

# Operational Goals FYE21 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report

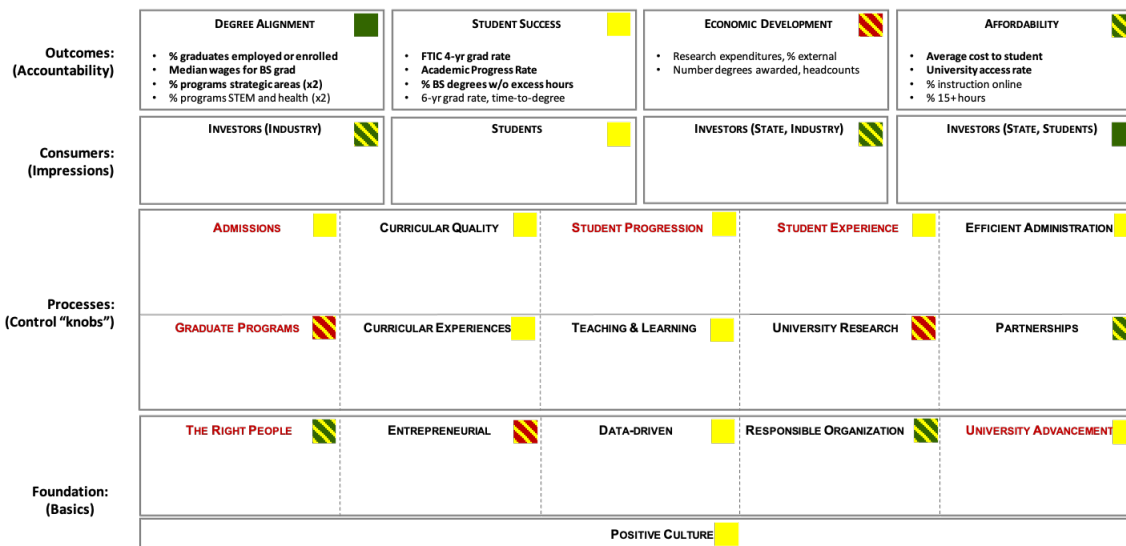
## **ASSESSMENT PLAN 2020-21** **FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY**

Interim Report  
to the Board of Governors  
on Operational Goals

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## Introduction

In FYE21 the University transitioned to a balanced scorecard approach in implementing our strategic plan. This balanced scorecard is shown below in Figure 1 and has our desired outcomes as its top layer. Note that these metrics are taken from the Accountability Report's Performance Based Funding (PBF) metrics (in black) and Key Performance Indicators (in grey). These outcomes also align to the four priorities in our Strategic Plan, which include: (1) Degree Alignment; (2) Student Success; (3) Economic Development; and (4) Affordability.



**Figure 1:** Balanced Scorecard method for implementing our 2018-2023 Advancing to Excellence strategic plan.

Achieving these outcomes require we know who the “consumer” is for each goal, what expectations they have and their impressions on how we are doing. For instance, degree alignment is measured by our programs of strategic emphasis, percent of graduates employed and starting salaries. To succeed in this goal, industry wants us to offer programs that meet their workforce needs, and graduate students that have strong technical skills, can communicate and work in multi-disciplinary teams, are adaptable and can innovate. To create these impressions there are number of initiatives and processes we focus on that are listed in the layer below consumers. These initiatives are where we have the most control and they basically allow us to “steer the ship” in the desired direction. Finally, a foundational layer provides the organizational construct and culture that supports success in the process layer.

Each element in the scorecard has benchmark metrics, which are developed as we build the initiatives, and a “stoplight” score on our progress thus far. In years past, we recognized that one of our threats was trying to do too much instead of focusing on the most important items, and this scorecard is designed to help us alleviate that problem. With that in mind, we focused our FYE21 efforts primarily in six areas: Admissions, Student Progression, Student Experience, Graduate Programs, Faculty Development (Right People) and University Funding (Advancement). We also noted that the pandemic left us in a tohubohu and thus our workplan needed to remain flexible during the year.

## **Admissions**

Despite having a very strong year in FYE20 followed by a pandemic, we increased Fall 2021 FTIC applications (+20%) and FTIC fall and summer deposits (+75%) YOY while our quality remained strong (admitted SAT is currently 1328, admitted ACT flat at 30, and GPA increased to 4.3). Leadership in this area was superb, as the current percentage of Fall 2021 FTIC deposits from the Top 10% of their high school class increased from 32% to 38%, and deposits in the top quartile improved from 49% to 67%. Our transfer applications are up 38% YOY, but with new PBF metrics on two-year transfer graduation rates this will hurt us overall and we must develop a plan for managing this. Out-of-state applications increased by 66% and FTIC deposits in this category have doubled. New spring undergraduate students also doubled. With a strong Florida economy and low unemployment rate (4.7%), and the turmoil surrounding international students and COVID, our graduate applicant pool is down.

We introduced three pipeline programs focused on improving outreach and underserved representation. We are up 7% in female and 28% in Latino FTIC deposits. Total Black/African American Fall 2021 undergraduate deposits increased from 8.2% to 11.9% (YOY). The pipeline programs we have designed include a summer cohort, a First-Year STEM Program (FYSP) and an innovative certification program that will help grow all diversity in the outyears. This summer certification program is offered to students based on their interest and gaps and is designed to better prepare them for the rigors of an engineering curriculum while providing them a coding certification if they successfully complete the program.

We added new concentrations, programs and degree enhancements and signed an MOU with Florida Southern College for a 4+1 STEM-to-MBA program. We also put a virtual peer network in place to build strong interactions with Florida High School Calculus and Physics teachers and created a team of Florida Poly students that tutor high school calculus students. While others struggled with campus visits, we created virtual events at the beginning of the year, college fairs, and then carefully planned personalized in-person visits to attract FTIC. We increased out-of-state waivers to grow our out-of-state student population and hired a recruiter dedicated to the northeast. We also grew student affinity groups and aggressively focused on branding through relevant video, digital content, and the web. Finally, we entered the USNWR rankings for undergraduate engineering colleges with no doctorate as a top 40 public. This ranking depends only on peer surveys; thus, we developed a year-round campaign targeted to the "influencers" that provides postcards and trifold brochures that highlight our successes.

## **Student Progression**

The University transitioned from remote operations in the fall, bringing both students and student-facing employees back to campus. Several new academic delivery models were developed with the primary mode being flex, which allowed students to attend remotely or in-person through a reservation system. This model highlighted a significant problem around engagement where many freshmen were simply "tuning in and turning off". Beginning spring semester, all employees were back on campus and our delivery models were modified based on lessons learned in the fall. A more proactive advising stance, classroom tracking that required in-person attendance in at least 50% of the classes and cameras turned on, grade forgiveness linked to recovery paths, on-line scheduling of tutoring sessions and a new class on Foundations of Academic Success were created to address these critical issues. While these proactive measures appear successful for some students, it did not have the broad affect we anticipated. Combined with new safety

measures based on CDC guidance and best practices, the University had less than 20 confirmed cases of COVID on campus last year.

We understand that the incoming class of 2021 will have had their full senior year in high school affected by COVID. To support our newest students in overcoming learning loss, and to proactively address their lack of engagement, we are changing new student orientation and reconfiguring classes. We will continue to have early alerts in place and offer “intrusive advising” for those students that are struggling. We are formalizing our Academic Improvement Program and having students meet with their success coaches either weekly or biweekly. Our registrar office is putting recovery paths in place that will drive summer courses and we are using degree audits to ensure students stay on track. Finally, we are in the process of creating a new professional skills program that builds on the Presidential Ambassador program, which has been moved from the Office of the President into Student Affairs. This new program also provides leadership and professional development skills for Orientation Leaders, Admission Ambassadors, Peer Health Advisors, Recreation Leaders, SGA, and Resident Assistants.

As we enter into our first five-year accreditation reaffirmation process, we have developed a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) around peer mentoring that is designed to improve all measures around student progression. This plan has been developed and socialized this year and is ready to begin implementation.

## **Student Experience**

We made significant improvements to campus life this year despite the pandemic and restrictions on events, including a carefully planned spirit week (with a redesigned campus mascot), recreational sports programs and fitness classes. We increased our presence in the P3 dormitory by introducing new residence life programs designed to build community and support our students. We increased the diversity of our mental health team and added new counselors as student demand increased. We had “Spring Break on Campus” and introduced new events designed to start traditions. We continued providing “Graduation Boxes” to our graduates and held an in-person graduation to honor our graduates from both 2020 and 2021. We also used CITF funds to build a student area within the wellness center called “The Nest”, and we built a campus arena for our eSports program.

We improved student experiences with the goal of student social engagement by adding club sports and affinity groups. We now have a (scatter) band, eSports program, a Nuclear Propulsion Officer Candidate Program (NUPOC) pipeline program for the Navy and a Purple Fire Robotics team that has participated in several competitions, including the VexU World Championship. We have a men’s Lacrosse team, which recently traveled to Georgia to play against Georgia Southern, and are organizing a similar women’s soccer team for next year. We are also introducing an archery and ultimate frisbee program and are considering golf, swimming, and softball.

We continue to offer career development opportunities on campus, with a “Career Class” that helps launch graduates into their careers and Career/Internship fairs in February, March, and April. This past year 74.1% of our graduating students were employed or enrolled in a graduate program and the average salary was \$56,300. We also continue to grow our internship program by adding companies. This year we had 43 Senior Capstone projects with over 90% of them being sponsored by industry. Multi-disciplinary experiences are important for our students and reflect real-world conditions, and 25 of our 43 projects included multi-disciplinary teams. Four of these projects were under the National Security Innovation Network and two were funded as part of the federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program.

## **Graduate Program**

With our primary focus on the undergraduate program, where most students are enrolled, we continue to make moderate progress on the graduate program. This year completed the total revision of the Graduate Student Handbook and Graduate Catalog, separating them from the undergraduate ones and putting them all on the web. We received approval from SACSCOC for a substantive change that allows us to begin offering programs with <50% online classes. The first-such program is a new MS in Engineering Management that will provide a foundation for professional evening programs. We are now conducting market analyses to consider adding additional programs. Many of these programs may be nontraditional and provide pathways for faster degree acquisition. To do this, we are working on policies and procedures that govern whether programs are thesis, project, or non-thesis. While thesis-based programs continue to require the most work, and are traditionally supportive of strong faculty research programs, it is important that we add programs similar to Professional Science Masters degrees that are targeted at industry-based professionals. To grow our graduate student body, we are also making strategic investments in stipend, tuition support and a Graduate Program Coordinator.

Graduate programs are traditionally supported through strong faculty research efforts and we continue to make good progress in our research centers. FIPR Institute represents our strongest effort and there has been good progress on refocusing FIPR research programs towards today's more relevant issues in the phosphate industry. We developed a plan for moving FIPR to campus with a new building and creating a stronger tie to the University through a new Environmental Engineering program. The Advanced Mobility Institute continues to make progress on the Hardware-in-the-Loop (HWIL) emulation capability that will allow us to build a "stimulator" that mimics operations at SunTrax. Work also continues on the NSF-funded Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) that will connect to the emulator and provide data for it. SunTrax is still negotiating with an operator to run the site, and it appears the facility will continue to morph and adapt to the changing needs of the advanced mobility community. We remain part of those discussions and are committed to helping the Florida Turnpike Enterprise properly position this important asset. Finally, strong progress has been made on the Health Systems Engineering program and recent partnerships with Lakeland Regional, AdventHealth, Tallahassee Memorial and Family CareSpace have been added. There is also a graduate program curriculum being developed for this program.

## **The Right People**

Searches for 30 open faculty positions spanning all grades including leadership in Computer Science, Electrical & Computer Engineering and Engineering Mathematics are nearing completion. We have our strongest field of candidates yet and are optimistic of our chances to add faculty in the appropriate fields. At the time this document was prepared, we had secured a new Math department chair from the Air Force Academy and a very strong Electrical and Computer Engineering department chair from the University of Maryland, College Park. The candidates we have attracted for this round of hiring have been very well-qualified; hence the competition in securing them on our faculty is significant.

Last summer, our faculty devoted time to preparing for a remote educational experience in COVID and we conducted training workshops, created policies and programs, defined a reopening plan, and put in place numerous efforts around instruction, academic operations, student life, and workforce rules that allowed us to safely open and run the institution. This summer our faculty will once again focus on typical research thrusts and will return to grants. Thus far, we have \$527K in research expenditures and have submitted 38 proposals for review.

We created an office of Diversity and Inclusion which reports to the President and have begun a more deliberate effort to build a strategic plan around this important topic.

### **University Advancement**

COVID has affected so much, and the legislative process has not been immune. With ever changing guidance on travel, in-person meetings and legislative meetings, we transitioned from our normal campus district and legislative visits to virtual meetings with key members. We worked with our lobbyists more aggressively this year and thus far, the legislative budget provides for the remainder of funding for the Applied Research Center and permission to move the Florida Industrial Phosphate Research Institute on campus. These funding sources are contingent on federal HEERF funding and must survive a Governor's veto.

With COVID and a concomitant lack of students on campus, Auxiliary operations are down this year so we made strong changes to their processes and procedures. Finally, HEERF II funding (and presumably HEERF III) allows us to recover previous Auxiliary losses due to COVID, and we hope to have enough funds left over to support these losses.

With our new VP of Advancement, we made significant improvements to operations and subsequent results in our Foundation. Numerous infrastructure projects were completed, leaving us with an improved Moves Management capability that finally has clean data. We made new board appointments and improved our investment management position. More importantly, we made key new hires in our development staff and provided training opportunities that have made a significant difference. To date, our scholarship funding has increased by 93% and our unrestricted funds have increased 121%, but the big gains have been in our endowment, which is now approaching \$3M. We recently announced the Alexander Scholars Program, which is a unique and prestigious scholarship for the most gifted high school graduates

Finally, we created a program that uses international dignitaries to build strong relationships with state leaders in industry, government, and academia so we can educate them on Florida Poly and its importance to the state of Florida. To date, we held an event on life after the pandemic that included a Nobel laureate, and an event on the bilateral relationship between Florida and Latin American countries with the former President of Ecuador (and nominee for Secretary General of the UN). Both events were well attended with senior state leader participation.