rate is substantially higher at USF T than at the current regional Master's institutions/future branch campuses (73.1% at USF T in 2018 compared to 33.3% at USF SP). Consolidation of student success operations into a unified division with common expectations across all three campuses is expected to boost both six-year and four-year graduation rates and enhance the student experience on all campuses.

The FTIC four-year graduation rate is one of two preeminence metrics that also double as Performance-Based Funding metrics [2]. The other is the freshman-to-sophomore year retention rate/academic progress rate. USF T already meets the required preeminence standard of a 90 percent freshmen-to-sophomore retention rate but, as with graduation rates, the combined performance of the three USF campuses falls short of this threshold. Working together as one institution with common admission standards and unified expectations for student success, the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate is also expected to improve on all campuses.

While student success is critical, student success earned by limiting access is not acceptable. Among all public universities, USF T is ranked by the *Education Trust* as #1 in the nation for Latino student success [3] and #6 nationally (and #1 in Florida) for Black student success [4]. USF T is also ranked by the *Third Way* as #9 in America (and #1 in Florida) among all public universities for success by Pell recipients [5], who comprise 40% of USF T's undergraduate student body. The consolidated USF will remain committed to increasing success rates for all students.

While granting access to and improving the likelihood of success for students from a wide variety of backgrounds is a high priority for the consolidated USF, another priority that consolidation will address is that of expanded access to curricular offerings on the future branch campuses. Curricular offerings are not likely to increase during the first year of consolidation, but efforts are underway to secure requisite funding to increase the array of degrees and majors in future years. Targets for increasing curricular offerings on the branch campuses, along with cost estimates, have been identified [6], as have opportunities to expand research, scholarship, and creative activity that will meet local needs and, through the establishment of interdisciplinary centers of academic and research excellence, contribute to USF's research stature. Due to the high cost of expanding programs, especially doctoral programs, additional planning will likely be required to establish priorities.

Stakeholder Involvement in Planning for Consolidation and Approval of Plans

Representatives of the three separately-accredited institutions have engaged in a coordinated,

collaborative planning process to prepare for consolidation. This process involved stakeholders at all levels, including the Board of Trustees; faculty, students, and staff from each campus; along with community members.

Within days of the passage of the law mandating consolidation, USF's Board of Trustees created its own ad hoc Consolidation, Accreditation and Preeminence (CAP) Committee, comprised of four Trustees, which adopted a set of *Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation* [7] at its first meeting. The CAP Committee met regularly during the first year of consolidation planning to oversee the development of the legislatively mandated *Consolidation Implementation Plan and Timeline*, which was approved by the USF Board of Trustees and submitted to the State University System in March of 2019.

At the direction of the BOT CAP Committee, the President of the USF System created an internal Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC) to advise USF leadership on the steps it must take to successfully consolidate. The CIC held its first meeting on June 11, 2018. The 86-member CIC included faculty, staff, and students from each of the consolidating institutions and consisted of six sub-committees [8]. Most of the CIC's work was conducted in meetings of these six sub-committees, but the co-chairs of each sub-committee met bi-weekly to coordinate and track progress. The CIC's report was submitted to USF leadership in December, 2018 [9].

While the CIC included a sub-committee focused on General Education and Curriculum Alignment, collegial collaboration about a General Education program for the consolidated USF began before this CIC sub-committee first met. In 2017, the faculty at USF T created a framework for an Enhanced General Education curriculum. After the bill mandating consolidation was signed into law in March of 2018, USF T faculty shared their framework with their colleagues at USF SP and USF S-M. Faculty at USF SP approved the Enhanced General Education curriculum for the consolidated USF in Fall 2018 [10], before the CIC issued its final report. Faculty at USF S-M approved it for the consolidated USF in Spring 2019 [11]. The assessment plan for the Enhanced General Education program was created collaboratively by faculty from each of the three campuses. An interesting feature of this collaboration is that the General Education curriculum and assessment plan were enriched by the collaboration. USF S-M's QEP focuses on critical thinking. The Enhanced General Education framework developed at USF T embeds critical thinking throughout the curriculum. By collaborating, faculty were able to use USF S-M's QEP as the vehicle for embedding critical thinking into the Enhanced General Education curriculum. Thus, the future plan for USF S-M's QEP is to implement its core components on all three campuses as part of the consolidated USF's Enhanced General Education curriculum. USF SP submitted its QEP Impact Report in 2011, but USF T, like USF S-M, has an active QEP. The QEP for USF T focuses on Global Citizenship. The curricular and programmatic enhancements resulting from this QEP will be incorporated into the curricula and programming implemented by the consolidated USF. Thus, the future plan for USF T's QEP is to implement its transformational benefits across the three campuses of the consolidated USF.

Following a recommendation by the CIC, the Provost and Executive Vice President of the USF System created 10 Teams comprised of leaders of functional areas, 12 Clusters of faculty with expertise in distinct disciplinary areas, and an Executive Committee to coordinate and integrate the work of the Teams and Clusters [12]. The inaugural meeting of the Team and Cluster leads, charging them with further development of the CIC's recommendations, occurred on January 8, 2019. The final Consolidation Teams and Clusters' report was submitted on February 12, 2019. Input from the CIC report, the Consolidation Teams and Clusters' report, and the report of the legislatively mandated 13-member Consolidation Planning Study and Implementation Task Force, which was comprised of community leaders from across the region who were appointed pursuant to law, were integrated into the *Consolidation Implementation Plan and Timeline* that was submitted to the Board of Governors (BOG) of the State University System (SUS) in March of 2019. The *Consolidation Implementation Plan and Timeline* [13] provided the framework that

enabled USF System leadership to begin implementing steps to facilitate consolidation.

Implementation of the *Plan and Timeline* began in early March of 2019 when the USF System President created an Accreditation Steering Committee and charged it with coordinating the development of consolidation documents required by SACSCOC, providing regular updates to the BOT, and facilitating a successful SACSCOC site visit following consolidation. The Accreditation Steering Committee is chaired by the USF System's Provost and includes the Regional Chancellors of USF SP and USF S-M, along with the co-chairs of the CIC. The Accreditation Steering Committee first met on April 8, 2019 and meets monthly. The President also asked the Deans of the colleges at USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M to jointly charge ad hoc Disciplinary Committees with aligning and integrating curricular offerings that exist on more than one campus to ensure that the faculty developed and approved curriculum for the consolidated USF by July 1, 2020 [14]. The ad hoc Disciplinary Committees completed their major curricular alignment activities in early May of 2019 in preparation for Faculty Senate approval of the proposed curricular changes. Because the three consolidating institutions are all part of the USF System, which has a System Faculty Council (SFC) that includes leadership from the Faculty Senates on each of the separately accredited campuses, the SFC (led by the faculty representative on the USF Board of Trustees) stepped forward and created an Intercampus Consolidation Committee for Curricular Changes (I4C) comprised of the chairs of the undergraduate and graduate councils on each campus (or their equivalents), which was authorized to consider and approve changes needed to align and integrate curricula. Changes to all 38 degree programs and all majors were approved by the I4C by September of 2019. Changes to certificate programs, concentrations within majors, and minors will be approved by the time the 2020-21 undergraduate and graduate catalogues are published for the consolidated USF in the spring of 2020.

Although faculty have authority over the curriculum, USF System Policy 10-055 [15] also provides USF faculty a voice regarding proposals to restructure academic units to facilitate consolidation. This policy requires the administration to provide faculty 90 days to review and comment on any proposed changes before those changes are implemented. Proposed changes were sent to the Chair of the System Faculty Council, for distribution to the Faculty Senates on each campus, in early August of 2019 [16]. On October 17, 2019, the SFC recommended that the proposed Academic and Student Success Reorganization proceed and unanimously approved a motion indicating that faculty participation in the Consolidation Implementation Committee, the Consolidation Teams and Clusters, and the curriculum alignment process met the requirements of USF System Policy 10-055.

Evidence of inclusion of consolidation in ongoing planning and evaluation processes is further detailed in Section 10 of this Prospectus.

- [1] [Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018](#)
- [2] [Performance-Based-Funding-Overview-May-2019](#)
- [3] [Education Trust 2017 - Latino Student Success \(Top Performing\)](#)
- [4] [Education Trust 2017 - Black Student Success \(Top Performing\)](#)
- [5] [Third Way 2018 - Pell Student Success \(Top Performing\)](#)
- [6] [Unified Response to Task Force by -wilcox-tadlock-holbrook-11-06-2018](#)
- [7] [Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation](#)
- [8] [CIC Structure and Membership](#)
- [9] [CIC Final Report 2018.12.19](#)
- [10] [USF SP Faculty Senate Minutes Documenting Approval of Enhanced Gen Ed](#)
- [11] [USF S-M Faculty Senate Minutes Documenting Approval of Enhanced Gen Ed](#)
- [12] [Teams and Clusters Memberships and Charges](#)
- [13] [Consolidation Implementation Plan and Timeline 031319](#)
- [14] [Curriculum Alignment Request to Deans](#)

[15] [USF System Policy 10-055](#)

[16] [Transmittal Letter to SFC for Review of Proposed Structure](#)

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE CHANGE

Provide a description of the proposed change, including any change in degree-granting authority. Provide an organizational chart for the proposed change. Describe the current governing board and the new governing board, listing the rosters for both. The rosters should provide titles, board members' occupations and affiliations, and current term. Describe the current and proposed authority of the Board and address committees of the Board. Explain the role of current owners/board members in the proposed change. Provide the current and proposed conflict of interest and board dismissal statements. Describe any differences in administrative oversight of programs or services. Describe any new foundations that will be established as the result of the change and the foundation's role in governance, if any. Describe how the change affects current foundations.

The consolidation of USF SP and USF S-M (both Level III institutions authorized to award Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees) with USF T (a Level VI institution authorized to award those degrees plus Specialist and Doctoral degrees) will have no impact on degree granting authority, since the resulting institution will award all degrees currently awarded by the three institutions. Following consolidation, however, those degrees will be awarded by one University of South Florida rather than by three separate institutions. Curricular changes made to facilitate consolidation are documented on the Institutional Summary Form and faculty involvement in making and approving those curricular changes is described in Section 3 above.

The Board of Trustees (BOT)

The governance structure will not change as a result of consolidation, nor will the governing board's membership or responsibilities. Pursuant to constitutional requirements in Florida Statute 1001.71 [\[1\]](#), the BOT is comprised of 13 trustees. Florida's Governor appoints six and the Board of Governors (BOG) of the State University System (SUS) appoints five. The Florida Senate confirms these 11 trustee appointments. A faculty representative and a student representative, both voting members, round out the BOT's membership roster shown here [\[2\]](#).

The BOT is currently the single governing board for all three separately accredited institutions in the USF System and will continue as the single governing board for the consolidated USF. Presently, USF SP and USF S-M have campus advisory boards which, following consolidation, will maintain their purely advisory role. While the campus boards currently advise the BOT Chair, following consolidation they will advise the President and CEO of the consolidated USF, who currently serves as the President of the USF System and CEO of USF T. The BOT's Operating Procedures will be amended to reflect a single accreditation with meaningful, but strictly advisory campus boards, which have a clear reporting structure to the BOT exclusively through the USF President [\[3\]](#). The BOT confirmed this structure on June 6, 2019 [\[4\]](#).

The authority of the BOT for the consolidated USF will remain the same as it is now for the USF System and its member institutions. The BOT is responsible for making policy decisions appropriate to the university mission [\[5\]](#). The BOT selects and evaluates the USF President, who may also be removed by the BOT. The BOT ensures that financial resources support the educational programs consistent with its legislative budget request and determines tuition policy and approves student fees. The BOT also reviews and approves the University's operating budget as required by BOG Regulation 9.007(1) [\[6\]](#). The BOT also routinely evaluates the institution's mission and routinely engages in self-evaluation.

The BOT currently has five standing committees, plus the ad hoc Consolidation, Accreditation and Preeminence (CAP) Committee. The five standing committees are Academics and Campus

Environment; Audit and Compliance; Finance; Governance; and Strategic Initiatives [\[7\]](#).

The BOT is actively involved in overseeing the consolidation process. It established its own CAP Committee to provide oversight and strategic guidance for the actions necessary to meet the statutory requirements contained in Chapter 1004, Section 335, Florida Statutes [\[8\]](#). The CAP Committee developed a charter [\[9\]](#) for the legislatively mandated 13-member Task Force to facilitate the orderly operation of the Task Force as it developed its consolidation recommendations. The CAP Committee also published a set of *Guiding Principles for Consolidation* [\[10\]](#) to inform all decision-making about consolidation.

Article VII of The BOT's Operating Procedures contains a *Code of Ethics* stating the fiduciary obligations of trustees and prohibiting conflicts of interest [\[11\]](#), which requires Trustees to be free of any contractual, employment, or personal or familial financial interest in the institution. Voting conflicts must be disclosed under Florida law [\[12\]](#). In addition, the BOT follows a *Code of Conduct for Financial Functions* [\[13\]](#). The current *Code of Ethics* was reviewed and revised in 2016 and is not anticipated to change in substantive ways as a result of consolidation.

The Constitution of the State of Florida, Article IV, Section 7[\[14\]](#), establishes the methods for removal of trustees. Because the BOT does not have authority to dismiss its members, it does not have a BOT-issued policy on dismissal of members. However, the BOT has the duty to notify "the Board of Governors or the Governor, as applicable, in writing whenever a member has three consecutive unexcused absences from regular board meetings in any fiscal year, which may be grounds for removal" [\[15\]](#). No member of the USF BOT has ever been dismissed.

No new foundations will be created as a result of consolidation, nor will consolidation affect any current foundations. Development efforts are currently consolidated under USF System Policy 0-216 [\[16\]](#), which will not change as a result of consolidation.

Differences in Administrative Oversight of Programs or Services

Consolidation will not impact administrative reporting lines at the highest levels of the organization. The Regional Chancellors (RCs), who presently serve as CEOs of the regional institutions that will become branch campuses, will continue to report to the President. A current senior leadership organizational chart for the USF System can be viewed here [\[17\]](#) and a post-consolidation chart for the consolidated USF can be viewed here [\[18\]](#). While consolidation will not impact lines of reporting at the highest administrative levels, the authority delegated to the RCs will change and the reporting structure for the consolidated USF will clearly articulate the collaborative relationships among RCs, the University Provost, Vice Presidents, and College Deans in matters of academic affairs and student success. The RCs will serve, along with University Vice Presidents, on the President's Cabinet.

No new colleges and no new senior institutional leadership positions are planned, although members of the Provost's leadership team, who currently primarily serve USF T [\[19\]](#), will serve all campuses following consolidation [\[18\]](#), becoming members of the USF Academic Leadership Team, which will be expanded to include Regional Vice Chancellors (or Associate Vice Chancellors) for academic affairs and/or student success on the branch campuses. Each branch campus will have a leadership team, led by the RC, which will include their direct reports and those representatives of USF Vice Presidential units and College Deans who will be assigned primarily to fulfill local branch campus responsibilities.

Currently, USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M have their own college structures. Following consolidation, there will be one college for each overarching disciplinary area, led by one college dean. All college deans will be members of a singular Council of Deans, which will be overseen by the Provost of the consolidated USF [\[20\]](#).

Some USF colleges will have academic programs and faculty on more than one campus. These "multi-campus" colleges will be led by a College Dean who will be responsible for assuring that the programs are unified and successful on all campuses. Academic administrators will have either college-wide responsibilities, reporting to the College Dean, or local campus responsibilities, reporting to the College Dean while maintaining a working relationship with the RC. Some USF colleges will reside on only one campus. If such a "single-campus" college is physically located on a branch campus, the College Dean will report to the Provost and to the RC, acting as a Campus Dean. Campus deans or local department/college leaders report to the College Dean in matters of academic affairs and student success and to the RCs or designee on local branch campus matters.

The consolidated Student Success unit will be led by a Vice President of Student Success and a team of ten Associate Vice Presidents, eight of them responsible for the administration of functional areas. The other two members of the Student Success leadership team will be the Regional Vice Chancellors responsible for Student Affairs and Student Success at the two branch campuses. Together, the Vice President, Associate Vice Presidents, and the Regional Vice Chancellors serve as the Student Success Cabinet, which is empowered to set a consistent direction for multi-campus student success initiatives that are designed to deliver equivalent high-quality student support services across all three campuses. Decisions made by this team will be implemented across the three campuses, with the Regional Vice Chancellors serving as the accountable Student Success/Student Affairs officers for their campuses.

A few key functional areas, such as Admissions [21] and Student Success [22], have already begun operating within a consolidated structure reporting to university leadership and ultimately to the USF System President. Student services, including advising, student advocacy, mental health counseling, financial aid, and career services will continue to be delivered locally to ensure that all students have expedient and equitable access to the support they need. The RCs or their designees, in partnership with the Provost, the Vice President for Student Success, and the College Deans, will continue to be responsible and accountable for assuring the delivery of equitable support services for students, faculty, and other academic/student success personnel on the branch campuses. A detailed explanation of administrative oversight of programs and services is provided in a communique that was sent by the President and the Regional Chancellors to members of the USF community on October 17, 2019 [23]. That communique includes a link to a more detailed plan [24], which describes the branch campus annual budget planning and approval process, as well as the process of hiring, recruiting, assigning, and evaluating the performance of faculty and academic/student success personnel.

Student and Faculty Governance Body

Student Governments at USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M developed and overwhelmingly approved a unified Constitution [25] for the consolidated USF, which was ratified by the student bodies on each campus on November 19-20, 2019 and approved by the President by **December 3, 2019**. Based on a federalist model, governing bodies on each campus will address local concerns, and a central government will address concerns that apply to students on all campuses [26]. A consolidated set of statutes for student governance in the consolidated USF will be finalized before student government elections occur in the Spring of 2020, during which leaders of the consolidated student body will be selected for the 2020-21 academic year.

The USF System Faculty Council approved a Faculty Senate Constitution [27] and set of Bylaws [28] for the consolidated USF on October 17, 2019. Approval of these documents by the USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M Faculty Senates, and ratification by faculty on each campus, was completed by **December 2, 2019**. The President approved these documents by **December 3, 2019**.

- [2] [USF Board of Trustees - Names, Titles, Occupations, Affiliations and Terms - 2020](#)
- [3] [Org Chart - Future - Governance](#)
- [4] [BOT Roundtable on Continuity of Leadership](#)
- [5] [USF BOT Operating Procedures Article I D \(page 3\)](#)
- [6] [Florida Board of Governors Regulation 9.007\(1\) - State University Operating Budgets](#)
- [7] [USF System - Board of Trustees - Committees](#)
- [8] [Florida Statute 1004.335 - Accreditation Consolidation of USF Branch Campuses](#)
- [9] [Task Force Charter](#)
- [10] [Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation](#)
- [11] [USF BOT Operating Procedures Article VII - Code of Ethics \(page 11\)](#)
- [12] [Florida Statute 112.3143\(2\)\(a\) - Voting Conflicts](#)
- [13] [USF BOT Financial Code of Conduct Alternative](#)
- [14] [Florida Constitution, Article IV, Section 7 - Suspensions - Filling Office](#)
- [15] [Florida Board of Governors Regulation 1.001\(2\)\(c\) - Reporting Absences](#)
- [16] [USF Policy 0-216](#)
- [17] [Org Chart - Current - Senior Leadership - USF System](#)
- [18] [Org Chart - Future - Senior Leadership](#)
- [19] [Org Chart - Current - USF Tampa](#)
- [20] [Org Chart - Future - Council of Deans](#)
- [21] [Unification of Admissions](#)
- [22] [Unification of Student Success](#)
- [23] [One USF - Cover Memo - October 17, 2019](#)
- [24] [One USF - Plan - October 14, 2019](#)
- [25] [Ratified Student Government Constitution](#)
- [26] [Org Chart - Student Government for One USF](#)
- [27] [Faculty Senate Constitution](#)
- [28] [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#)

5 FACULTY

Provide a narrative with supporting evidence that the number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support programs. Describe the impact of the proposed change on faculty and faculty workload. If the institution is merging with a non-SACSCOC institution, provide a complete roster (using the Faculty Roster form at www.sacscoc.org under "Substantive Changes") of the non-SACSCOC faculty to be added to the institution's faculty, including a description of those faculty members' academic qualifications and other experiences relevant to the courses to be taught. NOTE: Depending on the nature of the substantive change, it may be appropriate to provide additional faculty details.

The three institutions engaged in this consolidation are each presently separately accredited by SACSCOC. Therefore, a faculty qualifications roster is not required.

Adequacy of Full-Time Faculty to Support Programs of Study

The consolidation is not expected to reduce the number of faculty or the percentage of faculty who are full-time. Currently employed faculty are expected to remain with the consolidated institution to ensure that USF's educational, research, and service missions can be met, and to ensure continued curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review. SACSCOC recently determined that each of the institutions involved in this consolidation had an adequate number of full-time faculty members to support degree programs through USF SP's fifth-year interim review in 2017, USF S-M's reaffirmation in 2016, and USF T's reaffirmation in 2015. More recently, in fall 2018, the consolidating institutions had a combined IPEDS student-to-faculty ratio of 21 to 1, and with 2,023 full-time instructional faculty and an additional 452 other full-time faculty at USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M in 2018 serving 50,755 students, 74% of whom were undergraduates and 71% of whom were full-time, USF had a sufficient number of full-time faculty to support its programs. Since consolidation will not reduce the total number of faculty or

the percentage of faculty who are full-time, the consolidated USF will have an adequate number of full-time faculty to support its programs. The table below summarizes the percentage of credit hours taught by full-time faculty at each separately accredited institution during the 2018-19 academic year.

Student Credit Hours (SCH) Taught by Full and Part Time Faculty - Fall 2018 & Spring 2019

Campus	Undergraduate (Excluding Gen Ed)			Graduate			Classroom-based			Online		
	SCH #	Percent taught by:		SCH #	Percent taught by:		SCH #	Percent taught by:		SCH #	Percent taught by:	
	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time
USF T	751,831	73	27	155,807	85	15	666,669	77	23	240,969	69	31
USF SP	93,374	66	34	6,840	78	22	67,546	71	29	32,668	57	43
USF S-M	46,743	63	37	2,227	85	15	19,699	77	23	29,271	55	45
Total	891,948	71	29	164,874	85	15	753,914	76	24	302,908	66	34

While changes are being made to some curricular offerings to align programs of study that are presently offered by more than one institution, and these curricular integrations will result in some changes to academic organizational structures, and hence faculty departmental affiliations, the curricular integrations and the academic organizational changes are generally aligned to ensure that no academic programs will lose full-time faculty. Following consolidation, USF will continue to offer essentially the same portfolio of degree and certificate programs that the three separately accredited institutions currently offer, and the faculty currently supporting specific programs of study will continue to support those programs following consolidation. Only a small number of previously approved new academic programs, for which faculty are in place or are being recruited, will begin at any of the consolidated USF campuses in academic year 2020-21 (See table on the Institutional Summary Form). Planning for these new programs began prior to, and independent of, our planning for consolidation and these new programs would be created even if we were not consolidating. Further, we do not expect there to be an expansion of any existing degree programs on one USF campus to other USF campuses in academic year 2020-21 (our first year operating as a consolidated institution), nor will there be any deactivations of currently offered programs of study. Given the relatively small number of changes that are being made to curricula and academic organizational structures, the detailed breakout by degree level, major, and institution based on Fall 2018 data, available here [\[1\]](#) fairly approximates the high percentage of credit hours that will be taught by full-time faculty following consolidation.

Impact of Consolidation on Faculty Workload

USF plans to implement faculty workloads strategically and equitably following consolidation to best meet student needs while providing faculty members on all campuses with equity of assignment and support for research, scholarly, and creative activities. The table below, based on Fall 2018 data, shows that teaching loads for tenured/tenure-track faculty are roughly comparable across the USF System, with the exception of faculty in Health colleges, whose service obligations include patient care. While teaching loads at USF SP and USF S-M will require some reduction to ensure equity of assignment, the biggest impact of consolidation on faculty workload at the branch campuses will involve a reduction in service obligations as the committee and administrative service burden currently being distributed among a small number of faculty is distributed more widely, thereby freeing up more time for scholarly research and creative activities.

Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty		Percent of Faculty Workload		
Campus	Headcount	Teaching	Research	Service ³
USF T Health ¹	243	36%	38%	26%
USF T Academic Affairs	866	44%	35%	21%
USF SP ²	110	48%	23%	28%
USF S-M ²	49	48%	23%	29%

¹ Health's service assignment is high because it includes patient care.

² Fewer faculty for administrative/committee duties means higher service loads on smaller campuses.

³ Service category also includes faculty on sabbatical or release time.

As a Preeminent, Carnegie-designated R1 University (Doctoral University: Very High Research Activity), USF T has long set high expectations for scholarly productivity. However, a single set of tenure and promotion guidelines [\[2\]](#), developed by the USF System Faculty Council, adopted by the university, and supported by the United Faculty of Florida representing faculty at USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M on June 27, 2019, will become effective on July 1, 2020. These guidelines set higher scholarly productivity goals for USF SP and USF S-M faculty. Tenured faculty and instructors will retain their current status. Tenure-earning faculty initially hired at USF SP and USF S-M who have three years of tenure-earning credit on July 1, 2019 will be considered for tenure consistent with current local guidelines that are being used prior to consolidation. All other tenure-earning faculty will be evaluated for tenure and promotion using the new guidelines. Reductions in teaching loads combined with reduced service expectations will ensure equity of assignment and make it possible for all faculty to succeed in the consolidated USF. Although many of the faculty at USF SP and USF S-M are already research active, the significance of this change in performance expectations is acknowledged. More specifically, practices for determining faculty assignments for teaching, research, scholarly and creative activity, and service, are being reviewed and a workload policy is being developed. **A faculty handbook, and college and department specific tenure guidelines, are also being developed and will be finalized prior to consolidation.**

[1] [Student Credit Hours Taught by Full-Time Faculty, by Degree Level, Major, and Campus](#)

[2] [Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for a Consolidated USF](#)

6 LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

As appropriate to the change, describe library and learning resources, in general as well as specific to the program, site, or institution, as warranted. Describe the staffing and services in place to support the change. If reliant upon other libraries, describe those collections and their relevance to the proposed change and include a copy of formal agreements in the appendix. Relative to electronic resources, describe how students and faculty will access information, training for faculty and students in the use of online resources, and staffing and services available to students and faculty. If citing electronic databases accessed through consortial or statewide groups, please describe the discipline-specific suites of resources and not just the name of the consortium (such as Viva, Tex-Share, Galileo, Louis, etc.).

The library system for the consolidated USF will be comprised of the main research library and the Shimberg Health Sciences Library at USF T; the Poynter Memorial Library at USF SP; the Cook Library on the New College of Florida campus, which is adjacent to the USF S-M campus; and the Florida Blue Health Knowledge Exchange, which is the library affiliated with USF Health in South Tampa, a SACSCOC-approved off-campus instructional site that is scheduled to open in January of 2020. Current staffing for the libraries can be found here [\[1\]](#). No library positions will be lost due to consolidation.

Currently, the main USF T research library is led by the Dean of the USF Libraries, who reports directly to the Provost. The Shimberg Health Sciences Library is led by a Dean, whose portfolio includes the USF Health community, including the Morsani College of Medicine, the Taneja College of Pharmacy, and the Colleges of Nursing and Public Health. The Poynter Memorial Library at USF SP is also led by a Dean. USF S-M has a Library Services unit but does not have its own library; USF S-M students, faculty, and staff use the Jane Bancroft Cook Library on the adjacent New College of Florida campus. New College of Florida, like USF S-M, is a part of the State University System (SUS) of Florida, and per a Library Management Agreement, is considered a shared SUS resource [2]. The USF S-M Library Services unit is led by the Director of Library Services. Following consolidation, the current Dean of the USF T main library will become the Dean of USF Libraries, reporting to the Provost, and will assume responsibility for all library resources and services.

Consolidating USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M under a single SACSCOC accreditation will result in expanded access to library collections, technology, and facilities; seamless online access to library services, tools, and collections; and coordination of policies. The consolidated USF Libraries will maintain and manage the formal relationships established by individual campus libraries prior to consolidation on behalf of all locations and will continue annual reviews of said agreements under the new leadership structure. This arrangement ensures that benefits previously limited to the subscribing library location will now extend to all libraries. A full enumeration of the consolidated USF Libraries' memberships and partnerships, which provide access to information resources not owned by the libraries, is available here [3]. A comprehensive listing of all library resources accessed through consortial or statewide groups is available here [4]. USF T subscribes to the Center for Research Libraries and the Hathi Trust, which provide access to millions of newspapers, journals, books, pamphlets, volumes and serial titles; and this will continue for the consolidated USF Libraries.

Collection development practices over the past two decades focused on acquisitions of e-resources over print, whenever possible, to extend the availability, portability, and currency of materials. USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M each contribute to the cost of the collection. Current online collection holdings available to all include 941 databases, 721,020 e-books and 65,050 e-journals. The Shimberg Health Library's online collections include 269 e-journal subscriptions, 35 specific health science databases, and 3,304 e-books. A small subset of clinical resources is limited to access by Health students and faculty. All other materials are universally accessible.

Coordination of the libraries in the consolidated USF will lie in collaborative management of the shared electronic collections, the means of access to those collections, and a range of needs assessment activities that cover five broad categories: Collections [5], Services [6], Facilities and Equipment [7], Academic Programs [8], and Outreach [9]. These assessments will be informed by the Faculty Senate's Library Council, the Student Advisory Board, and the Dean's Advisory Board. The Library's Faculty Committee will collaborate with the library's administration through a formal shared governance process. Each library will maintain a physical collection and technology resources to support onsite learning and research and facilities appropriate to campus needs [10]. The libraries already work closely with Students with Disabilities Services and Information Technology to assure that computer workstations in open areas are accessible and have software (i.e., Zoomtext, Dragon Naturally Speaking) that aid in accessing and fully utilizing library resources. The licensing process includes robust consideration of ADA compliance prior to acquiring materials.

The USF Libraries' physical collections [11] include print, microform, video, audio, maps, medical images, and multimedia materials. As a member of the Federal Depository Library Program, the USF Libraries receive catalog records for approximately 45 percent of the annual U.S. Government Printing Office publication output, now overwhelmingly supplied in a digital format. Rare and unique primary source materials are held by the Special Collections

department. Collection foci include Florida Studies, children's and young adult literature, the book arts, Florida environmental history, a local African-American newspaper *The Weekly Challenger*, and the Briggs Collection of Ichthyology and Natural History [12].

The USF Libraries' website currently functions, and will continue to function, as the primary online portal to locate and access collections and information resources. Students and faculty navigate through a system of drop-down menus and links and are assisted by online subject guides and context-sensitive help resources supplied by the USF Libraries and the publishers of the resources, e.g., EBSCO's Discovery Service (FindIt). Online search aids created by Special Collections librarians describe and facilitate access to archival and manuscript collections. Online resources created and hosted by the libraries are accessible globally at no cost. The website also provides links to all affiliated library websites. Distance education students, regardless of location, have the same access to search tools and online resources as on-campus students, and may request no cost shipment of print holdings and desktop delivery of copies of print articles. Specific training and support for the use of online resources is available by appointment, online chat, email, text, and scheduled in-person trainings. A list of services provided at each library and the impact of consolidation on those services is available here [13].

- [1] [Library Staffing Table](#)
- [2] [Cook-Library-Management-Agreement](#)
- [3] [Current Library Memberships and Partnerships](#)
- [4] [Library Resources via Consortial or Statewide Groups](#)
- [5] [Library Needs Assessments - Collections Resources](#)
- [6] [Library Needs Assessments - Services](#)
- [7] [Library Needs Assessments - Facilities and Equipment](#)
- [8] [Library Needs Assessments - Academic Programs](#)
- [9] [Library Needs Assessments - Outreach](#)
- [10] [Library Facilities](#)
- [11] [Library Collections by Format](#)
- [12] [Library Resources by Sub-Library and Subject Area](#)
- [13] [Service Portfolios and Delivery](#)

7 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Provide a description of student support programs, services, and activities - general as well as specific to the change - in place to support the change.

One of the seven *Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation* adopted by USF's Board of Trustees is "Commit to 'Students First', through expanding access and raising educational attainment while continuing USF's national best practice of student success and diversity" [1]. As noted in Section 4, following consolidation, academic advising, student advocacy, mental health counseling, financial aid, and career services will be delivered locally on all campuses, guided by USF's Vice President for Student Success, strategic performance expectations, and best practices. The Regional Chancellors (RCs) or their designees, in partnership with the Provost, the VP for Student Success, and College Deans will be responsible and accountable for assuring the equitable delivery of student support services, regardless of campus. The VP for Student Success, College Deans, School Directors, and Department Chairs may delegate these responsibilities to campus chairs, campus directors, campus deans, and other personnel to ensure that students are provided consistent levels of local support on all USF campuses. The Dean of Graduate Studies and the Senior VP for USF Health, or their designees, will work collaboratively with the RCs, the Provost, and College Deans in support of graduate and professional student success.

In preparation for consolidation, the Consolidation Implementation Committee (CIC), described

in Section 3, formed a Student Success sub-committee. The members of this sub-committee took the "Commit to 'Students First'" guiding principle to heart and began implementing and coordinating best practices across USF T, USF S-M, and USF SP well before consolidation. For example, to enhance undergraduate student success, the members of the sub-committee standardized persistence efforts by empowering local persistence committees to use high quality predictive analytics and retention platforms and practices. They also unified policies and regulations, such as the Student Code of Conduct and the General Student Grievance Process, to ensure that students on each campus benefit from best practices and equal treatment immediately, not waiting for consolidation.

During the spring of 2019, a formal process was initiated by the President of the USF System to centralize some student support functions. This process began with the undergraduate admissions function, because recruitment of the first undergraduate entering class into the consolidated USF needed to begin well before the enrollment of the students during the summer or fall of 2020 [2]. (Work is currently underway to coordinate graduate admissions, across campuses, as appropriate.) Shortly after the centralization of undergraduate admissions, the President directed the Vice President of Student Success at USF T to develop the consolidated USF's unified structure for all student support services, creating a single student success movement, with programs, practices, policies, and the leveraging of technologies that promote student retention, graduation, and success, with minimal levels of debt and higher levels of student satisfaction [3].

Student success operations (i.e., student support services) will be accountable to USF's Vice President for Student Success, who reports to the Provost. Although the VP for Student Success is ultimately responsible for equitable services, each of the campuses in the consolidated USF will have a designated student success leader, who will be responsible for harnessing the expertise and resources that exist on each campus to successfully implement the initiatives developed by the Vice President's cabinet, in accordance with established rules, regulations, and procedures.

The three institutions currently have varying capacities for the depth and breadth of services, because their resources, such as facilities and personnel, differ substantially. For example, USF T and USF SP both have a dedicated student union building and residence halls, but USF S-M has neither. That said, with consolidation the quality of services delivered will be consistent across all three campuses and all students, irrespective of their primary campus, will be provided equitable access to programs and services. How best to do this with available resources is the responsibility of the designated student success leader on each campus, who is accountable to both the VP for Student Success of the consolidated USF and to the Regional Chancellor who oversees campus operations, planning, and budgeting. A detailed listing of student support services that are presently provided on each campus and that will be provided post-consolidation is available here [4]. Close collaboration between college personnel and local student success professionals on each campus, under the proven leadership of the cabinet of the USF VP for Student Success, is expected to result in a student success profile for all campuses and colleges that is befitting of a *Preeminent State Research University*.

While the different facilities, resources, and student needs at each of the three institutions influenced consolidation planning by student success professionals, they also impacted consolidation planning by the Student Government Associations on each campus, which developed a unified Constitution for the consolidated USF that was ratified by the student bodies at each institution [5]. This constitution creates a federated governance system, in which governing bodies on each campus provide a mechanism for local decision-making, while also providing a mechanism through a central student government to address concerns that apply to students on all USF campuses [6]. Efforts are underway to create a set of statutes for the consolidated institution that will be completed before general elections occur in the spring of

2020 to elect leaders of the consolidated student body for the 2020-21 academic year.

- [1] [Guiding Principles for USF Consolidation](#)
- [2] [Unification of Admissions](#)
- [3] [Unification of Student Success](#)
- [4] [Student Support Services - Detailed Listing](#)
- [5] [Ratified Student Government Constitution](#)
- [6] [Org Chart - Student Government for One USF](#)

8 PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Provide a description of physical facilities and equipment to support the change. Assess the impact the proposed change will have on physical resources, facilities, and equipment.

The consolidation will have immaterial impact on physical resources, facilities, or equipment. The physical resources, facilities, and equipment of each of the separate institutions will be combined and aligned to serve the needs of the consolidated USF, which will serve students, faculty, and staff utilizing physical resources, facilities, and equipment on the main (or parent) campus in Tampa, on branch campuses in St. Petersburg and Sarasota, and at SACSCOC approved off-campus instructional sites, including the recently approved USF Health site and the previously approved Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation, both of which are in downtown Tampa, approximately 10 miles south of the main USF campus. Additional off-campus instructional sites are listed on the Institutional Summary Form and include leased space in the City Port Building located at 250 8th Avenue SE, St. Petersburg, FL [\[1\]](#); a Culinary Innovation Laboratory at 8130 Lakewood Ranch Main Street, Unit D104, Lakewood Florida [\[2\]](#), used by students studying in the undergraduate program in Hospitality and Tourism at USF S-M; and science teaching labs and instructional space at Mote Marine Laboratory, a private non-profit organization located approximately six (6) miles west of USF S-M, which are used by USF S-M students taking science classes [\[3\]](#). USF S-M also has a Shared Services Management Agreement with New College of Florida (5800 Bay Shore Rd, Sarasota, FL), a SACSCOC accredited institution, which is adjacent to USF S-M. This agreement establishes four buildings as shared-use facilities comprising 88,195 gross square feet: Cook Library, the Counseling and Wellness Center, waterfront facilities, and conference and meeting space [\[4\]](#). Students do not take credit-bearing course work in these facilities. Additional agreements provide details about shared library resources [\[5\]](#) and counseling and wellness services [\[6\]](#).

The three existing institutions have adequate facilities, as SACSCOC verified through its review of USF SP's fifth-year interim report in 2017, USF S-M's reaffirmation in 2016, and USF T's reaffirmation in 2015. The main USF T campus (at 4202 E. Fowler Ave, Tampa, FL 33620) has a total of 244 buildings and 20,376 parking spaces on 815 acres, with 780 acres on adjoining property [\[7\]](#). The USF SP branch campus (at 140 7th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701) has a total of 30 buildings and 1,897 parking spaces on 52 acres [\[8\]](#). The USF S-M campus (at 8350 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34243) has nine on-campus buildings and 581 parking spaces on six land parcels totaling a little over 41 acres [\[9\]](#). The effect of the consolidation on the use and allocation of facilities will be negligible. Useable space by type of facility and room counts by room types on each campus are provided here [\[10\]](#). Please note that the USF T and USF SP campuses have residential life space, but the USF S-M campus does not.

Current USF master plans for the three campuses, summarized here [\[11\]](#), encompass the period from 2015-25. Detailed plans for USF T [\[12\]](#), USF SP [\[13\]](#), and USF S-M [\[14\]](#) are also provided. Already conducted as a joint project of all three institutions, the Educational Plant Survey [\[15\]](#), required every five years by the State University System (SUS) of Florida's Board of Governors (BOG), blueprints USF's systemic review of its facilities and space needs. Although USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M currently hold separate SACSCOC accreditations, the BOG considers USF as one for the purposes of facilities planning. Each year, the USF System

submits a Capital Improvement Plan that sets forth funding requests for capital projects for all three campuses. The latest plan can be viewed here [\[16\]](#).

Due to the current consolidated nature of funding requests, existing coordinated planning, the need to achieve efficiencies and avoid duplication, and in recognition of the distinct needs of daily campus operations, facilities management in the future will be addressed in a hybrid manner. Certain activities require personnel on site to deal with day-to-day activities such as grounds and maintenance – these persons will be campus based. Executive and managerial activities will involve personnel from all three campuses, providing needed local knowledge informed by awareness of the consolidated institution's overall needs.

The USF System is, and the consolidated USF will be, committed to the use of advanced technologies to support student learning and faculty collaboration. In response to student demand for flexible scheduling and increased access to student support resources and course work, faculty and staff have extended the use of technology to support engaged learning and enhanced student success through online, blended/hybrid, and face-to-face courses. USF Innovative Education (InEd) will be an academic support division for the consolidated USF that prioritizes the implementation of consistently high standards, processes, procedures, and resources for distance education. To provide broader access to alternative modes of delivery for existing courses and programs and increase learning opportunities, InEd has extended the use of technology to support engaged learning and enhanced student success through multiple delivery modalities. InEd ensures a culture of continuous improvement in the design and delivery of online and blended/hybrid courses through adoption of Quality Matters and the Florida Online Course Design Quality review process.

Information Technology (IT) on all USF System campuses is currently a centralized operation, with local staff support provided in each location. Services include academic support through a learning management system, technology in classrooms, smart computing labs, lecture capture, and more. Across the campuses, there are over 72 supported computing labs for student use, 54 technology-enhanced auditoriums, and 397 technology-enhanced classrooms. Classroom technology is refreshed on a 5-year cycle. Over 800 printers ranging from student printers, plotter printers and individual printers are supported for students, faculty and staff. At USF T, but available to students and faculty on all campuses, high-end computational resources are provided via three state-of-the-art clusters, one for general research, one for restricted data research, and one for student education. USF's Advanced Visualization Center provides access to 2D and 3D visualization, a 20-megapixel 3D visualization wall, augmented reality systems, virtual reality systems, 3D printing, specialized web viewers, and an Internet-of-Things laboratory. Additionally, the Library's Digital Media Commons provides students with access to cameras and audio equipment, editing tools, multimedia tools, a green screen, and workshops for students to create their own content. At USF S-M, Bloomberg terminals allow students access to Bloomberg Professional Services, which provide real-time data from markets around the world and news, research, and analytics used by decision-makers in finance, business, and government. Additional investments in technology infrastructure are being made on the future branch campuses during the current year to more deeply connect the three campuses post-consolidation and expand delivery of high-quality distance education.

Students and faculty can download over 60 licensed software titles allowing access from anywhere with any device [\[17\]](#). Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Teams are used for collaboration and productivity. IT maintains dedicated repair centers available to all students, faculty, and staff for computer repairs on all campuses. This service is free. Walk up support is located on all three campuses. IT also provides online chat and telephone support.

The USF System maintains a very robust high-speed optical fiber ring that not only connects with its multiple campuses and instructional sites, but also links with many research networks,

especially Florida LambdaRail (FLR) and Internet 2(I2). FLR is Florida's premier 100 Gigabit Research and Education Network and I2 spans across the United States. To access these research networks USF T, as an equity partner, maintains a 10Gbps to FLR. USF SP has 10Gbps connections back to USF T while USF SP buildings are interconnected via 1Gbps connections with 100MB connections to the desktop. USF S-M has a 1Gbps connection back to the USF T. Overall, USF System IT today supports over 6,000 wireless access points across all campuses. Using Eduroam as the wireless access provider, students, faculty, and staff enjoy seamless global wireless access not only throughout the USF System but also while visiting all other participating universities. IT reduces risk of cybersecurity threats by protecting USF's technology assets. The use of robust threat detection and log software to scan all systems connected to the network helps ensure a safe computing environment for the USF System.

- [1] [City Port Building Lease](#)
- [2] [Lakewood Ranch MOU](#)
- [3] [Mote Marine Laboratory MOU](#)
- [4] [Shared Services Agreement with New College of Florida](#)
- [5] [Shared Services Agreement - Cook Library](#)
- [6] [Shared Services Agreement - Counseling and Wellness](#)
- [7] [Building Inventory USF T May 2019 - Final](#)
- [8] [Building Inventory USF SP May 2019 - Final](#)
- [9] [Building Inventory USF S-M May 2019 - Final](#)
- [10] [Square Footage and Room Counts on Each Campus](#)
- [11] [USF System Master Plan PowerPoint 2015-2025](#)
- [12] [Campus Master Plan USF T](#)
- [13] [Campus Master Plan USF SP](#)
- [14] [Campus Master Plan USF S-M](#)
- [15] [USF Educational Plant Survey](#)
- [16] [Capital Improvement Plan April 2019](#)
- [17] [Software Available Through Software Catalogue](#)

9 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Provide a business plan including all of the following:

- a. a description of the financial transaction and the effect the transaction has on the net assets of all the institutions or entities involved. In addition, specifically provide details regarding each of the following: (1) liabilities, (2) transfer of assets, (3) future contractual obligations, (4) existing contracts, (5) charitable contributions generated or involved with the transaction, and (6) any other significant factor that will impact financial or physical resources;
- b. a description of financial resources to support the change, including a budget for the first year
- c. projected revenues and expenditures and cash flow
- d. the amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services
- e. the operational, management, and physical resources available for the change.

Provide contingency plans in case required resources do not materialize.

Description of the Financial Transaction and Its Effect

The consolidation of the separately accredited institutions in the USF System does not involve the exchange of cash, stock, or any other considerations. Nor does it involve incurring debt, contractual obligations, or other liabilities, or the use of charitable contributions to facilitate the transaction. It is a simple pooling of interests that has no effect on the net assets of the institutions involved or their liabilities, existing contracts, future contractual obligations, or any other significant factor that could potentially impact financial or physical resources. The consolidation of the three institutions that collectively form the USF System, under a single

SACSCOC accreditation, will preserve a financially strong university while imposing no new obligations on the consolidated entity. Further, because the three institutions in the USF System have in many ways operated like a consolidated entity, the proposed consolidation does not present significant incremental budgetary challenges nor does it necessitate expenditures to synchronize disparate practices and procedures that are present when non-aligned institutions merge. The consolidated financial statements will be very familiar to bond rating entities and other users of USF's financial statements, because USF has been reporting on a combined basis as well as providing campus-level financial data for many years.

Financial Resources: First Year Budget with Revenues, Expenditures, and Cash Flows

USF's Board of Trustees (BOT) approves a budget each year. The budget approval process happens in two stages. First, a "continuation budget" is prepared that is approved by the BOT prior to the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1. This State of Florida practice allows USF to spend appropriated state funds until the fiscal budget is approved, which usually happens in August. The continuation and fiscal budgets are submitted to the Board of Governors (BOG) for approval. The operational budget has two sources of revenue: tuition and state funding. State funding consists of a general revenue appropriation and lottery profits. Due to the performance-based funding model used by the state [\[1\]](#), budget planning is necessary and is arguably more data driven than in many higher education institutions. This focus on performance metrics, especially those related to student retention, graduation rates, and other indicators of student success, has motivated the USF System and its consolidating member institutions to obtain a more granular understanding of students and hence, a better ability to estimate tuition revenue than many other institutions.

Recent history of base-funding appropriation in Florida creates fairly conservative planning parameters. While there have been some increases in Preeminence funding, those monies have largely been reserved to attract and retain world-class faculty. With no increases in tuition or fees authorized since 2013-14 and a desire by the USF President and BOT to hold enrollment flat, financial planning is fairly straightforward and argues for a flat plan for the current year (for the USF System) and for the year ending June 30, 2021 (for the consolidated USF). This approach has the added advantage of not relying on aggressive revenue goals or budget cuts to facilitate the success of the consolidation. It also negates the need to develop a contingency plan. The budget for fiscal 2020 and plan for 2021, which provides projected revenues, expenditures, and cash flows, is available here [\[2\]](#). For the sake of simplicity, account balances, including accruals, revenues, and expenses are assumed level for FY 2020 and 2021. The GASB treatment of appropriations as "non-operating" has been ignored to simplify presentation. This yields net cash used of \$13 million for both years. Bolstered by budgetary savings from open positions and other efficiencies, USF will have sufficient cash for unforeseen expenses relating to consolidation or other demands.

Resources Going to Institutions/Organizations for Contractual Support Services

No resources are going to institutions or organizations as payment to facilitate consolidation. However, the USF System and its member institutions currently outsource some services, including dining, bookstore, security, and other services deemed advantageous (e.g., for specialized legal services, certain types of maintenance and repairs, software-as-a-service and internet cloud services).

Operational, Management, and Physical Resources Available for Consolidation

The consolidating institutions, all SACSCOC-accredited members of the USF System, have many operational, management, and physical resources available to facilitate consolidation. The USF System and its member institutions are financially strong. Collectively, they have a modest amount of debt compared to peer institutions and that debt is at fixed rates with level amortization [\[3\]](#). Furthermore, with the exception of one research building, no new borrowing plans are on the horizon, allowing a strategic deployment of debt by the consolidated institution

should the need arise. Good ratings from Moody's [4] and S&P [5] (Aa2, with some issues rated in the A to Aa range – Florida statutes do not allow crossing revenue pledges between issues, so a consolidated rating is not possible), strong credit opinions [6] and financial ratios [7] (low debt to operating expense, high liquidity, and over 200 days of cash on hand), and a sizable endowment (\$514 million as of fiscal year end on June 30, 2019) would allow USF to borrow at low cost should the need arise. In addition to well managed debt, USF has a successful, conservative investment record, in which endowment assets held by the USF Foundation performed in the top decile compared to other college endowments and short-term investments, managed internally, outperformed the state's short-term investment pool [8]. Additionally, USF has received unmodified audit opinions for the years ending on June 30, 2017 [9] and June 30, 2018 [10]. Separate financial statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M are provided for FY 2018 [11] and FY 2019 [12]. (The audit for FY 2019 is not yet complete, but it will be forwarded to SACSCOC when it is received.) USF did not receive any management letter comments in its latest audit because, as the Auditor General of the State of Florida noted [13], "the results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*."

The Auditor General periodically performs a statewide "A-133/single audit" that encompasses USF's expenditures of federal financial aid and grants and contracts. These audits have resulted in unmodified opinions on the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and internal controls and have never cited a material weakness or significant deficiency at USF. The latest single audit for the 2018 fiscal year [14] had a single finding relating to USF. That finding detailed that in a single instance, USF paid a vendor after it had obtained federal reimbursement [15]. Note that this finding, on page 75, is specific to research and development. **USF had no findings related to Financial Aid.** Note that this is a statewide federal audit involving multiple institutions across the state, so the report is long. The pertinent sections in this long report are on pages 1-11 and page 75.

USF is subject to an annual operational audit that tests compliance with state laws and regulations. The operational audit for fiscal 2018 [16] found immaterial compliance issues that subsequently were remedied [17]. These results demonstrate that USF has the expected internal control mechanisms governing compliance with federal financial aid and grants and contracts from the federal government and other granting organizations.

This sound financial status can be attributed to the knowledge, skills, and experience of the USF System's financial leadership team and to the success of USF's Foundations and other Direct Support Organizations. USF's financial leadership team members all have significant experience in higher education. Most complement that background with work in the private sector. Several have earned CPA credentials. This team and their supporting staff position USF well to support the academic enterprise through and following the consolidation process. The USF System and its member institutions are also served well and assisted by ten Direct Service Organizations (DSO). These DSOs are authorized by Florida Statutes. They provide special support services and supplemental resources to the institutions and their faculties and staff. A recap of each of the DSOs can be found here [18]. The DSO's are all included in the audited financial statements of USF as discrete component units. In addition, each DSO has a separate audit. One of these DSOs is the USF Foundation, which had \$514 million in endowment assets when the most recent fiscal year ended on June 30, 2019. Its audited financial statements for 2018 and 2019 can be viewed here [19] and here [20]. The USF Foundation, which uses a spending policy of 4% and charges a 1.95% management fee on balances to fund operations, presently serves all three separately accredited institutions in the USF System and will serve the consolidated USF following consolidation. Unlike many universities, there is little dependence on the Foundation's endowment for operating expenses. USF also has a blended component unit, USF Financing Corporation, which issues bonds on behalf of USF.

A statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2019, is provided here [21]. A multi-year view is provided here [22]. As the unrestricted net assets table shows, net of pension liabilities and other post-employment benefits, USF offers a very stable financial picture.

- [1] [Performance-Based-Funding-Overview-May-2019](#)
- [2] [USF Budgets Pre- and Post-Consolidation](#)
- [3] [Debt Report to Board of Trustees - August, 2019](#)
- [4] [Moody's Rating Report for USF Financing Corp - 2018](#)
- [5] [S&P's Rating Report for USF Financing Corp - 2018](#)
- [6] [Moody's USF credit opinion - November 2018](#)
- [7] [USF Financial Ratios - FY 2015 through 2019](#)
- [8] [Investment Report to the Board of Trustees - August, 2019](#)
- [9] [USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30 2017](#)
- [10] [USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30 2018](#)
- [11] [Financial Statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M for Year Ending on June 30, 2018 \(excerpted from USF System Financial Audit Report\)](#)
- [12] [Financial Statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M for Year Ending on June 30, 2019](#)
- [13] [Auditor's Letter Explaining Absence of Management Letter Accompanying Financial Audit Reports](#)
- [14] [Most Recent Financial Aid Audit \(Statewide Single Audit - FY 2018\)](#)
- [15] [USF Finding from Statewide Single Audit \(Federal R&D Funds\) - FY 2018](#)
- [16] [Auditor General Operational Audit - February 2018 \(Report 2018-105\)](#)
- [17] [Auditor General Operational Audit - August 2019 \(Report 2020-014\)](#)
- [18] [Direct Support Organization Descriptions - 2019](#)
- [19] [USF Foundation Audited Financial Statements - FY 2018](#)
- [20] [USF Foundation Audited Financial Statements - FY 2019](#)
- [21] [Statement of Financial Position of Unrestricted Net Assets - June 30, 2019](#)
- [22] [Unrestricted Net Assets Recap - June 30, 2015 to June 30, 2019](#)

10 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Describe how the institution assesses overall institutional effectiveness and the means used to monitor and ensure the quality of the changes. Summarize procedures for systematic evaluation of instructional results, including the process for monitoring and evaluating programs and using the results of evaluation to improve institutional programs, services, and operations. Explain how the change has or will affect the institution's strategic planning including the development of campus master plans.

Overall Institutional Assessment

The three consolidating institutions, USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M, engage in systematic, ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning, evaluation, and budgeting processes to ensure continuous quality improvement in their programs, services, and operations. Processes for the assessment of institutional effectiveness in the consolidated USF will incorporate the strongest components from each institution's evaluation systems and processes and leverage the State University System of Florida's Board of Governors' (BOG) annual planning, performance, and accountability cycle [1].

The USF Board of Trustees (BOT), which is the governing board for each of the three separately accredited institutions participating in this consolidation, annually approves an Accountability Plan for each of the three consolidating institutions separately, and a combined Accountability Plan for the USF System [2], for submission to the BOG. Moving forward, USF will develop a single Accountability Plan for the consolidated institution that will reflect the

recently developed mission and goals for the consolidated institution, which are described in Section 2 of this prospectus.

Performance accountability across all three campuses will be aligned with clearly defined decision-making responsibility. College Deans, Department Chairs, and their branch campus designees (e.g., campus deans, campus associate/assistant deans, local department/college leaders, and RCs) are responsible for academic quality assurance across their academic units.

College Deans, in consultation with the Provost, Vice President for Student Success, and RCs, are directly responsible for strategic performance decision-making and performance outcomes across their colleges to enhance USF's position and stature with regard to Preeminence, Performance-Based Funding, and progress toward meeting strategic plan goals. Annually, the consolidated USF's Accountability Plan will outline our top priorities, strategic directions, and the specific actions planned for their achievement. Previously approved goals relating to teaching, research, innovation, and key fiscal performance indicators, as well as projections of future performance, will be examined. Additionally, any planned changes in the academic portfolio of the institution will be described.

The comprehensive planning, performance and accountability cycle at the macro level of the institution is currently vertically integrated and reproduced at multiple micro levels at USF T, and will be fully implemented across the Colleges and campuses in the consolidated USF. Each year, colleges (and academic and student support units) will undergo a comprehensive review process, in which performance will be examined relative to goals for teaching, research, service and the stewardship of resources. New goals will be collaboratively set, based on analysis of past-performance and in consideration of the college/unit's strategic direction aligned with the University's mission and goals. Quarterly, the Planning-Performance-Accountability (PPA) matrix, which shows progress towards goals, will be updated for each college/unit, so that ongoing and continuous actions to improve performance can be initiated. An example PPA matrix as currently implemented in USF T is available here [\[3\]](#). This matrix documents which PPA metrics are used in annual College/Unit Review data packets (CR), in the annual Accountability Plan (AP), in formulas used to determine performance-based funding allocations [\[4\]](#), in formulas used to determine which State Universities are worthy of the *Preeminent State Research University* designation [\[5\]](#), in performance evaluations used to determine membership in the American Association of Universities (AAU), and in rankings reported by *US News & World Report* (USNWR). USF T has long aspired to AAU membership eligibility and a top 25 ranking among public institutions in *US News & World Report*. These will be aspirations for the consolidated USF. Many of the same performance metrics that are used in College Reviews for USF T are also used in Academic Program Reviews, to keep all levels of the institution focused on achieving key success objectives.

In the consolidated USF, the PPA cycle will be implemented across all three campuses and, under the leadership of the USF Office of Decision Support (ODS), the RCs or their designees will be responsible and accountable for monitoring campus-level performance outcome data on their branch campus, which will be delivered to each College Dean, along with college-level performance data. Under the direction of the Provost, and ultimately the USF President, ODS will remain responsible and accountable for collecting, verifying, archiving and reporting the University's performance outcomes (consolidated for all campuses) to both internal and external constituent groups in accordance with USF Policy 11-007 [\[6\]](#).

The PPA cycle is only one process by which the consolidated USF will set goals and measure ongoing performance in support of continuous improvement. The consolidated institution will rely on a combination of measures, many of which are required for external reporting, and all of which have proven useful through ongoing internal assessment processes. As One University Geographically Distributed, the consolidated USF will leverage its current expertise in

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) and Institutional Research (IR), housing those functions in an integrated Office of Decision Support (ODS), which will continue to provide timely, actionable data and analyses needed for evidence-based decision-making by faculty and administrators responsible for improving institutional quality and assuring that USF accomplishes its mission and achieves its goals. As is current practice at each institution, the faculty and staff in all educational programs and in units supporting administration, students, research, and service, will continue to engage in collaborative setting of goals that align with USF's mission and strategic plan. Performance relative to goals will be regularly assessed and evidence of program/unit improvement based on analyses of the assessment results will be documented.

Procedures for Systematic Evaluation of Instructional Results

The current systematic assessment of academic instruction and educational programs across the three campuses is continuing and consolidation provides an increased opportunity for the identification and implementation of the best practices already in effect at each of the individual institutions. BOG Regulation 8.016 [\[7\]](#) requires learning outcomes assessment at the undergraduate level and USF System Policy 10-060 [\[8\]](#) also requires learning outcomes assessment for all graduate programs, and assessment of programs that support student success. Moving forward with consolidation, the BOG regulation and USF policy will assure that each program, regardless of mode of delivery: (a) Outlines expected student learning outcomes in the areas of content/discipline-specific knowledge and skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills; (b) Develops methods for assessing student achievement of the defined outcomes; (c) Assesses student achievement of the outcomes; and, (d) Uses the evaluation results to improve student learning and program effectiveness.

To prepare for consolidation, discipline-specific and general education workgroups composed of faculty from all three institutions aligned and integrated the curricula, developed student learning outcomes, and are in the process of developing and/or modifying assessment procedures to ensure consistent academic content and quality in all programs across all USF campuses. An example of the work completed to date involves detailed information about the General Education curriculum and the assessment plans in place for it [\[9\]](#), reflecting the consolidated USF's commitment to two unique facets of assessment: (1) Assessment of the implementation of the General Education program (Alignment; Fidelity) and (2) Assessment of student learning outcomes (Samples of Student Work). The USF Faculty Senate's consolidated General Education Council (GEC), with faculty representatives from all three campuses, will use a multidimensional system of assessment to help continuously improve both the assessment itself and the overall program/curriculum.

In addition to the work of the GEC, faculty teaching in each of the academic degree programs in the consolidated USF will continue to refine student learning outcomes (SLOs) at the program level, assess the extent to which these outcomes are achieved, and use the results to improve educational programs and maximize student learning. Ongoing assessment of SLOs and concomitant implementation of continuous improvement activities emanating from the assessment results will inform our 7-year cycle of comprehensive academic program review, as specified by SUS of Florida BOG Regulation 8.015 [\[10\]](#) and USF Policy 10-062 [\[11\]](#). While all academic degree programs are subject to cyclical comprehensive review, this process is also linked to requirements of specialized/professional accrediting bodies, which currently accredit over 100 programs offered across the USF System. The rigorous processes involved in meeting the requirements of these specialized accrediting bodies provide another integrated layer of institutional effectiveness that will continue post consolidation.

The work described above is currently supported by separate Institutional Effectiveness units on each campus. Moving forward, consolidation provides for the synergistic integration of all IE professionals into a single unit, with local campus presence, to oversee and support in a consistent fashion our commitment to continuous improvement, not only of our academic

programs, but also our academic and student support services that support student success, and other administrative units, as briefly described below.

USF's Institutional Effectiveness unit will continue to support the academic and student services units that support student success as they define their missions, establish their goals, develop plans for assessing outcomes associated with those goals, and use the results of assessment for improvement, so that key processes that meet the needs and expectations of students, parents, employers, faculty and other stakeholders can be improved on a continuous basis. Similar to the aforementioned annual College Reviews, academic and student service support units will participate in an annual PPA process involving both unit and executive academic leadership. The data-driven PPA process provides a mechanism for reviewing progress towards goals and the collaborative setting of new, vertically integrated goals. It also informs resource allocation. The IE unit will continue to work with other administrative units as they too are required to develop integrated operational goals, set data-driven performance targets, and evaluate their performance against those targets. Under the purview of executive leadership, these goals and related performance-accountability reviews will remain as explicit parts of the consolidated institution's budgeting and strategic planning processes.

The USF-wide academic and student support leadership team, which includes the Provost, Vice President for Student Success, College Deans and Regional Chancellors, supported by the USF SACSCOC liaison, will provide unified leadership to assure compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation and SACSCOC Policy Statements.

Consolidation's Impact on Strategic and Master Planning

On July 1, 2019, the University of South Florida's 7th president, Dr. Steven Currall, began his tenure. Under President Currall's leadership, the faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community stakeholders from across the three campuses are enthusiastically beginning a strategic renewal process for the consolidated USF. The mission and goals approved by USF's BOT **on December 3, 2019** [12] and the national peers and aspiration peers identified by university leadership [13] will provide a foundation for the strategic renewal process, which will be guided by peer benchmarking and informed by stakeholder input. The strategic renewal process will identify academic and research priorities, which in turn will inform any changes to our current campus master plans, which were developed and approved by both USF's BOT and the SUS of Florida's BOG, pursuant to Section 1013.30 Florida Statutes [14], and BOG Regulations, Chapter 21 [15], and USF Policy 6-021 [16]. Evidence of progress on the strategic renewal process and the campus master planning process will be included in the Documentation for the Substantive Change Committee at least six weeks prior to the site visit.

- [1] [BOG Regulation 2.002 - Accountability Plans](#)
- [2] [USF System Accountability Plan 2019](#)
- [3] [Planning, Performance, and Accountability Matrix Example 1](#)
- [4] [Performance-Based-Funding-Overview-May-2019](#)
- [5] [Preeminent Metrics Methodology 2019-20](#)
- [6] [USF Policy 11-007 - Data Submission to External Entities](#)
- [7] [BOG Regulation 8.016 - Student Learning Outcomes Assessment](#)
- [8] [USF Policy 10-060 - Academic Learning Compacts and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan for Enhanced Gen Ed](#)
- [9] [Assessment Plan for Enhanced Gen Ed](#)
- [10] [BOG Regulation 8.015 - Academic Program Review](#)
- [11] [USF Policy 10-062 - Academic Program Review and Specialized Accreditations](#)
- [12] [USF's Mission and Goals - Updated](#)
- [13] [USF's Peer Institutions](#)
- [14] [Florida Statute 1013.30 - Campus Master Plans and Campus Development Agreements](#)
- [15] [BOG Regulation 21.202 - Campus Master Plans General Requirements](#)
- [16] [USF Policy 6-021 - Campus Master Planning Program](#)

11 APPENDICES

Provide copies of documents appropriate to the change. For a merger/consolidation or an acquisition, the prospectus must include a complete list of all off-campus instructional sites including branch campuses that will exist after the merger/consolidation or acquisition; a template with instructions is provided on the following pages.

Prospectus Supporting Documents

USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30, 2019 (Not yet available from Florida's Auditor General)

USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30, 2018 [1]

USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30, 2017 [2]

Auditor's Letter Explaining Absence of Management Letter Accompanying Financial Audit Reports [3]

Most Recent Financial Aid Audit (Statewide Single Audit - FY 2018) [4]

Financial Statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M for Year Ending on June 30, 2019 [5]

Financial Statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M for Year Ending on June 30, 2018 (excerpted from USF System Financial Audit Report) [6]

Statement of Financial Position of Unrestricted Net Assets - June 30, 2019 [7]

Post-Consolidation Off-Campus Instructional Sites and Branch Campuses [8]

Correspondence with the US Education Department about Consolidation (More Coming Soon)

A "Pre-Acquisition Application" is not required for this type of consolidation of public institutions. US Education Department Communication about IPEDS [9]

[1] [USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30 2018](#)

[2] [USF System Financial Audit Report for Year Ending on June 30 2017](#)

[3] [Auditor's Letter Explaining Absence of Management Letter Accompanying Financial Audit Reports](#)

[4] [Most Recent Financial Aid Audit \(Statewide Single Audit - FY 2018\)](#)

[5] [Financial Statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M for Year Ending on June 30, 2019](#)

[6] [Financial Statements for USF T, USF SP, and USF S-M for Year Ending on June 30, 2018 \(excerpted from USF System Financial Audit Report\)](#)

[7] [Statement of Financial Position of Unrestricted Net Assets - June 30, 2019](#)

[8] [Post-Consolidation Off-Campus Instructional Sites and Branch Campuses](#)

[9] [US Education Department Communication about IPEDS](#)