Student Information Technology Systems - Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund   **FY2023 Request:**   **$20,000,000**
Reference No: **63993**

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Information Technology / Systems / Communication

Category: University
Location: Statewide   **House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)
Impact House District: Statewide (HD 1-40)   **Contact:** Michelle Rizk
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2027   **Contact Phone:** (907)450-8187

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:
This project modernizes the university's student-facing information technology (IT) systems, including necessary security upgrades and cloud migration, to be competitive in the post-COVID environment. Enrollment is key to serving Alaska and to UA's future budget stability. The pandemic has shown the critical need to have a reliable, robust system. After 30 years, UA's student-facing IT systems are out of date and compare poorly against peers in terms of delivering a quality student experience. UA must improve these capabilities to remain competitive in the marketplace and offer a more user-friendly entry point for the student. This upgrade would facilitate student recruitment, retention, and success.

Funding:	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	Total
1265 COVID Fed	$20,000,000						$20,000,000
Total:	**$20,000,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$20,000,000**

☐ State Match Required	☑ One-Time Project	☐ Phased - new	☐ Phased - underway	☐ Ongoing
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		☐ Amendment	☐ Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	Amount	Staff
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	0	0

Prior Funding History / Additional Information:

Project Description/Justification:

Proposal: Increase institutional agility within a single system and enhance cybersecurity capabilities

Background

The University of Alaska (UA) was an early adopter of student information systems (SIS). In the 1990s, very few statewide systems attempted to manage multiple universities with a single computer system. UA realized the value of a single system and worked within the limitations of the technology available at the time.

Due to the foundational design of the University's current implementation and heavy customizations, UA is currently unable to take advantage of many of the benefits provided through modern cloud

State of Alaska Capital Project Summary   University of Alaska
FY2023 Governor   Reference No: 63993
Page 1   Released December 15, 2021

delivered solutions. Current cloud-based systems are more capable of facilitating student recruitment, retention, and success for multiple university systems.

Additionally, cyber threats to the security of University data and assets have dramatically increased. The University will leverage this project to increase its capabilities when it comes to protection of University data and the data of its partners.

Impacts:

- Students encounter barriers when applying for admissions, registering for classes, paying their bills and many other essential functions. UA is working hard to increase the college-going rate in Alaska. These barriers add complexity to an already highly challenging registration process and can be a deterrent to increasing our enrollment.

- Increased vulnerability to cyber threats due to aged hardware, software, and IT processes.
- Students must navigate through the entirety of the UA system when seeking to make routine transactions at their home campus.
- Simple improvements to the student experience must be negotiated among the three UA Universities and manually customized within the software. This makes the Universities less nimble and the system less responsive to the students' varied needs which results in the universities being at a competitive disadvantage.
- UA spends significant resources supporting the customized solutions developed since the 1990s. This systemic friction prohibits timely upgrades and slows regular maintenance tasks which exacerbates the antiquated student experience. The level of work required for standard software upkeep diverts resources which could be used supporting the instructional and research mission.

Proposed solution

UA requests $20.0 million to modernize and secure the UA student's higher education experience. UA would commit to implementing a vendor-provided, cloud-based solution for managing multiple universities in a single SIS or within a single product line that preserves efficiencies within the UA structure, allowing autonomy where possible as business practices are differentiated. Through this solution, UA would retain the many benefits of a single SIS system or features, and a common reporting structure, while allowing each university to innovate and adapt the system more quickly to their changing requirements.

As part of this effort, UA would:

1. Identify the best SIS vendor partner for ensuring success of this effort and long-term mission fulfillment
2. Seek opportunities to retire legacy customizations where the base system allows greater value than the customization
3. Identify new opportunities for each university to align the system to their scale and needs by enabling autonomy in a single SIS model
4. Fully implement the modern student-facing online user interface

5. Improve the operational model that supports upkeep of the systems with productivity and process efficiency in mind, moving forward
6. Deploy and implement additional security tools

Estimated Project Budget- Modernization of Student System				
(estimated 24-month project)				
Category	**(in thousands)**			
Consulting Services Software Implementation	$8,250.0	Contractor Cost for project implementation services		
Consulting Services Other	$4,600.0	Business Process Improvement, Conversion, Reporting, Change Management, Training and Security Tools Deployment assistance		
Additional Software licensing	$1,000.0	Additional Software licensing including Cybersecurity tools		
Hardware provisioning	$150.0	Additional Cloud Hardware provisioning during project		
Project staff	$6,000.0	Estimated 20 Project FTE for two years		
TOTAL	$20,000.0			

State of Alaska Capital Project Summary   University of Alaska
FY2023 Governor   Reference No: 63993
Page 3   Released December 15, 2021