

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
LAKELAND, FLORIDA
January 26, 2017

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and its Committees are accessible at <http://www.flbog.edu>*

1. Call to Order

Governor Wendy Link called the meeting to order at 9:54 a.m. January 26, 2017 with Committee members Doyle, Jordan, Morton, and Valverde present. A quorum was established. Other Board members in attendance were Governors Beard, Frost, Hebert, Huizenga, Kitson, Kuntz, Lautenbach, Levine, Tripp, and Tyson.

2. Approval of Select Committee Minutes, November 3, 2016

Governor Link called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Select Committee's November 3, 2016 meeting. A motion was made by Governor Doyle, seconded by Governor Morton, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Florida Polytechnic University Implementation Status Report

Governor Link said that the Committee's next item was to receive Florida Polytechnic University's latest implementation status report from President Randy Avent.

President Avent indicated that the University has completed five of the six legislative implementation mandates and that the only remaining mandate is regional accreditation from the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS). He said that Poly achieved candidacy status in June 2016 and that Compliance Certification documentation had been due to SACS at the beginning of January and that it was submitted as requested. He noted that SACS requested that Poly submit Compliance Certification documentation following the University's Fall 2016 semester. President Avent said that the president of Jacksonville State University has been assigned chairmanship of the SACS Accreditation Committee and that Poly representatives have had a number of conversations with him. He said that the Accreditation Committee is scheduled to visit Poly February 13-15, 2017. Dr. Avent said that everything appears to

be going very well for the site visit. He noted that the University conducted a mock site visit a few weeks ago with its consultant and that it went very well. He indicated that the University was thoroughly engaged in preparation and that everyone at Poly was looking forward to the February visit.

President Avent reminded the Select Committee that one condition of SACS accreditation is to have a graduating class. He said he was happy to report that the University graduated its first class on January 3rd, 2017. Dr. Avent said that 18 students graduated, 14 of whom were graduate students and 4 of whom earned baccalaureates.

President Avent said that he has been asked whether Poly graduates are having difficulty finding jobs because they graduated from an unaccredited institution. He said that only one Poly graduate did not yet have a job but that he has an offer in hand. President Avent said that the remaining graduates all have jobs with the exception of one who has been accepted into a doctoral program at the University of California Irvine. President Avent indicated that two Poly graduates have started companies of their own. He noted that the University did not yet have a great deal of data with regard to salaries but that Poly had conducted a survey of its graduates and nine responded, indicating that two undergraduates were making \$40,000-\$50,000, and that one master's-level graduate was making over \$110,000.

President Avent then turned to the subject of Poly students transferring to other SUS institutions. President Avent thanked Jason Jones in the Chancellor's Office for providing assistance in gathering this data. He said that 194 students have left Poly since it opened its doors and that, of those, only 25 transferred to other SUS universities. President Avent indicated that, of the 25 transfers to other SUS institutions, 15 left for non-STEM majors and, therefore, that only ten transferred from Poly to other SUS institutions and remained in STEM disciplines. He indicated, further, that eight of those 10 students transferred into majors that Poly did not offer. He also noted that 25 students transferred from other SUS institutions to Poly.

Governor Link asked whether other students who left Poly had simply dropped out of college. President Avent said that it was possible that some of the students had transferred to Florida College System institutions. Governor Link noted that because Poly was both new and small, it would be beneficial for the University to follow-up with transfers in order to ascertain why they had left and what they were currently doing. President Avent indicated that the University was institutionalizing an exit interview process. He said that the process would require exiting students to meet with counselors in order to determine why they were leaving. Chair Link asked if transferring was related to the difficulty of Poly's curriculum. President Avent said that he believed that was clearly one reason. He indicated that many entering Poly students struggle with calculus before taking more rigorous math classes. President Avent

reminded the Committee that, at the Board's 2+2 Workshop, it was noted that students' grades on their most recent math class was one of the best predictors of future success.

President Avent then turned to recent University accomplishments. First, he noted that Poly had been advised by the U.S. Department of Education that it has been accepted to begin offering federal aid to students. The University was now working on packaging and dispersing federal Pell Grants. Secondly, Poly was the recipient of a \$1.5M grant from the Florida Department of Transportation. Third, Poly was part of a winning team to establish a transportation communications infrastructure for interconnected vehicles. Fourth, the University is a member of a team comprised of several other institutions selected by the Federal Department of Transportation as one of 10 national proving grounds for autonomous connected vehicles. Finally, he noted that a Poly student was recently awarded a \$12,000 grant from NASA to study radiation in space.

President Avent then thanked the Board for the opportunity to host the meeting. He said that he appreciated the opportunity to showcase Poly's main building. He noted that the building was on the cover of the 54th edition of *Landmarks of Humanities* which highlights global landmarks ranging from pre-civilization to 21st Century globalism.

Chair Link thanked President Avent for his presentation and asked if there were questions or observations. President Avent was asked what strategies the University had for ensuring that Poly graduates remained and took jobs in Florida. President Avent said that he believed that only one Poly graduate has taken a job outside of Florida. He said that Poly's next graduating class would be approximately 35 students, with more bachelor's degrees conferred than the first graduating class. When Poly's initial freshmen class graduates in 2018, there will be an even larger number of degrees conferred. Governor Valverde asked whether the University has any proactive programs that entice Poly graduates to remain in Florida and whether such programs connect industry with graduates. President Avent indicated that Poly had a great deal of career development infrastructure in place and that the University worked with business and industry to ensure that current students had internship opportunities and graduates had job offers. He said that Poly has more than 90 industry partners and that an entire University team develops relationships with business and industry. He said that Poly's project-based curriculum included internships and serving on industry advisory boards. President Avent indicated that the University's curriculum involved solving real-world problems as well as theory and fundamentals.

Chair Link then asked President Avent to confirm that, although there could be no promises, the University was on-track to achieve accreditation in December 2017 and that June 2017 was still a possibility. President Avent confirmed those dates. Board Chair Kuntz thanked President Avent for his presentation and said that he was pleased with the progress that Poly has made.

4. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Link adjourned the Committee at 10:08 a.m.

Wendy Link, Chair

R.E. LeMon,
Associate Vice Chancellor,
Academic and Student Affairs