MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
INNOVATION AND ONLINE COMMITTEE
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA
OCTOBER 30, 2019

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Ed Morton convened the meeting at 10:56 a.m. on October 30, 2019, with the following members present: Vice Chair Darlene Jordan (joined 11:04 a.m.); Tim Cerio; Dr. Shawn Felton; H. Wayne Huizenga, Jr.; Zenani D. Johnson; Syd Kitson; Eric Silagy (joined 10:59 a.m.); Kent Stermon (joined 11:00 a.m.), and Norm Tripp. A quorum was established.

2. Approval of Committee Meeting Minutes

Governor Tripp moved that the committee approve the minutes of the August 28, 2019, meeting, as presented. Governor Kitson seconded the motion, and the members concurred.

3. Consideration of Online Courses in Medical Schools Admissions Process

Chair Morton said that in previous meetings, he had heard comments that implied certain of our admissions processes in medical schools may not be embracing of credits that students earn online. He said that he felt the Committee should have a discussion with medical school representatives to better understand how online courses are taken into consideration in the admissions process, and to make sure the online courses and programs in the SUS are designed in a way that could help address their concerns.

Dr. John Fogarty, Dean of the Florida State University Medical School and Chair of the Council of Medical School Deans, said that admissions criteria are set by each medical school. Schools look at more than grades and academic performance in the admissions process; they also look at human factors, including communication and relationship skills, life experiences, the ability to work together in teams, and leadership roles. The admissions team also must weigh the quality of the institution from which the student is applying. He said these admissions criteria have served the medical schools well.

Dr. Fogarty said that FSU does not treat online courses any differently than face-to-face courses, other than lab courses. Some medical schools require a secondary application to obtain more information before accepting applicants for interviews, and many of the SUS medical schools will ask about online education during that time. It is a highly competitive process.

Dr. Fogarty said that the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) leaves admissions policies up to individual medical schools, but does acknowledge that

acceptance of online coursework has increased in recent years, although the type of courses that can be taken online vary widely. He said that the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) essentially leaves these issues to medical schools. He referred to an article in Inside Higher Education which reflected that attitudes toward online education are changing. He said the SUS medical schools do not take the hard line on online education that some schools mentioned in the article take.

He said that several of the SUS medical school deans recently met with the Steering Committee, a group of provosts guiding the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Online Education. He said the deans in attendance all agreed that some courses aligned well with online formats, but questioned whether others, such as writing courses, would align well.

Chair Morton said that at the faculty breakfast that morning, the question came up as to why online education was not as acceptable as it should be at the SUS medical schools. This is an issue that is beginning to be amplified throughout the system. He asked the medical school deans if they would consider meeting with the distance learning leaders to inform them as to what is needed to make the deans more comfortable with online education and to make the deans more knowledgeable and comfortable with the progress that is being made in the system. The deans may want to talk to some of the faculty who teach these courses online and gain their perspective on student performance. He said there were questions not just on chemistry and the sciences, but also on why other courses, such as English and mathematics, were looked upon ambiguously by medical schools.

Chair Morton also asked the deans if they would consider gathering some data on the performance of students who had taken online courses versus those who had taken those courses in the classroom.

Dr. Fogarty responded that the Council would look at that, and stated that he had no problem with students learning the content online, but medical schools look beyond that to teach students how to be physicians, to have the professional behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, and skills they need, and he does not think that those things are necessarily identified online. The outside experiences they have might tell the schools more about them beyond the courses they take online.

Dr. Fogarty also indicated that the second request would be tough to ferret out, because most medical schools do not like to look back and compare students; they expect all students, once they are admitted, to succeed. He said he would ask the question of some of the medical schools' admissions people.

Dr. Fogarty said he would be glad to meet with representatives of those providing online courses so they can better understand each other.

4. <u>Meeting Workforce Needs: Certificates</u>

Chair Morton indicated that the Committee had asked in the past about how the system is preparing students to meet workforce needs of the region, the state, and the country, and that staff had been asked to present the first step of that analysis.

Dr. Nancy McKee provided the Committee with the definitions of college credit certificate programs and non-college credit certificates found in Board regulations, saying both definitions included an organized curriculum of study; both led to specific educational or occupational goals; both resulted in the award of a certificate or diploma; and the university set the number of credit hours or length of the program.

Dr. McKee said the SUS has 908 for-credit certificate programs, with 581 of those (64%) being at the graduate level. The University of Florida had the most graduate certificate programs (159), followed closely by the University of South Florida with 145. UF also had 50 certificate programs at the professional level. The SUS had 277 undergraduate certificate programs, with Florida international University having the most (58), followed closely by the University of Florida with 53 and the University of Central Florida with 49. She stated that neither Polytechnic nor New College offered for-credit certificate programs at this point.

Dr. McKee said that over 5,000 for-credit certificates were awarded in the system in 2018-19. The University of Central Florida awarded the most with 1,276, followed by the University of Florida with 1,015.

She indicated that 355 of the for-credit certificate programs were offered online. UCF and the University of West Florida were the only two institutions that offered more certificate programs online than they offered face-to-face. She said that, system-wide, 30% of the undergraduate for-credit certificate programs were offered online and 46% of the graduate ones were.

Dr. McKee indicated that 542 (60%) of the for-credit certificate programs were in Areas of Strategic Emphasis, with most of those being in STEM or Health programs. University of Florida had the most certificate programs in those two areas, by far; the University of Central Florida had the most in Education and FIU the most in Global Competitiveness. Several universities were close in the number of certificate programs they offered in areas identified by the Gap Analysis.

She indicated that she would be meeting with university representatives to draft a taxonomy for use with non-credit certificates. The taxonomy would be approved by the Steering Committee, which is guiding the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Online Education. Upon that group's approval, the Board Office will distribute a survey to capture non-credit certificate information in a way to better articulate the activities in that area.

She said that some institutions have started offering badges, and others are starting to have conversations about doing so. The term "badges" does not have a system-wide definition, and one needs to be developed before information can be collected in a consistent manner. Other credentialing terms that are frequently seen in the literature, such as micro-credentials, nano-degrees, micro-Masters, and stackable credentials, need to be discussed in the system to see how they fit with efforts to meet workforce needs.

Governor Felton cautioned that the Board not overregulate these new approaches so universities will continue to have flexibility to be responsive in meeting regional workforce needs. Chancellor Criser said the discussion is not about regulation as much as it is about organizing the inventory in the system in a way that allows universities and the system to share information with each other, the Florida College System, the Department of Economic Opportunity, technical schools, and employers themselves. He said he is excited about the online aspect that allows universities to go beyond a region.

Governor Scott indicated that a library of these online programs and courses would be useful so the system would not have unnecessary duplication of programs and so that students could have easy access to those programs and courses. Governor Lautenbach said that with the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Online Education, all the universities are involved and the system is well on its way to accomplish that effort.

5. Mid-course Correction of the Performance Indicators and Goals

Governor Morton reminded the Committee that Quality and Affordability performance metrics and goals were presented during the June and October meetings as part of the mid-course correction of those listed in the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education. He said today's focus would be on the Access performance indicators and goals.

Dr. McKee stated that the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education had two Access performance indicators that are recommended for consolidation into one: "Number of undergraduate student credit hours in online education" and "Number of undergraduate FTE enrolled in Online courses." The new performance indicator would be "Percent of undergraduate FTE in online courses," with a corresponding goal of 40%. She said the system is on track to meet the 40% goal by 2025.

She said there are parallel performance indicators for graduate students and the recommendation is to consolidate them into one, as well. The new performance indicator would be, "Percent of graduate FTE in online courses," with the goal being 35%. She said the system is on track to meet this performance indicator by 2025.

She recommended no change to the next two performance indicators and goals:

> "Percentage of SUS undergraduate students enrolling in one or more online courses each year," with a goal of 75%

"Percentage of SUS graduate students enrolling in one or more online courses each year," with a goal of 50%

She said the system is at 72% now for undergraduate students and is on track to meet the 75% goal. The system has already exceeded the 50% goal with 51% of graduate student online enrollment. However, the provosts on the Steering Committee felt strongly that the current goal of 50% reflected the optimal mix for graduate students.

Dr. McKee indicated that the last Access performance indicator was "Percentage of academic degree programs in the Board of Governors Academic Program Inventory that have at least one major offered fully online," with a goal of 60%. She said that the inventory of online programs will be updated in December and she will be presenting the data to the Steering Committee in January for review and consideration of whether the indicator and goal should be revised. Her recommendation was to reflect "To Be Developed" for this performance indicator and goal and bring it back to the Committee at a later date.

Governor Silagy questioned whether the goals for undergraduate and graduate students taking online courses were optimal goals. Dr. McKee said the provosts had discussed that issue during a Steering Committee meeting and felt that both percentages reflected the optimal goals. Governor Silagy stated that graduate enrollment had already exceeded the goal and said he is trying to get a sense of whether the goals were truly optimal. Chair Morton asked her to talk to the appropriate people and respond to Governor Silagy's question at a future meeting. Governor Lamb requested data to support the 50% and 75% goals for undergraduate and graduate enrollments to explain why they are optimal.

Governor Levine noted that the performance indicator that addresses academic programs does not provide any guidance as to the type majors that should be offered online to meet workforce needs. Dr. McKee indicated that when the Steering Committee reviews the updated inventory, those provosts will make a recommendation as to the re-wording of that performance indicator, possibly focusing on Areas of Strategic Emphasis.

Governor Tripp moved that the updated performance indicators and goals be approved for the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education, and Governor Huizenga seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. <u>Concluding Remarks and Adjournment</u>

Chair Morton adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

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Edward Morton, Chair

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Nancy C. McKee, Ph.D.
Associate Vice Chancellor