



FY 2025

CAPITAL BUDGET TESTIMONY

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Presented by Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, *President*

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Subcommittee on Capital Budget

Senator Craig J. Zucker, Chair
March 12, 2024

House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Capital Budget

Delegate Mark S. Chang, Chair
March 11, 2024



BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY | FY 2025 CAPITAL BUDGET TESTIMONY

It is my pleasure to offer testimony regarding the Governor’s proposed capital budget for FY 2025 for Bowie State University. We thank the Governor for including the necessary funds for completion of the new Communication Arts & Humanities Building, and I am pleased to report that this project is proceeding on schedule and on budget. We look forward to welcoming students, faculty and staff into this new facility for the start of the 2024–25 academic year. I agree with the Department of Legislative Services’ recommendation to approve all authorizations for this project, and I am also grateful for the operating funds included in the budget for staff and equipment to support this state-of-the-art facility. However, I must strongly disagree with the recommendation to deauthorize funds previously approved for our proposed Thurgood Marshall Library and Academic Commons project.

This project is so very critical to Bowie State University’s continued growth. With the addition 16 new academic programs since 2021, the need for twenty-first century facilities to support teaching and learning is quite urgent. Accordingly, I ask that the previously authorized planning funds be retained and that the Library and Academic Commons project be accelerated in the CIP to allow planning to begin in FY 2025.



in Historically Black Colleges & Universities (tie)
(U.S. News Best Colleges 2024)



for graduating African-Americans with bachelor’s degrees in Nursing, Biology, & Computer/ Information Sciences
(Diverse: Issues in Higher Education)



in Top Public Schools in the north (tie)
(U.S. News Best Colleges 2024)



in Best Undergraduate Teaching (tie)
(U.S. News Best Colleges 2024)



in Most Innovative Schools (tie)
(U.S. News Best Colleges 2024)



in Top Performers on Social Mobility (tie)
(U.S. News Best Colleges 2024)

21ST CENTURY FACILITIES FOR 21ST CENTURY TEACHING AND LEARNING

The demand for a Bowie State University education continues to be high, with more than 13,000 applications received for 1,000 first time, full-time slots. First-time full-time freshmen enrollment has increased by over 20% since Fall 2019, and graduate student enrollment has increased by more than 18%. We saw a 20% increase in graduate enrollment in just one year.

With the infusion of operating funds from the HBCU Coalition settlement, we have been able to launch 16 new programs since 2021.

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

5 UNDERGRADUATE UPPER DIVISION CERTIFICATES

- Data Analytics
- Entrepreneurship
- Cloud Computing
- Cybersecurity
- Internet of Things

6 BACHELOR'S DEGREES

- Philosophy, Politics & Economics
- Software Engineering
- Cyber Operations Engineering
- Data Science
- Public Health Informatics & Technology
- Health Services Administration

2 POST BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATES

- Public Health Informatics
- Clinical Pastoral Counseling

2 MASTER'S DEGREES

- Applied Biotechnology & Molecular Biology
- Internet of Things & Internet Technologies

FIRST PHD PROGRAM

- Counselor Education & Supervision

We need state-of-the-art facilities to support the continued growth in new programs. We are grateful for funds to complete the new **Martin Luther King, Jr. Communication Arts & Humanities Building**. It will replace an outdated structure with active learning classrooms, specialized labs including audio/video editing and demonstration spaces to be used by our communication majors to build skills in media production and to support our television and radio stations, WBSU-TV and WBSU Radio. It will also feature a 1,500-seat auditorium. Departments to be housed in the facility are Communications; Language, Literature & Cultural Studies; and History & Government. It will also be the new home to our Military Science Department and will support our growing ROTC program. A special space in the ROTC area is dedicated for reflection in honor of Lt. Richard Collins, III, our fallen bulldog.





NEW THURGOOD MARSHALL LIBRARY/ACADEMIC COMMONS

Built in 1977, the current 166,869 square foot Thurgood Marshall Library is the largest building on campus. With the exception of computer labs added in 1996, many of the essential library spaces have never been renovated. Instead, we continue to invest significant Facility Renewal funds to simply maintain the building which, over time, has become home to a variety of unrelated administrative offices for which there was no other space on campus. The facility has not kept pace with the technological and programmatic demands of a modern academic library.

The proposed new Library & Academic Commons project would replace the existing library, which

originally was considered for renovation in our Facilities Master Plan. After further study, as outlined in the Part I Program, renovation is not technically or financially feasible. The new proposed project complies with current state guidelines and addresses all the deficiencies identified in the existing library.

The project is a high priority for the University and is critical for our continued growth. We need to begin work on the construction of the new library project soon after the new MLK Communication Arts & Humanities building is completed. With funding approval for FY 2025 and project acceleration in the CIP, design for the project can begin as early as December 2024.



Existing library



Proposed Academic Commons project

OTHER CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

CAMPUS SAFETY

In the aftermath of bomb threats received by BSU and HBCUs across the country over a year ago and in response to the recent shooting on campus, the University allocated \$3.8 million to enhance safety on the campus. Enhancements include new perimeter fencing, an additional security guardhouse, video surveillance and weapon detection systems. We must do more to ensure that our campus community and visitors feel safe. Additional needs include:

- Surveillance camera system (\$2M)
- Enhanced exterior lighting (\$350k)
- Exterior building card access (\$485k)
- Interior classroom card access (\$450k)
- Additional gates at parking lots (\$700k)
- Generators to support 20 buildings (\$9.4M)
- Metal detectors in ten buildings (\$200k)

AGING INFRASTRUCTURE & FAILING SYSTEMS

The oldest building on the BSU campus, Harriet Tubman Hall, is over 100 years old. The university had to take that building offline just before the fall semester began due to problems with the HVAC system. The university must address the aging infrastructure by replacing old and failing boilers and chillers. The cost to replace boilers and chillers in four buildings is \$2.5 million.