

FAMU

FLORIDA
AGRICULTURAL AND
MECHANICAL
UNIVERSITY



Presidential Search

Feedback Form Statistical Analysis



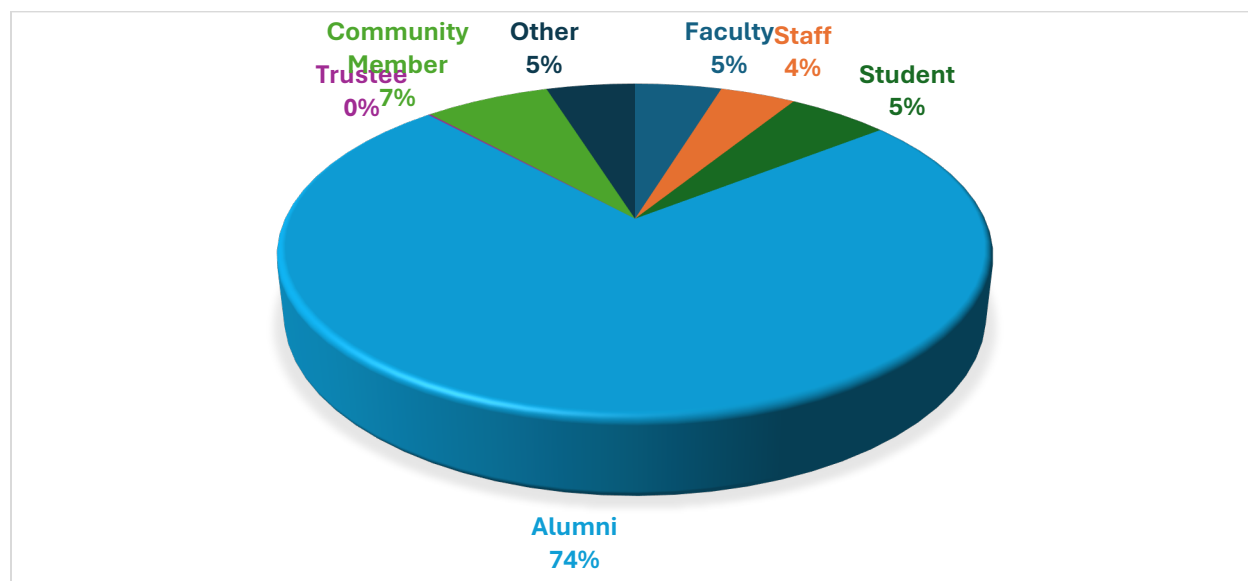
Marva Johnson, J.D.

Group Vice President, State Government
Affairs, Charter Communications

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Feedback Form Statistical Analysis

Survey Response Distribution by Group | 802 Total Responses



Overall Summary

The feedback from all user roles—alumni, students, faculty, staff, community members, and others—reveals a clear and consistent pattern in the evaluation of the presidential candidate. Respondents frequently acknowledge the candidate’s strengths in business, legal, and community leadership, as well as her strategic vision and ability to build partnerships. However, these positive attributes are consistently overshadowed by widespread concerns about her lack of higher education leadership experience, limited familiarity with FAMU’s unique culture and mission, and strong political affiliations. Many respondents also question her preparedness, depth of understanding, and authenticity, expressing fears that her leadership could jeopardize the university’s legacy and values.

Overall Tone

The overall tone of the responses is overwhelmingly negative and critical. Across all groups, there is a strong sense of skepticism, disappointment, and even urgency to protect FAMU’s traditions and future. While a minority of responses recognize the candidate’s professional accomplishments and potential for external engagement, the dominant sentiment is one of distrust and opposition, with many expressing that the candidate does not align with the university’s needs or the expectations of its diverse stakeholders.

Feedback Summary by Role

ALUMNI

- **Strengths highlighted:**
 - Deep personal connection and pride in FAMU's legacy.
 - Recognition of professional achievements in business and leadership.
 - Appreciation for willingness to serve and potential to bring strategic partnerships.
- **Concerns raised:**
 - Lack of higher education administrative experience.
 - Strong opposition to political affiliations (MAGA, DeSantis, Republican ties).
 - Fear of disconnect from FAMU's culture and mission.
- **Tone:**
 - Predominantly negative and critical, with strong urgency to protect FAMU's legacy.

STUDENT

- **Strengths highlighted:**
 - Leadership qualities: energy, innovation, and strategic mindset.
 - Business acumen and experience in policy, technology, and community service.
 - Visionary approach, emphasizing growth and modernization.
- **Concerns raised:**
 - Lack of higher education or HBCU experience.
 - Political affiliations viewed negatively.
 - Perceived disconnect from student needs and campus culture.
- **Tone:**
 - Predominantly negative and critical, with strong disapproval and skepticism about alignment with student interests.

COMMUNITY MEMBER

- **Strengths highlighted:**
 - Strong connections in the legislature and community, with potential benefits for fundraising and political support.
 - Recognition of Marva Johnson's leadership qualities, strategic vision, and reputation for ethical engagement.

- Appreciation for her community involvement, kindness, charisma, and ability to build consensus.
- **Concerns raised:**
 - Lack of relevant higher education experience and understanding of university culture.
 - Political affiliations and ties to controversial figures or agendas, raising questions about motives.
 - Perception of unpreparedness, superficial responses, and potential misalignment with FAMU's values and needs.
- **Tone:**
 - Generally cautious and skeptical, with many expressing doubt about her qualifications and intentions. Some responses are critical, but there is a mix of respect for her community ties.

FACULTY

- **Strengths highlighted:**
 - Some mention of being friendly, collaborative, hardworking, and loyal to the mission.
 - A few responses note experience in legal, telecom, public relations, or business sectors as potentially transferable strengths.
 - Certain responses mention political experience or connections as possible strategic assets.
- **Concerns raised:**
 - Overwhelming concern about lack of higher education experience, especially in academic leadership.
 - Insufficient understanding of university operations, research, faculty needs, and academic governance.
 - Worries about political ties, lack of research, and unfamiliarity with campus culture and DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion).
- **Tone:**
 - Predominantly critical and cautious, emphasizing inexperience and potential misfit for academic leadership. There are isolated positive notes, but these are overshadowed by concerns about readiness and fit.

STAFF

- **Strengths highlighted:**
 - Demonstrates strong business and legal expertise, with some highlighting strategic thinking and financial oversight.
 - Shows enthusiasm and vision for the university's future, emphasizing innovation, collaboration, and potential for growth.
 - Recognizes the importance of stakeholder engagement and the ability to build support among students, staff, faculty, and alumni.
- **Concerns raised:**

- Many responses point to a lack of higher education experience, including no background in academia, faculty, or university leadership roles.
- Concerns about political affiliations and potential conflicts of interest, especially regarding DEI initiatives and legislative processes.
- Perceptions of superficial answers, deflection, or lack of depth in addressing critical university issues, indicating unpreparedness or limited knowledge.
- **Tone:**
 - Generally cautious and skeptical, with a focus on qualifications and experience. Some responses express disappointment or frustration with perceived superficiality or evasiveness. The overall tone is evaluative, emphasizing the importance of genuine expertise and alignment with the university's mission.

OTHER (including multi-role responses)

- **Strengths highlighted:**
 - Experience in corporate leadership, public policy, and technology, which could contribute to innovation and external stakeholder engagement.
 - Strategic planning abilities, vision, and capacity to develop partnerships and secure resources.
 - Motivation to deliver results, work across groups, and background in telecommunications and policy.
- **Concerns raised:**
 - Lack of higher education leadership experience and institutional knowledge, with many responses emphasizing her limited or no direct experience in academia.
 - Questions about her understanding of FAMU's unique culture, history, and student needs, with some responses highlighting her disconnect from the university's core mission.
 - Political ties, perceived lack of authenticity, and doubts about her ability to lead effectively, especially given her external focus and limited familiarity with higher education challenges.
- **Tone:**
 - Predominantly critical and skeptical, with many responses expressing doubt about her qualifications and fit for the role. Some responses are strongly negative, citing concerns about her motives, experience, and potential impact on FAMU's legacy. A few responses acknowledge her strengths but are overshadowed by concerns about her suitability and understanding of higher education.

Summary of Question 1

What are the candidate's strengths?

1. Business and Professional Experience

- Strong background in corporate leadership and executive decision-making
- Extensive experience in telecommunications and technology sectors
- Proven track record in strategic planning and organizational management
- Demonstrated success in financial oversight and resource management
- Experience serving on various boards and managing complex organizations
- Background in legal affairs and regulatory compliance

2. Political and Community Connections

- Strong relationships with state legislators and government officials
- Established networks in both public and private sectors
- Ability to navigate political landscapes effectively
- Track record of successful lobbying and advocacy
- Experience with state-level educational policy making
- Strong connections with business and community leaders

3. Leadership and Personal Qualities

- Articulate and professional communication style
- Strong presence and executive demeanor
- Demonstrated resilience and determination
- Ability to build consensus among diverse groups
- Strategic and innovative thinking approach
- High energy and enthusiasm for challenges

4. Vision and Innovation

- Forward-thinking approach to institutional growth
- Understanding of technological advancement and innovation
- Focus on modernization and competitive positioning
- Emphasis on measurable outcomes and results
- Strategic vision for institutional advancement
- Interest in developing new partnerships and opportunities

5. Resource Development Potential

- Experience in fundraising and resource acquisition
- Understanding of public-private partnerships
- Knowledge of grant processes and funding mechanisms
- Track record of successful business development

- Ability to identify and pursue funding opportunities
- Experience with budget management and fiscal planning

6. Professional Credentials

- Strong educational background including J.D. degree
- Experience on educational boards and committees
- Professional certifications and achievements
- Recognition in business and community circles
- Track record of professional development
- Demonstrated commitment to continuous learning

This analysis shows that while there are significant concerns about the candidate's fit for the role, there are also recognized strengths, particularly in areas of external engagement, business acumen, and professional leadership. However, it's worth noting that many responses indicated "none" or "limited" when asked about strengths, and the positive attributes mentioned were often qualified with concerns about their relevance to higher education leadership.

The strengths identified tend to cluster around external-facing capabilities (business, politics, community engagement) rather than internal academic leadership qualities, which aligns with the concerns raised about higher education.

Summary of Question 2

What concerns, if any, do you have about the candidate in this role?

1. Lack of Higher Education Experience

- The candidate has no prior experience in higher education administration or academic leadership.
- Respondents are concerned about her unfamiliarity with university operations, governance, and faculty needs.
- Many note she has never worked at an HBCU or similar institution, raising doubts about her readiness.
- There is skepticism about her ability to manage academic affairs, research, and accreditation processes.
- Concerns are raised about her lack of understanding of student development and campus life.
- Respondents fear she would require significant on-the-job learning, which could hinder FAMU's progress.

2. Disconnect from FAMU's Culture and Mission

- Many believe the candidate does not understand or appreciate FAMU's unique history, legacy, and traditions.
- There is a perception that she is unfamiliar with the needs and values of FAMU's students, alumni, and community.
- Respondents worry she lacks genuine connection to the university and its stakeholders.
- Concerns are raised about her ability to uphold and advance the university's mission and vision.
- Some feel her responses and plans are generic, lacking specificity to FAMU's context.
- There is apprehension that her leadership could erode the sense of pride and identity within the FAMU community.

3. Political Affiliations and External Influence

- The candidate's ties to political figures and parties (especially MAGA, DeSantis, and Republican circles) are viewed with suspicion.
- Respondents fear political agendas may take precedence over the university's best interests.
- There is concern about potential conflicts of interest and lack of independence in decision-making.
- Many worry about the impact of external political pressures on academic freedom and campus climate.

- Some believe her candidacy is politically motivated rather than rooted in a commitment to FAMU.
- There is apprehension that her leadership could undermine diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

4. Lack of Transparency, Preparation, and Authenticity

- Respondents note a lack of clear, concrete plans or vision for the university's future.
- Many describe her answers as vague, superficial, or evasive during interviews and public forums.
- There is skepticism about her authenticity and sincerity in engaging with the FAMU community.
- Some feel she relies on buzzwords and generalities rather than substantive proposals.
- Concerns are raised about her ability to communicate effectively and build trust with stakeholders.
- Respondents question her willingness to listen to feedback and adapt to the university's needs.

5. Insufficient Support from Key Stakeholders

- Many highlight widespread opposition from students, alumni, faculty, and staff.
- There is concern that her appointment could lead to loss of support, increased transfers, or decreased morale.
- Respondents fear her leadership would not reflect the will or interests of the FAMU community.
- Some worry about the potential for protests, petitions, and public backlash.
- There is apprehension that her selection could damage FAMU's reputation and external relationships.
- Concerns are raised about the long-term impact on fundraising, enrollment, and institutional stability.

6. Uncertainty About Ability to Address Critical Issues

- Respondents question her capacity to handle challenges such as accreditation, research growth, and student success.
- There is concern about her understanding of the complexities of running a large, public HBCU.
- Many doubt her ability to advocate effectively for FAMU at the state and national levels.
- Some worry about her preparedness to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Concerns are raised about her ability to recruit and retain talented faculty and staff.
- Respondents fear she may not be able to navigate the unique challenges facing FAMU in a competitive higher education landscape.

This summary reflects the most prominent and recurring concerns voiced by the FAMU community and stakeholders in question 2 of the survey.

Summary of Question 3

What other observations or comments do you wish to share about this candidate?

1. Interview Performance and Communication

- Responses during forums and interviews were perceived as rehearsed and superficial
- Demonstrated difficulty in providing specific, concrete answers to questions
- Tendency to deflect or provide generic responses to critical inquiries
- Lack of depth in understanding FAMU-specific challenges and solutions
- Communication style appeared disconnected from academic context
- Responses failed to demonstrate genuine engagement with university issues

2. Cultural Fit and Understanding

- Limited demonstration of understanding HBCU culture and traditions
- Apparent disconnect from FAMU's historical mission and values
- Insufficient appreciation for the unique challenges facing FAMU students
- Lack of authentic connection to the FAMU community
- Limited understanding of the institution's role in African American education
- Inability to articulate a vision that aligns with FAMU's cultural identity

3. Stakeholder Reception

- Widespread opposition from multiple stakeholder groups
- Strong student body resistance to the candidacy
- Faculty concerns about academic leadership capabilities
- Alumni expressing serious reservations about fit
- Community stakeholders questioning the selection process
- Unified concern across various constituent groups

4. Readiness and Preparation

- Lack of preparedness for the complexity of university leadership
- Insufficient understanding of academic operations and governance
- Notable gaps in knowledge about higher education administration

- Limited familiarity with faculty needs and academic processes
- Inadequate preparation for addressing specific FAMU challenges
- Questions about ability to lead without significant learning curve

5. Political Context and Concerns

- Worries about external political influence on the selection process
- Concerns about potential impact on FAMU's autonomy
- Questions about motivations behind the candidacy
- Fears about alignment with controversial political agendas
- Apprehension about potential negative legislative implications
- Concerns about preservation of FAMU's independence

6. Impact on FAMU's Future

- Fears about potential regression in FAMU's progress and standing
- Concerns about maintaining FAMU's position as a leading HBCU
- Worries about impact on student recruitment and retention
- Questions about effect on faculty recruitment and academic quality
- Concerns about institutional reputation and competitive position
- Apprehension about long-term strategic direction and growth

The comments section revealed deeper, more personal concerns than the structured questions about strengths and concerns. Many respondents used this space to:

- Express stronger emotional investment in the selection process
- Share detailed observations about candidate interactions
- Voice concerns about the broader implications for FAMU's future
- Highlight specific incidents or responses that raised red flags
- Emphasize the historical significance of this leadership decision
- Call for greater consideration of FAMU's unique needs and mission

The overall tone in this section was notably more direct and passionate, with respondents often using this space to make final, emphatic statements about their position on the candidacy. The responses frequently went beyond professional critique to address fundamental concerns about FAMU's future direction and institutional integrity.

Analysis

Based on the following objectives, how does the feedback and overall responses deliver against the objectives and what are the gaps?

OBJECTIVES

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

Leadership and Administration

- Strategic Leadership: Assumes full responsibility for the organization, administration, and leadership of the University. Provides leadership for the academic programs and student support services.
- Policy and Planning: Makes policy recommendations to the Board of Trustees on all matters affecting the university and recognizes their oversight. Conducts appropriate planning for the University.
- Performance Improvement: Continually assesses productivity, student success, and financial metrics to enhance the University's performance according to the Florida Board of Governors' performance funding metrics.

Financial Management and Fundraising

- Financial Oversight: Possesses a thorough understanding of various funding models with a history of sound financial management.
- Fundraising and Grants: Directs and supports fundraising and grant solicitation activities to enhance financial resources available for programs and services.

Community and Partnerships

- Partnership Building: Promotes partnerships with businesses, educational agencies, civic organizations, military bases, and community groups to benefit the University and community.
- Advocacy: Advocates on behalf of the University with state and federal governments for the benefit of the University.
- Community Engagement: Provides leadership for the University's involvement and support in community activities. Acts as the public relations contact for the University.

Compliance and Policy

- Policy Adherence: Adheres to and ensures compliance with all University and Board policies in accordance with Florida Statutes and the State Board of Governors.

Exercises broad discretionary power to carry out BOT policy. Serves as Corporate Secretary for the Board of Trustees, engaging in policy recommendations.

- Legal and Accreditation Compliance: Ensures familiarity with institutional, NCAA, and athletic accreditation processes and legal requirements, administering contracts, and recommending site locations and utilization in compliance with regulations.

Faculty and Staff Development

- Professional Development: Commits to professional development and success for all faculty and staff, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and an institutional climate of professionalism.

Additional Responsibilities

- Performs other similar related duties as may be delegated by the Board of Trustees, including lending influence in the development of higher education on local, state, and national levels.

Qualifications & Experience

Educational Requirements

- Terminal degree or significant professional achievement, recognition, and prestige are required.
- Combined administrative and academic experience at a research university and experience with D1 athletics are preferred.
- Individuals with the requisite leadership experience in education, industry, government, the military, or other sectors and whose experience will further the mission of Florida A&M University will be given full consideration.

ANALYSIS

Leadership and Administration

Alignment:

- The candidate is recognized for strong business leadership, strategic thinking, and organizational management in the private sector.
- Some respondents acknowledge her ability to build partnerships and her professional presence.

Gaps:

- There is a critical gap in direct experience with higher education administration, academic program leadership, and student support services.
- Respondents consistently note a lack of familiarity with university governance, academic planning, and the unique needs of a research university.

- The absence of a track record in policy development and performance improvement within an academic context is significant.

Severity:

- These are critical gaps, as the role requires hands-on experience and understanding of academic leadership, which is not demonstrated in the feedback.

Financial Management and Fundraising

Alignment:

- The candidate's business background suggests strong financial oversight and resource management skills.
- Some feedback highlights her experience with fundraising, grant processes, and public-private partnerships.

Gaps:

- There is a gap in demonstrated experience with higher education funding models and the specific financial challenges of public universities.
- Respondents question her familiarity with performance funding metrics and the nuances of university budgeting.

Severity:

- This is a significant gap. While her business acumen is a strength, the lack of direct experience with university financial systems and state funding mechanisms is a concern.

Community and Partnerships

Alignment:

- The candidate is credited with strong community and political connections, and an ability to build external partnerships.
- She is seen as capable of engaging with business and government leaders, and has experience in advocacy and public relations.

Gaps:

- There is a gap in demonstrated engagement with the academic community, students, and alumni.
- Respondents express concern about her ability to authentically connect with and advocate for the university's internal stakeholders.

Severity:

- This is a significant gap. While external engagement is a strength, the lack of internal community connection and understanding of FAMU's culture is a recurring concern.

Compliance and Policy

Alignment:

- The candidate's legal background suggests a foundational understanding of compliance and policy adherence.
- Some respondents note her experience with contracts and regulatory environments.

Gaps:

- There is a gap in experience with higher education accreditation, NCAA compliance, and the specific legal requirements of university administration.
- Respondents question her familiarity with university and board policies, as well as her ability to serve as Corporate Secretary for the Board of Trustees.

Severity:

- This is a significant gap. Legal expertise is valuable, but the lack of direct experience with academic compliance and accreditation processes is a notable concern.

Faculty and Staff Development

Alignment:

- The candidate is recognized for her leadership and professional development in the corporate sector.
- Some feedback notes her ability to foster professionalism and strategic thinking.

Gaps:

- There is a critical gap in experience with faculty and staff development within a university setting.
- Respondents highlight her lack of understanding of academic career progression, shared governance, and the unique needs of faculty and staff at a research university.

Severity:

- This is a critical gap, as fostering an academic climate and supporting faculty and staff development are central to the role.

Additional Responsibilities & Qualifications

Alignment:

- The candidate holds a terminal degree (J.D.) and has significant professional achievement and recognition in her field.
- She is seen as influential in business and policy circles.

Gaps:

- There is a critical gap in combined administrative and academic experience at a research university, as well as experience with D1 athletics.
- Respondents consistently note the absence of higher education leadership and direct experience with the mission and operations of an HBCU.

Severity:

- These are critical gaps, as the role explicitly requires academic leadership experience and a deep understanding of the university's mission.

Summary

As the analysis shows, while the candidate's strengths in business, legal affairs, and external relations align with some aspects of the role, there are critical and significant gaps in higher education leadership, academic administration, compliance, and internal community engagement. These gaps are repeatedly highlighted in the feedback and are seen as fundamental to the successful fulfillment of the university presidency. The lack of direct experience in academic settings, especially at a research university and HBCU, is viewed as a critical barrier to meeting the essential duties and responsibilities outlined for the position.