



Chancellor Mark Rosenberg

Challenges of the Board of Governors and State University System

Florida Atlantic University

Boca Raton, Florida

December 1, 2006

1. I want to thank Noel and you all for inviting me to speak. As you know, I have a strong working relationship with many individuals here, particularly Lizbeth and of course our colleagues at FAU – I appreciate very much the good work of President Brogan and his team. They have opened my eyes to many important developments here in the Gold Coast!
2. I have also enjoyed working with Senator Pruitt and look forward to his leadership and that provided by another Senator – Mr. Atwater, as we move forward in this coming legislative session.
3. Knowing of my South Florida background, a number of you, have asked me about how I am adapting to Tallahassee since I have moved there nearly one year ago. Two quick stories:
 - a. Apparently there is an ordinance that requires that all autos in Leon County have their horns removed: In Miami, at any intersection where there is a light, I can open my messages on my blackberry and give them total attention until there is a horn demanding that I move through. The light is green – the horn is wondering what I am waiting for! Here in Tallahassee it took me a while to realize that this light notification system was not operative. One day at a Tallahassee intersection I did about 25 blackberrys, never lifting my head to check the light. Finally, when I was finished, I looked up amazed that I had gotten through all my email. I glanced in the rear view mirror and about 50 cars had backed up, waiting for me to finish. I think that we went through three green lights there.
 - b. On my first day here, I did the obligatory meet and greet in the Capitol. With one upstate senior senator, I was given a royal welcome for the first ten minutes. He was so happy that I was there. But the next five minutes turned into a stern lecture about the 1000 evils of our public university system. Then he finally pointed a finger at me and said, “things are gonna get rough up here for you. Are you ready?” I paused, took a breath and said, well – I did just spend 29 years in Miami...” His response: he threw his arms up and said, “well, then you will be fine. You will be fine...” As if South Florida was some tropical Babylon!

This morning, I want to speak about three things:

- first the values that inform my work at the Board of Governors;
- some larger challenges that we face in this country;
- the future as it pertains to our public universities;

VALUES

I am driven by three values:

Quality: best in class; just because we are public sector, doesn't mean that we have to settle for mediocrity;

Competitiveness: I define this as world class – a standard that is global in nature. Our students graduate into a global labor market, not an I-95 labor market. Wherever the world of work takes them or finds them, they must be prepared....

Accountability: transparency, responsibility, efficiency and professionalism in a context of performance.

These are values that I live by and I have asked my staff to embrace them as well.

What are the larger challenges? These values link with the wider world around us of course. During the past few weeks, we have learned a lot about ourselves – in particular the public debate surrounding the elections and the kinds of issues that we should be addressing over the next few years and how we should be addressing them.

No doubt, there is great change afoot and we need to be prepared. But I want to step back just a bit and examine some broader issues that will have an impact on our quality and competitiveness here in Florida:

- **population explosion;** worldwide we are adding a country the size of Germany every year;
- **diminishing land resources:** 45 million hectares a year we are losing; in South Florida – you can feel pressure already;
- **diminishing water resources:** Average American consumes 380 liters per person per day/compared to the world average of 83 liters per person per day;

- **destruction of the atmosphere:** global warming is real; greenhouse gases are a major threat;
- **we are in an energy crisis:** We need to find a quick exit from fossil based fuels, particularly for transportation fuel. We should have moved to bio-fuels long ago!

How do we fit in? I look at the state university system as an important source for solutions to these issues:

- we are 11 public universities with nearly 295,000 students;
- we graduate nearly 60,000 students this year;
- we have important partnerships with the community college system and both state and federal government;
- we provide leadership, skill, and innovative solutions for the state;

We have several challenges:

Access vs. quality. How do we accommodate the thousands of students who want and deserve a university education? But we must improve the quality to ensure global competitiveness!

Space: How to maintain and enhance our current physical plant – we have 3,500 buildings, while rising to the challenge of building another 10 million square feet over the next five years.

We have 3,500 buildings – half built before 1970.

I understand that a university is more than bricks and mortar, but without the quality classroom and laboratory environment, we can NOT attract the best and the brightest to teach our sons and daughters.

Deepening our Role in Economic Development: Finally, how can we convince the business and public affairs community that this state can not make it in the 21st century innovation economy without a strong public university system?

Support: Our students have recently stated that they recognize that a quality education is a shared responsibility! They are beginning to understand that they can not be spectators in the financing of their own education. They support a new technology fee – what a step forward!

But I worry that there is not really an understanding in this state about what it takes to move our public universities forward. Every year we are ranked and sized up by a variety of organizations and agencies – the NSF, The NRC, Carnegie and the US News and World Report. There are many variables that the publication examines:

Peer assessment, average freshman retention rate, % of class under 20; % of faculty who are full time, acceptance rate, and average alumni giving rate.

Let me focus on alumni giving rate: this is defined as the average percentage of alumni who gave to their school during 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. It is an “indirect measure of student satisfaction.”

I know that since so many of you are graduates of Florida publics, you will want to know how we are doing in alumni giving:

Here is the data:

UF – 18%
FSU 22%
USF 6%
FIU 4%
FAU 2%
FAMU 4%
FGCU 15%
UWF 7%

Now, we will do our part to improve the rankings of your alma mater, but you must dig in and provide more support. The higher our institutions are ranked, the easier it will be to attract the best and brightest faculty. Good faculty bring good students and demand more. You raise the value of our university assets when you provide your own financial support. Again, building a great university system is a share responsibility.

Finally, I know that a tendency that many of you might have is to dismiss this generation of students as apathetic and disconnected.

I want to assure you that nothing could be further from the truth. Our student government leaderships and thousands of clubs are full of students who will become our future leaders. Give them credit – they are our future and they are eager to help us improve the quality of life in our state.

So this morning, I have outlined the values that will guide us, some of the larger global challenges that will have an impact on Florida, some specific challenges confronting our system – including access and quality, space, deepening our role in economic development, and support – particularly from graduates.

As Chancellor, I pledge to you that we will work for higher quality, more competitiveness, and greater accountability as we prepare our state’s human assets for the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. Thank you.