

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS

January 21, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Confirmation of Reappointment of the President for University of Central Florida

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Confirm the reappointment of Dr. John Hitt as the president of the University of Central Florida.

**AUTHORITY FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS ACTION**

Article IX, Section 7, Florida Constitution; Section 1001.706, Florida Statutes.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Subsection 1001.706(6)(a), Florida Statutes, provides, "The Board of Governors shall confirm the presidential selection and reappointment by a university board of trustees as a means of acknowledging that system cooperation is expected."

On November 2, 2015, the Board of Trustees of the University of Central Florida approved an amendment to Dr. Hitt's employment contract, unanimously reappointing Dr. Hitt to serve as the president of the University of Central Florida. The reappointment extends the term of Dr. Hitt's contract through June 30, 2016, and Chair Marcos Marchena is requesting confirmation of Dr. Hitt's reappointment by the Board of Governors.

Under Dr. Hitt's leadership as president of the University of Central Florida, the university has grown from a commuter school serving 21,200 students to a residential research university serving more than 63,000 students. Expanding access to a higher education has long been a paramount goal of President Hitt's and under his leadership, UCF entered into a partnership with six state colleges to create the *DirectConnect* program. Under the *DirectConnect* program, students with an associate of arts or associate of sciences degree from one of the colleges are guaranteed automatic admission to UCF. This program has been tremendously successful and become a national model for other universities both in Florida and nationwide.

Recently, Dr. Hitt was named one of the 10 most innovative university presidents in America by *Washington Monthly Magazine*, and UCF was ranked as one of the "Most Innovative" universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. These honors stem from

innovative partnerships that President Hitt formed in recent years which include the University Innovation Alliance and the Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities. The University Innovation Alliance is a partnership between UCF and ten other large, public research universities, including Arizona State University, that functions as its own innovation cluster to develop and nationally disseminate practical models for implementation of high-impact approaches to student success. The Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities, formed with USF and FIU, is a partnership that is designed to increase the number of graduates in high-demand areas and the number of underrepresented and limited-income students graduating with the skills required by Florida employers.

In addition to these partnerships, Dr. Hitt has, since the beginning of his tenure, stressed the importance of partnerships as being key to achieving UCF's goals. In 2014-15, UCF partnered with more than 450 businesses and governmental units to provide students the opportunity to participate in academic service-learning courses, which supported over 8,600 students and generated almost 175,000 hours of student labor valued at more than \$4.5 million. UCF also collaborates with Lockheed Martin and supplies the contractor with more than 500 engineering interns each year. On average, six of 10 interns who complete the program are offered full-time employment with Lockheed.

Finally, President Hitt is a champion of online learning. In the 2014-15 academic year, 77.7 percent of the UCF student body enrolled in one or more online classes and 37.8 percent of all student credit hours produced were generated by online classes. UCF also created a professional development program for faculty, training more than 2,000 UCF faculty members in the design and production of online courses. The results of these efforts have not gone unnoticed. Recently, UCF's online programming won the United States Distance Learning Association's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Award for Best Practices.

Additional highlights of Dr. Hitt's leadership of the University of Central Florida are included in the Board materials, as well as a copy of the Presidential Evaluation Report prepared by Dr. Constantine Curris, a consultant retained by the Board of Trustees to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of Dr. Hitt's performance.

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- Supporting Documentation Included:**
1. Letter from the University of Central Florida Board of Trustees Chair
  2. Summary of Key Contract Terms
  3. Highlights of Leadership
  4. Performance Evaluation

**Facilitators/Presenters:**

Tom Kuntz, Chair, Board of Governors  
Marcos Marchena, Chair, University of Central Florida Board of Trustees