

MINUTES
FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE/
GOVERNOR'S ACCESS AND DIVERSITY COMMISSION
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA
JANUARY 26, 2006

Ms. McDevitt, Chair, convened the joint meeting of the Board's Student Affairs Committee and of the Governor's Access and Diversity Commission at 10:15 a.m., in the Grand Ballroom, J. Wayne Reitz Union, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, January 26, 2006, with the following Board members present: Dr. Akshay Desai; Ann Duncan; Charles Edwards; Joe Goldberg; Dr. Stanley Marshall; Bill McCollum; Lynn Pappas; Ava Parker; Dr. Martha Peláez; Tico Perez; Carolyn K. Roberts; John Temple; and Commissioner John Winn. Dr. Zach Zachariah joined the meeting by telephone.

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Ms. McDevitt welcomed Board and Commission members to the joint meeting. She said the focus of the Board's Student Affairs Committee since last summer had been to identify and look at programs in place and to look at ways the universities could recruit better prepared students or provide better access for students to the universities. The universities were sharing best practices. She said she had assembled a working group of institutional representatives to assist with this information-gathering, as they were the professionals in the field. The group included representatives from K-12 and from the community colleges. Their mission was to look at university programs and present best practices.

She said Governor Bush was proposing several budget priorities to provide assistance and incentives to recruit minority and underrepresented students to postsecondary education and to retain them after enrollment. The Governor had signed an Executive Order earlier in the month to outline these initiatives and to appoint members to the Access and Diversity Commission. She said the Commission, with the members of the Board Committee, could be a forum for discussion, and to evaluate best practices. In addition, the members were in place to advocate for the Governor's initiatives in the 2006 Legislature, particularly the need-based aid initiatives and the mentoring partnerships. She said the work of the Student Affairs Committee was to be done in two phases, with phase one executed in conjunction with the Governor's Commission and completed by June 30, 2006. Phase one was to be the advocacy of the initiatives in the Legislature, both the budget initiatives and the initiatives requiring substantive legislation.

Ms. McDevitt welcomed Mr. Joe Goldberg, the new student member of the Board of Governors. Mr. Goldberg said he was pleased to serve on this Board and looked forward to participating in the work of this Commission. Ms. Parker introduced two students from the University of Florida she had invited to participate, Ms. Denise Jean-

Louis, representing the UF Black Student Union, and Ms. Katrina Ruiz, representing the UF Hispanic Student Association.

Ms. McDevitt introduced the members of the Commission. Commissioner Winn said he was pleased to serve as a member of the Board Committee and of this Commission. He said he had worked with Governor Bush on the One Florida Initiative in 1999 and would bring One Florida information to the next meeting. He said Florida needed to continue to grow as a diverse state. Also serving as members of the Commission, and present for this meeting, were: Dr. Oswald Bronson; Dr. Castell Bryant; Dr. Bernie Machen; Mr. Darryl Marshall; Ms. Carmen Brown; Dr. Lawrence Morehouse; Dr. David Colburn; Ms. Keneshia Grant; and Dr. Gordon Chavis.

2. Overview of the Process; Charge to the Commission

Ms. McDevitt reviewed Public Records and Sunshine Law requirements for members of the Commission, reminding them that their notes might constitute public records and that any two members should not discuss Commission business outside the public meetings of the Commission. Any materials presented to the Commission in the course of its business are public records, as are email messages regarding Commission business. Meetings of the Commission are noticed and deliberations of the Commission are public and in open meeting. She suggested that members direct questions to staff to avoid violating these provisions of law. She said a brief summary of the requirements were in the notebook provided to members.

Dr. Minear reviewed the Governor's proposed initiatives to recruit and retain low income youth, as well as children of parents who did not attend college. She noted that, although minority enrollment at the universities had continued to increase this past fall, the growth in non-Hispanic Black enrollment had slowed. In looking at the actual numbers, there was an increase in the enrollment of in-state non-Hispanic Black students, but the universities experienced a slight decline in the enrollment of out-of-state non-Hispanic Black students. She said the universities had already begun discussing possible outreach tools to reach these students. She added that the effort was not just to be directed at enrolling new students, but to provide support to students through to their graduation. She said enrollment and graduation data could be found in the notebook at Tab 7. She said that, in Florida, trend lines showed an increase in the percentage of adults in each racial and ethnic category obtaining the baccalaureate degree. The gap, however, between the percentage of adults from underrepresented minority groups and the percentage of White adults with at least the baccalaureate continues to widen.

Dr. Minear said the Governor had proposed eight specific initiatives. She said information on each of these initiatives was in the notebook at Tab 4. She reviewed the recommendations, as follows: the Governor had recommended an increase in need-based aid of \$35.8 million for Florida Student Assistance Grants; an increase of \$1 million in the Financial Assistance line item in the SUS budget; an increase in need-

based aid funding for the Independent Historically Black Colleges and Universities; an increase of \$3 million in funding for the Florida Partnership with the College Board; an increase in funding for the Stanley Tate Project STARS Program; an increase in funding for the College Reach Out Program; funding to create a Matching Grant Program for First Generation Scholarships; and creation of University "Focus on Achievement" Mentoring Partnerships Targeting Middle School Students. She said the Volunteer Florida Foundation would team up with Campus Compact to train mentors for middle school students and to help them see college as attainable and possible.

3. Presentation and Commission Discussion

Dr. Joe Glover, Associate Provost, UF, said the emphasis should be on widening the pipeline, from kindergarten, to grades 1 to 3, to middle school, and through high school to university. He said this pipeline now looked like a sieve, and narrowed at each junction. He said in 2003, of the 18-44 year old cohort, 36.8 percent were African-American, Hispanic or Native American. In the SUS undergraduate population, less than 33 percent were from these ethnic groups, and of this number, out-of-state students were included. He said that a diverse student body strengthened the university environment. He said UF was also targeting students who were the first in their family to attend college. He said that the statistics showed that 59 percent of high school graduates attended college whose parents had not attended college; 75 percent of high school graduates attended college if one parent had attended college; 93 percent of students attended college if one parent had earned a B.A. He noted that, in Florida, the median salary of a high school graduate was \$23,000 per year, while the median salary of a baccalaureate degree holder was \$40,000 per year.

Dr. Glover reviewed some of the barriers to successful college admission. He said academic preparation should begin as early as middle school. Students needed good academic and student support services, including trained advisors. He said some admissions practices acted as barriers. He said there were also cultural factors, noting that financial aid applications were very complicated and that some students' families were debt-averse.

He said there were a dizzying array of programs to attract minority and underrepresented students to the universities, but no group was designed to attack the problem of underrepresented minority groups in a systematic manner. He said it was important to have targeted support services; the university could not afford to wait for a student to falter. Finances served as a barrier. Students needed help with learning and study skills. He said it was critical to track student progress. Students should not be admitted to huge campuses and then be lost. He noted that proactive strategies had an enormous impact on the graduation rate. He emphasized the value of a diverse staff and faculty and the need to reduce the student/faculty ratio. He commented that minority students needed more tutoring and advising assistance. Family awareness and involvement in the recruiting and motivating of students in the university experience was important.

Dr. Patricia Telles-Irvin, Vice President for Student Affairs, UF, presented a case study. She said that a student in middle school should be helped to think about going to college as a real possibility. She said UF had partnerships with high schools and students identified as low achievers to expose them to the State University System. She described the College Reach-Out Program and said that relationships with parents were critical. She stressed the importance of access to need-based aid, particularly as the federal government reduces the availability of student aid. She said the program Dr. Machen had initiated, the Florida Opportunity Scholarship Program for first generation students, was very important. She added that mentoring was also very important to college students.

Ms. McDevitt inquired whether the Governor's proposed initiatives were the right approach. Dr. Telles-Irvin said they were exactly the right things to be doing, but the commitment needed to be for the long-term.

Ms. Keneshia Grant commented that the Governor's recommendations focused on need-based aid for students with the greatest demonstrated need. She asked whether there was a recommendation for similar need-based aid for other students who demonstrated need, but did not fall into this category of greatest need. Ms. McDevitt said that would be part of the work for the second phase of the Committee's work. She noted that some institutions were doing better in providing student financial assistance. She suggested that this might be an opportunity for the University Foundations to develop fund-raising programs to enhance these new recommended programs. President Machen said the UF Foundation was focusing on raising funds for these programs and there was already an interest in them among donors. He noted that the Bright Futures Scholarship was not nearly enough to cover all the expenses of a UF student.

Dr. Bryant said she was interested in data regarding student attendance from families with no college background. She said it would be helpful to have some further information on the educational pipeline, i.e., ethnic breakdown, retention rate from the ninth grade to graduation, public/private school, and city/rural area. She said this would assist widening the pipeline. She said it was important to have this baseline data from K-12 that would help define how the pipeline for scholarships would look.

Commissioner Winn said that data were available. He said the Department of Education also had information on student scores on the SAT/ACT whose parents had no college experience. He said that superintendents and principals were encouraging students in the underrepresented groups to take the PSAT and the SAT; a number of talented students had been discovered from that pool.

Dr. Bryant asked Dr. Minear to assemble the retention rates of students from the ninth grade through high school graduation and to review the graduation rates of underrepresented students. Ms. McDevitt added that it would be helpful to know what

was being done in the middle and high schools to encourage students to go to college. Commissioner Winn said not enough was being done in the middle schools.

Ms. Parker said there were many programs in place, for which increases in funding were being recommended, such as the Florida Partnership with College Board, Project STARS, and CROP. She wondered whether there was a lot of interest by students and parents in these programs without enough money or whether students and parents were not aware of the programs in place. Commissioner Winn said these programs had incredible success. The limitations were in the funding. He added that there were also instances where students were graduating from high school and were still not prepared for university work. Ms. Parker inquired how the outreach programs were advertised. The Commissioner responded that they were advertised by the local school districts. Dr. Bryant recommended that the Commission might want to look at the criteria for these programs to be sure they were not all targeting the same students and that they were reaching all who might be eligible.

Ms. Katrina Ruiz, representing UF's Hispanic Association, said she came from Hialeah, a low-income community, and that both her parents were UF graduates. She said the largest issue was that many parents lacked awareness of the universities. She said information and brochures needed to target specific audiences, and mentoring programs needed to begin early. She added that college visits could be helpful to students unfamiliar with university and campus life.

Ms. Denise Jean-Louis, representing UF's Black Student Union, said the environment on a college campus, the diversity of the population, was important to minority students. Universities needed to be cognizant of cultural and language differences, especially for parents.

Dr. Desai said that any marketing/communication strategy needed to be organized in terms of the end users. He said these programs should have accountable and measurable outcomes. Ms. McDevitt concurred. She inquired whether there were mechanisms in place to track the success of these programs.

Commissioner Winn said there was a high degree of integrity in these programs. Ms. McDevitt agreed, but said the Commission needed to have additional information as to how the middle schools and high schools were using these programs.

Dr. Colburn said it was important to do this "right." He asked whether staff had looked at the "Carolina Covenant" and how that program was working. Ms. McDevitt said that was one of the programs she had asked staff to provide further information. She said there was a similar program in Indiana, and there might be others.

Mr. Edwards said it was not enough to recruit the students to enter the universities. He said he would ask each university to track students and see what is

done to be sure students were making progress to graduation. He said he understood that USF had a good system in place to track every student who entered the university.

Ms. Parker suggested that at some future meeting staff should invite a counselor from a middle school or from a high school to address the Commission. She said it would be helpful to hear the experience of counselors who have direct contact with students. What else could they do? She said that many of the recommendations were for increased funding. Is direction provided as to how the money should be spent?

Dr. Minear said the notebook included a tentative timeline for activities of the Commission at Tab 6. She said the questions from members would help the institutional team in its work. She said the institutional team would meet February 9, 2006, to discuss these issues from the university perspective, and whether refinements were necessary to keep students from falling through any cracks. They would also discuss the criteria for these programs and whether they were targeting the right students. Mrs. Roberts asked whether universities were working with community groups, such as churches.

Ms. McDevitt said the next meeting of the Commission would be held February 23, 2006, at Florida A & M University, at which time questions from the Commission would be answered. She said she would ask representatives from middle school to report on initiatives to involve parents. She wondered whether it would be helpful to hear from a parent representative.

Dr. Morehouse said he would be interested to see data on students in regular, honors and gifted programs, by race. He said he was interested to know whether there was any correlation to retention. He said he was also interested in the impact on student performance from participation in extra-curricular activities that were academic-related. Commissioner Winn said the Department had that data and was working on correlation studies to confirm or deny these hypotheses, also any correlations between course-taking and performance and student access to community college or university. He said this was the reason that efforts made at the lower elementary grades were so important.

Dr. Maribeth Ehasz, Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Services, UCF, said UCF did track students to see who was successful. She said they also had a math project underway, and that Advanced Placement classes in high school made a difference in student success. She said every student was assigned an advisor to track the student's progress. Ms. McDevitt asked if UCF could share the data with the group when appropriate.

Ms. McDevitt asked Commission members to view the proposed schedule and advise staff if they had problems with it.

Mr. Winn offered a motion that the Student Affairs Committee and the Commission adopt the Governor's initiatives. Further, because the recommendation for an additional \$1 million was found in the Financial Assistance line item in the SUS budget, Commissioner Winn offered a motion to amend the SUS Legislative Budget Request to include that amount. Ms. Duncan seconded the motions, and all members of the Board Committee and the Governor's Commission concurred.

President Machen said these were important first steps. He said it was also critical to expand the pipeline to increase diversity. He said he would also ask the Commission to consider recommending in-state tuition for the children of undocumented adults. Ms. McDevitt said this topic should be discussed. She noted that legislation had been introduced during the last Legislative Session; the legislation had not passed.

Commissioner Winn said the work of this Commission was an outstanding example that improving education required the participation of all the education sectors.

Ms. McDevitt said the state depended on educated citizens in the workforce. Florida needed the most educated workforce possible. This would improve the quality of life in the state, as well. She thanked the members of the Committee and of the Commission for their participation. She said she was confident of success in their work.

4. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m., January 26, 2006.

Sheila McDevitt, Chair

Mary-Anne Bestebreurtje,
Corporate Secretary