



**Preparing for a Post-Pandemic World in the State  
University System:  
Lessons Learned, Best Practices, and Future Considerations**

Prepared by the  
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## *Executive Summary*

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The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted activities across the State University System. To provide a continuity of service, the operational practices of every university division were significantly altered, and remote work modalities were embraced where possible. This report summarizes pandemic-driven changes witnessed by administrators of different campus operations and synthesizes their observations into system-wide findings and recommendations for post-pandemic improvement. Their findings include challenges and limitations encountered during the pandemic, emerging SUS strengths and opportunities, lessons learned, and newly identified best practices for resiliency and improvement. Their guidance generated specific, actionable recommendations for changes in practice, partnership, or regulations that could confer resiliency and accelerate the competitiveness of SUS universities as Florida emerges from the pandemic. Findings and recommendations from each mission-driven area of the SUS are outlined below.

To deliver a quality experience to SUS students, changes were implemented rapidly in both classroom IT infrastructure and professional development in instruction, and barriers in student access to remote instruction and support services needed to be identified and overcome. New instructional technology infrastructure was built, and the sharing of lessons-learned in remote and multi-modality instruction flourished across the SUS. Changing expectations of students led to the need for increased flexibility in work environments. The use of remote formats for student mental health improved access, as long as students had access to the necessary technology. Recommendations for improving the quality of the student experience include: sustaining the newly developed IT infrastructure; providing system-wide tele-counseling support; sharing best practices in multi-modal instruction; tailoring student relief funding and admissions requirements with access needs; and requiring health insurance for all students.

For the creation of new knowledge and its application, there were unexpected supply-chain disruptions of research materials and limited access to facilities or subjects, especially when travel was required. Faculty quickly and robustly realigned their research with state pandemic priorities, clearly demonstrating the value of an expanded SUS research enterprise. The pandemic fostered collaboration among epidemiologists and disease modeling networks, and earlier investments in technology-rich research services afforded some resiliency to research operations. Recommendations for research include: further investing in system-wide shared technology and research tools and instrumentation; establishing statewide professional development programs for research; and building statewide interdisciplinary research networks to address other grand challenges facing Florida.

Engaging with communities external to the SUS through remote modalities initially proved to be quite challenging. This was particularly difficult for patient health-care, continuing education, and cooperative extension. However, as the universities adapted to remote technology and services, health-focused units learned to use telehealth effectively. Other units identified ways to further link universities to workforce development and to expand the

audiences accessing continuing education and cooperative extension. Recommendations to improve work with external communities include: expanding remote interviews and professional seminars to promote access and quality; engaging continuing education and cooperative extension offices with chambers of commerce for regional workforce development; and establishing Florida workforce microcredentials to enhance university alignment with industry.

For the effective operation of our universities, challenges were encountered with remote work policies, reduction in on-campus and off-campus employment opportunities for students, and ensuring equitable access to IT resources necessary for remote operations. Mental health and disability offices saw changes in the types of students using their services, international admissions were severely disrupted, and existing challenges facing university police forces were further exacerbated. New ways to support access and equity for SUS students were created using food pantries, clothing exchanges, and laptop/hotspot loaner programs. Recommendations to improve campus operations include: updating remote work policies; disseminating best practices for IT access and use and the associated professional development of employees; leveraging volume contracts for purchasing, including software; easing restrictions on carryforward reserves to accelerate resiliency response; and creating guidelines for the deployment of emergency student aid in the future.

As this report was a synthesis of observations primarily by administrators, staff, and faculty and student leaders during the pandemic, its recommendations to the SUS were developed prior to the conclusion of the worldwide pandemic. Consequently, limited performance-based data is available to suggest more permanent changes which will stem from student and employee outcomes and expectations post-pandemic. It would be prudent for the SUS to determine what existing or new data should be monitored and analyzed over the coming years to provide strategic guidance on performance improvement in a post-pandemic Florida.

## ***Introduction***

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In response to the health impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Florida, the majority of operations at universities became largely remote March 2020. This included moving almost all instruction to online formats, adapting student support services to remote modalities, and necessitating a wide range of responses in research and auxiliary services. Over the next several months, continued evolution of operations was apparent in the way technology was used to deliver instruction, in the comfort level of students and campus communities using this technology, and a host of remote-work related activities across campus operations. Many began to wonder which of these changes would have a lasting impact in how higher education operates; discussions ensued among the Florida Board of Governors and among SUS institutions about the long-term impact of the pandemic on higher education in our state.

A planning workgroup was created in February 2021 by the Board of Governors Innovation and Online Committee (IOC) to inform the Committee's discussion on the post-pandemic world in the SUS. The IOC approved the use of the existing Steering Committee, which was originally created to oversee the implementation of the SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education, to undertake this responsibility, inviting other institutional leaders to its meetings as needed (Appendices A-C).

The Steering Committee and other institutional leaders focused their discussions on challenges, limitations, opportunities, and lessons learned during the pandemic, as well as best practices and innovations that emerged, all of which contributed to the development of actionable recommendations for continuing to build excellence and greater resilience in the post-pandemic world. The timeline for these discussions is outlined in Appendix D.

## ***Delivering a Quality Student Experience***

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### **Preamble:**

As teaching and learning continue to advance in ways that focus on multimodal course offerings and services, SUS institutions will need to expand investments in Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, software, and communication tools that support the ability to deliver a quality student experience. This investment must also consider enhanced technical support and training programs for faculty, staff, and students. Institutions will need to put a greater emphasis on the learning space and consider the transformation of both physical and virtual student environments that are conducive to student success. Educational technologies to enhance one-way communication and just-in-time individualized messaging will help guide students, identify roadblocks, and highlight interventions. Collaborations among the SUS to share resources and expand partnerships will help build a stronger foundation to elevate student success as a system. With the rapid shift to and reliance on digital technologies that supported teaching and learning throughout the pandemic, it is critical that the SUS develop a forward-thinking digital learning strategy centered around improvements in student engagement and identification of student needs throughout the entire student lifecycle. The SUS should collectively work to better understand the relative instructional and learning effectiveness of different modalities adopted.

## **The SUS Experience**

### **Challenges and Limitations:**

The pivot to remote instruction and virtual services due to the emergency response to the COVID-19 global pandemic presented many challenges and limitations for the higher education community. The common challenges identified among the SUS institutions included IT support issues, maintaining a sense of community among students and faculty, and navigation of the

digital divide to maintain equitable support for all students. A recap of the presentations associated with the student experience highlighted the following common and related themes:

*Access, Technology, Communication:* The increased reliance on off-campus technology usage during the pandemic brought a greater awareness of the digital divide among diverse student populations. Access to high-speed internet, Wi-Fi, unlimited data, and laptops was not readily available to all students as institutions shifted to remote instruction. There were also unique challenges experienced with instructional labs, performing arts, and faculty/institutional responses. IT units faced an increase in demand for classroom technology support as faculty, students, and staff returned to campus with multi-modal course options with some students online and some simultaneously in the classroom. The global pivot to remote work presented additional challenges of retaining IT staff due to private sector job opportunities. Fatigue from the usage of video platforms and information overload were evident as the pandemic extended into multiple semesters. The lack of real and tangible social interactions was noted as an issue by many students, faculty, and staff. Students struggled with keeping up with communication and the changing landscape associated with the pandemic.

*Pedagogy, Course Modality, Faculty Training:* The rapid transition to remote instruction resulted in substantial institutional investments in faculty training, along with support resources for instructional design and student engagement. The training required development of specialized instructional design and educational technology resources and support. Testing and evaluation presented unique challenges for faculty as new proctoring solutions were quickly on boarded, often requiring modification to assessment strategies. Creating meaningful student engagement with peers, instructors, and the curriculum was also a challenge in a fully digital environment. The use of new educational technologies along with multi-modal instruction practices necessitated a much greater investment of personnel time and vigilance to address student engagement.

*Student Health, Housing, Financial Challenges:* Mental health and substance abuse conditions and demand for financial aid services increased among students during the pandemic. Students seeking counseling were reported to have more severe emotional and behavioral problems and were seeking counseling more frequently. Many students and their families experienced immediate financial trauma due to job loss. Homelessness and food insecurity, along with other personal challenges and responsibilities, made it difficult for students to remain committed to degree progression. Sustaining on-campus housing operations during the pandemic presented additional funding challenges, resulting in the loss of staff and student employment positions.

*Diversity and Equity:* The impacts from the pandemic on underrepresented students are evident in the level of demand for support and access to technology, financial, and well-being services essential to sustaining their educational progress. Career centers

reported that access to technology and equipment to support virtual hiring practices was a challenge for many, contributing to the equity gap. The Student Government Association reported that students received emergency financial assistance, which will potentially become a student expectation beyond the federal- funding period. Support associated with addressing equity and diversity among the campus community will be an ongoing challenge to assess and predict.

### **Strengths and Opportunities:**

The sudden challenges brought by the pandemic revealed a set of strengths across SUS institutions. These strengths can be grouped in three areas: existing and new investments in technology infrastructure for online learning; resiliency; and partnerships. The following are examples of identified strengths and opportunities:

*Existing and new investments in technology infrastructure for online learning:* These structures facilitated the transition to remote delivery. Institutions made use of instructional technology tools to create mechanisms that allowed them to provide services more efficiently in areas such as academic support services, as well as student recruiting and life experiences. These mechanisms also supported a flexible remote work environment. When it comes to teaching, the incorporation of new instructional technology has generated opportunities for faculty to expand their teaching methods and develop enhanced learning environments.

*Resiliency:* The resiliency and resourcefulness of faculty, administrators and staff allowed them to join in collaborative efforts to find solutions and overcome challenges in a successful way.

*Partnerships:* Collaborations and partnerships within and across the SUS institutions have created opportunities for innovation. Existing and new partnerships among universities will provide more opportunities to respond effectively to challenges in areas such as: contracts with technologies, research on synchronous learning, and models for quality review of synchronous courses.

### **Lessons Learned:**

Reports from higher education stakeholders across the SUS revealed lessons learned during the pandemic that should be leveraged to strengthen resilience, build efficiencies, and facilitate “futureproofing” of our institutions. Emergent themes include the value of shared resources, a greater need for investment in a strong foundation of staff and technology support, a re-envisioning of work environments, and multi-modal collaboration and delivery of services. Modernization of our state system through lessons learned will bring greater agility, innovation, and opportunities for collaboration, inclusion, and equity.

*Shared resources:* The Innovation and Online Education Implementation Committee noted that continued SUS-wide collaboration will be necessary to establish continuity of academic and student services. Leveraging volume contract savings on software and

technology was suggested as a way to create efficiencies across the institutions. The Housing Directors also noted shared resources and the importance of aligning policies and sharing successful practices.

*Staff and technology support:* The Advisory Council of Faculty Senates indicated that there is now an opportunity to develop a new taxonomy for course delivery in light of the changing mindsets regarding educational technology. From the perspective of the Innovation and Online Education Implementation Committee, increased interest from faculty for technology support and training allows for professional development across modalities to strengthen pedagogical practices in their on-campus and off-campus courses. Similarly, the Public Health Deans said that faculty were highly adaptable and would benefit from additional infrastructure support and technology skills training.

*Re-envisioned work environments:* Many of the reports cited the need to remain flexible in adapting to changes in workforce demand post-COVID. The need for remote work options with clear expectations and consistent policies/guidelines was seen as a viable option for repurposing space for mission-driven activities. The Career Centers reported that flexible workplace practices allowed for the expansion of services. Remote work and flexible scheduling were also suggested as strategies for recruitment and retention of skilled staff, especially in the technology field.

*Access:* The Florida Career Consortium revealed the digital divide challenges faced by many students. Those challenges create equity imbalances in expanding virtual hiring practices which can only be overcome with universities providing appropriate IT (computer video cameras, laptops, hotspots, etc.) to students in need.

*Multi-modal delivery and support:* The Counseling Center Directors reported that teletherapy has become an accepted practice and a hybrid of in-person and online services will continue to be the model. The value of Telehealth for patient care was echoed by the Medical School Deans who also recognized that the use of remote residency interviews provided more equity / access for students with limited means. The student government representative confirmed that students will expect video platforms to be a permanent part of the educational toolkit. Her comments included recognition that virtual conferencing programs provide greater inclusivity for people who would otherwise not take part in student government activities. Multi-modal communication was indicated as a normal part of the workplace going forward.

### **Best Practices:**

The committee's discussions with the various institutional stakeholders revealed a number of best practices that can be expanded and scaled across the system to support the state's post-pandemic higher education needs. These best practices include examples of Financial Stewardship, Access, and Health/Wellness. The following are a few examples in each of these three broader categories.



*Financial Stewardship:* The Chief Information Officers discussed the power of aggregating demand across the entire system, combining the collective buying power of the entire SUS to ensure the best possible prices for procured goods and services. This is reflected in several sections of the report and will be addressed specifically in the section “Operating an Efficient Enterprise” later in this report. The Financial Aid Directors shared how certain non-core functions have been successfully outsourced, allowing efficiencies and the ability to redeploy critical internal resources for key activities.

*Access:* The Deans of Students shared how loans can assist students with housing and food insecurity, as well as the cost of tuition and materials. Both the Council on Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the Directors of Disability Services discussed how virtual modes of instruction and service can be used to support all students with varied backgrounds and needs.

*Health/Wellness:* Both the Public Health Deans and Student Health Services Directors discussed the benefits of requiring every student in the SUS to have health insurance. They also put a spotlight on the need to focus on the life stressors that students face. The Counseling Directors discussed how the use of pandemic-inspired telecounseling services could allow the pooling of counseling resources across the system, possibly helping to alleviate some of the growing demand burden being placed on each individual institution.

## Recommendations

- 1. Recommendation:** Expand and sustain digital services for student outreach and engagement across all university units, including but not limited to mental health and substance abuse tele-counseling, career services, and library support.

**Action Steps:**

Vice Presidents for Student Services:

- Expand needed digital services for student outreach and engagement;
- Monitor the availability of digital services for students using the Florida Online Student Services Scorecard;
- Share best practices for services among SUS institutions. Collaborate across the System on the effectiveness of services and the changing needs of students.

- 2. Recommendation:** Develop a mechanism for SUS staff to share counseling support at other institutions in times of crisis.

**Action Steps:**

Health Center Directors:

- Propose policies and procedures that would allow SUS staff to provide supplementary telecounseling support at other SUS institutions.

- 3. Recommendation:** Develop strategies, standards, and training associated with best practices in multi-modal (i.e. Flex) instruction and student resources to support faculty, staff, and student success.

**Action Steps:**

Innovation and Online Education Implementation Committee:

- Develop, maintain, and disseminate shareable resources for faculty and staff related to best practices in multi-modal (i.e. Flex) instruction;

Distance Learning Research Consortium:

- Explore student learning, grades, and progression into future courses and disseminate findings to the Implementation Committee and SUS Provosts.

- 4. Recommendation:** Address sustainability of financial support associated with federal relief funding, which was necessary to 1) increase the extent of IT resources and software in classrooms and teaching laboratories, although it does not cover the cost of a refreshment cycle, and 2) provide loaner laptops, hotspots, webcams, and other IT support to students without access to the necessary infrastructure for off-campus learning.

**Action Steps:**

Provosts and Vice Presidents of Administration:

- Identify sources of funding that can be used to support refreshment of the IT infrastructure in expanded classrooms and teaching laboratories.
- To ensure that equitable access to the SUS is maintained, identify sources of funding that can be used to allow for ongoing support of students in need of additional IT essential to their use of remote modalities.
- Create links to external resources for students to access financial support from employer education benefits and internships, state-funded workforce development resources, and other community services.

- 5. Recommendation:** Encourage institutions to consider requiring students to have health insurance in order to ensure every student has the opportunity to receive the physical and mental health support they need to be successful as a student.

**Action Steps:**

Vice Presidents for Student Affairs:

- Document the benefits to students from institutions that currently require student health insurance, their lessons learned, and best practices that have emerged as a potential model for SUS institutions.
- As supported by the documentation, formulate a recommendation for consideration by institutional leadership.

## Creation of New Knowledge and Its Application

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### **Preamble:**

*The mission of the State University System of Florida is to provide undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, research, and public service of the highest quality through a coordinated system of institutions of higher learning, each with its own mission and collectively dedicated to serving the needs of a diverse state and global society.*

The *State University System's 2025 Strategic Plan* further underscores a commitment to "transform and revitalize Florida's economy and society through research, creativity, discovery, and innovation." Essential to the pursuit of truth, creation of new knowledge, and solutions to Florida's most critical and complex challenges, the SUS maintained its focus on research, scholarship, and innovation throughout the global pandemic. Universities continued to be guided by three related goals to:

- Strengthen the Quality and Reputation of Scholarship, Research, and Innovation,
- Increase Research Activity and Attract More External Funding, and
- Increase Research Commercialization Activities.

Throughout, institutional progress has been gauged using the following key performance indicators: Faculty Membership in National Academies; Faculty Awards; Percent of Undergraduate Seniors Assisting in Faculty Research, or Percent of Undergraduates Engaged in Research; Total R&D Expenditures; Total Annual R&D Expenditures in Non-Health Sciences; University Centers and Institute Expenditures; Percent of R&D Expenditures funded from External Sources; National Ranking in Research Expenditures (by STEM discipline); Number of Patents Awarded Annually; Number of Licenses and Options Executed Annually; Number of Start-Up Companies Created; and Postdoctoral Appointees.

In addressing the global pandemic's impact on research, the creation of new knowledge, and its application across the SUS, three major themes emerged:

- The recognition and readiness on the part of Florida's universities to adapt to change, especially as it pertains to research, scholarly and creative activity and building toward a new, smarter, more inclusive, collaborative and stronger future;
- A focus on building an environment to support collaboration, efficiency, equity, excellence, innovation, redundancy, resiliency, and safety across the SUS' academic research enterprise; and
- A commitment to reimagining and leveraging a post-pandemic "new normal" through increasing statewide partnerships and interdisciplinary, team-based research.

The SUS Innovation and Online Education Steering Committee sought input from institutional vice presidents for research and chief information officers, along with medical school and public health deans. In addition, valuable testimony from others (including the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates, Council of Student Affairs, the Council on Equal Opportunity and Diversity, the

Council of State University Libraries, and the Council of Administrative and Financial Affairs, in particular) helped inform the Committee's work, especially with regard to the specific impact on early career scholars and scientists, along with the experience of undergraduate and graduate student researchers.

## The SUS Experience

### **Challenges and Limitations:**

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the academic research enterprises across the SUS. Many traditional research activities were suspended in the spring and into the summer of 2020. The Committee's discussions with stakeholders identified key areas of impact, including lack of access to physical space, technology, and supplies.

*Physical Infrastructure:* Due to pandemic protocols instituted at each university, laboratory facilities were often closed, sometimes reducing access to faculty and student researchers below what was necessary to meet research outcomes. As well, field-based researchers (including those engaged in international research) and those in the performing arts found their research, scholarly and creative opportunities significantly curtailed.

*Technology:* The switch to remote or virtual work revealed inequities in researchers' access to technology and digital literacy (i.e., the digital divide) in responding to research needs. These limitations also uncovered a paucity of existing remote or virtual platforms and services to support research (e.g., including telehealth for clinical research).

*Supply chain:* A constant theme among presenters was the impact the pandemic had on the global supply chain. Planned projects, even those focused on COVID variants, were delayed due to disruptions to supply chains procurement of essential research equipment and supplies (e.g., chemical reagents).

*Current policies:* Due to the strain on university budgets, the presenters identified that statewide restrictions on the use of carryforward fund reserves could limit the universities' agility in responding to research needs.

*Academic resiliency:* While much of the research on academic resiliency focuses on academic continuity, the challenges and limitations raised questions regarding the resiliency of the research enterprise, especially regarding the recruitment and retention of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and technical research support staff talent throughout the pandemic.

### **Strengths and Opportunities:**

While the pandemic created many challenges to academic research, positive outcomes were also identified. The presenters highlighted the following phenomena that present opportunities for research moving forward.

*State University System:* Addressing multiple dimensions of the State's challenges due to the pandemic demanded creative problem solving, often at the intersection of disciplines. The rapid emergence of system-wide networks of research expertise in response to challenges associated with the pandemic (e.g., biomedical, global health, mental health, communication, business, economics, and cybersecurity) provided a talented and diverse research community to assist in the communication and exchange of knowledge. The competitive strength of epidemiological and disease modeling researcher teams across the SUS contributed to the timely, safe, and productive response to the pandemic.

*Research productivity:* Researchers in some fields found that remote work supported higher levels of productivity primarily due to their work efficiency and work-life balance. The faculty indicated that the virtual environment provided additional time for tasks that needed focused attention, such as working to complete manuscripts or analyzing research data. Research grant applications appear to have held steady across the SUS, providing some evidence of the productivity of researchers working remotely, with awards and expenditures suggesting a slight decline.

*Strong digital foundation:* The benefit of the SUS' earlier investment in online digital content platforms, products (e.g., libraries), and technology-rich services served researchers very well. This digitization, including continuous access to the internet and academic research, allowed for creativity and efficiency outside of normal working hours.

### **Lessons Learned:**

*Collaboration across disciplines:* One of the key lessons learned in all areas relating to navigating the pandemic was the strength of a collaborative approach. Academic researchers identified the essential benefits of statewide collaboration and shared services in support of research. Creative and innovative solutions focused on interdisciplinary research pulling together cross-functional teams from within and across our universities. The interdisciplinary nature of the COVID research also indicated a need for researchers to be attuned to shifting patterns in the dissemination of research findings. The success of these partnerships should assist us in building and sustaining long-term research relationships.

*Financial investment:* The research community was instrumental in using science and data to provide recommendations to state leaders during COVID. The vice presidents of research noted that these activities did not come without a cost. To prepare for future

disruptions while continuing to drive innovation, there is a need to further invest in research and development across the SUS. The presenters indicated that determining optimal long-term investments (i.e., the need for seed funding, the development of research infrastructure and mechanisms, the creation of flexible, adaptable, and available research space, and the ongoing investment in digitization) are critical to mitigate future disruptions to our universities' financial stability and their research effort.

### **Best Practices:**

A number of best practices emerged from the overall discussions with university leaders from across the SUS. For researchers, this included:

*Professional development:* Academic continuity throughout the pandemic required faculty and researchers to be skilled in a variety of modalities. Online professional development and credentialing (e.g., grant-writing), especially for early-career faculty and graduate students, was critical in maintaining academic continuity. To navigate a future disruption successfully, continuous professional development must become an integral part of the academic career path.

*Interdisciplinary research:* The global pandemic required interdisciplinary research to provide solutions to complex problems. Researchers across disciplines, internally and externally, have created new ways to disseminate information and collectively solve pressing issues. The effectiveness of this synergistic approach to a worldwide problem has provided a firm foundation for the continuation of interdisciplinary collaboration post-pandemic.

*Digital operations:* The rapid response necessary during COVID enabled the SUS institutions to find technological solutions utilizing existing infrastructure, connectivity, and digital platforms. The opportunity to continue research virtually provided much-needed flexibility and accommodations to researchers. In many ways, these best practices assisted universities in becoming more equitable and more accessible to a broad range of faculty researchers. The introduction and continuation of digital resources and technology-enhanced delivery will enable faculty to maintain their work during future disruptions.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. Recommendation:** Identify opportunities, then build and support statewide, interdisciplinary research communities, networks, and clusters with a focus on grand challenges and global problems affecting Florida. The SUS ExpertNet should be updated accordingly (<https://expertnet.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.home>).

**Action Step:**

Vice Presidents of Research:

- Identify opportunities for grand challenges and global problems affecting Florida;
- Build and support statewide, interdisciplinary research communities, networks, and clusters to create an experts list for critical and/or time-sensitive topics.
- Organize disease and modelling groups composed of experts existing within the SUS, so if requested, they are prepared to inform statewide response and policy.

- 2. Recommendation:** Identify investment needs in a system-wide shared technology, research tools, and instrumentation (including remote access to core facilities) to expand SUS research competitiveness (e.g., high-performance computing), productivity, and data protection (i.e., cybersecurity,). This will also support the resiliency of research operations to future disruptive events.

**Action Steps:**

Vice Presidents of Research and Chief Information Officers:

- Jointly identify investment needs in system-wide shared technology, research tools, and instrumentation
- Prioritize the repurposing of vacated "back office" space (due to remote work) to expand research facilities

Council of Administrative and Financial Affairs

- In concert with plans being discussed with key stakeholders, seek solutions to statewide restrictions on the use of carryforward fund reserves to support universities' nimble response to research needs.

- 3. Recommendation:** Develop and deliver system-wide professional development programs for faculty, student researchers, and technical staff utilizing digital platforms to enhance their skills in grant writing, equipment use, and other skills transferrable across institutions. This should be an ongoing effort given the rapidly changing technology available to researchers.

**Action Step:**

Vice Presidents of Research:

- Develop and deliver system-wide professional development programs utilizing digital platforms.

## ***Engagement with Our Communities***

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**Preamble:**

There have been, and will be, expanded relationships with distant communities, increased engagement with county health departments, enhanced use of the statewide IFAS and FAMU

extension programs, and increased opportunities to meet workforce needs through continuing education and certificate programs. In addition, in the new post-pandemic world, increased use of technology will prompt changes in addressing many dimensions of community engagement.

## The SUS Experience

### Challenges and Limitations:

*Patient care:* Many of the medical schools' clinics and programs had to provide telehealth during the pandemic in order to maintain a continual relationship with their patients, most of whom were in that high-risk population and were very uncomfortable coming into the medical school setting. However, news stories have reported that some of the COVID allowances will be cut back in terms of billing for telehealth. In addition, medical school deans believe it is critical to re-establish a sense of community, working and learning together among classmates, faculty and patients, but medical schools will utilize remote learning when most effective. They expect students to return to skills labs and direct patient contact with preceptors for critical skills, such as professional communication, patient assessment, data synthesis, and medical decision-making.

*Continuing education:* Training instructors was a challenge, specifically in using Learning Management Systems, video platforms, Microsoft TEAMS, and or Skype for Business. Most instructors are experts in content, not instructional design.

*Extension services:* Agents had to maintain a presence with and connection to county government. There was video platform, on-line, and COVID fatigue. There was often decreased clientele engagement, particularly with clientele who favor face-to-face interaction. Some programs had to be delayed, and along the way, extension offices discovered that certain programs were not suitable for a virtual format. A lack of broadband access was a challenge for extension faculty, staff, and some Florida residents. School closings and limited virtual access caused decreased engagement with 4-H, a critical program for youth development.

### Strengths and Opportunities:

*Patient Care:* Medical schools learned the value of telehealth for patient care, student wellness visits, and remote counseling. They have creatively used remote platforms for clinical skills exams with standardized patients, small group facilitated sessions, and for clinical encounters on rotations, e.g. tele-psychiatry. Medical schools led the state in implementing testing procedures and practices, research on the pandemic, and best practices for care of COVID-19 patients.



*Assisting the Workforce:* The Public Health programs have the opportunity to better prepare the workforce, especially in the areas of data forecasting and health communications; to work with various agencies in the state that employ public health professionals to find ways to keep talent in the state; and to create a mechanism whereby their expertise could be utilized by the entire state, not just the counties that happen to have academic public health programs within reach.

The Public Health deans will be working on developing an epidemiology/disease modeling group that can be a resource for the state when future disease outbreaks occur, and they are exploring similar groups around health communications and health policies. There are areas of the state that do not have access to all the resources that other areas have. The public health deans will work on coming up with different ways to be a more effective resource to the entire state. Having a good relationship with the county offices would provide learning opportunities and internship opportunities, and good communications would help counties in their efforts to control a pandemic.

Also, universities' continuing education programs developed innovative programming to meet the needs of their communities during the pandemic. A few examples are below:

- FIU partnered with the City of North Miami to provide on-demand COVID-19 Contact Tracing training.
- FSU Campus Reimagined staff provided support for the university COVID dashboard and developed web-based enrollment for testing and vaccinations.
- UCF and Cengage offered 10 professional development courses free of charge to the Central Florida community, which totaled just over 11,000 registrations. Many of the courses were selected because they fulfill demonstrated employer needs.
- UF and Coursera partnered to launch the UF COVID Access Free Education (Café) program which made the full catalog of Coursera courses available to UF students, teachers around the state of Florida, and anyone in the workforce.
- UNF Expanded delivery boundaries for high-demand distance courses around the world by leveraging its local relationship with the Army and Navy Corps of Engineers.
- USF Continuing Education partnered with the Muma College of Business to offer certificates in Post-Crisis Leadership with 35K participants and in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion which had 165k Participants.
- UWF utilized a video platform to create synchronous courses for its Leisure Learning 55+ community to allow them to continue their educational journeys and engage with their peers.

*Extension Services:* UF/IFAS Extension has an office in every one of Florida's 67 counties and provides solutions and expert advice for clientele of all ages in agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer issues, homes and gardens, and positive youth development through the Florida 4-H program. IFAS will continue on-line teaching and

learning for both internal and external audiences and is investing in hybrid face-to-face/virtual extension teaching space in counties modeled after HyFlex classrooms on the UF campus. Both IFAS and FAMU Extension intend to permanently transition a portion of extension teaching and learning to the virtual world. However, face-to-face programming will be kept in their portfolios to retain traditional audiences.

FAMU Cooperative Extension also provides research-based educational programs and direct technical assistance to Florida citizens, with particular emphasis on underserved and limited resource audiences. The pandemic saw increased and innovative use of email and social media platforms to maintain contact with clientele, disseminate information, and deliver educational programming.

### **Lessons Learned and Best Practices**

*Working Remotely in Medicine:* Large group meetings, such as faculty and staff meetings that require travel and parking near the medical school, are much better attended when done remotely, particularly for those faculty who work off-campus in clinical settings. Many medical school faculty liked the video platform sessions because overall attendance was better and interactions improved. The use of remote residency interviews provides more equity / access for students with limited means and provides interviews for a more diverse and national pool. This was also observed with medical school applicants. Remote guest lectureships for critical and timely topics for medical schools brought a diverse pool of national speakers who were more available by video platforms, which eliminated the need for longer planning for logistics.

*Patient Care:* The Council of Florida Medical School Deans has several subcommittees that are addressing the lessons learned and proposing joint solutions, including for clinical skills and standardized patient plans.

*Extension Services:* Virtual education is not limited by county border, so faculty expertise was widely shared across county lines. Virtual audiences were larger and more diverse than usual. Decreased commuting gave agents more time to produce scholarly works and write grants. Flexible work schedules allowed for creativity and efficiency outside of normal working hours. On-line consultations to solve problems increased. Agents learned that not all problems need to be solved by in-person visits. On the programming side, IFAS Extension's "Human Health Initiative" expanded into vaccine education and telemedicine due to collaborations with the Centers for Disease Control and with UFHealth.

*Out of the Research Lab and into the Community:* Intensive work is conducted daily in university research labs and shared with the community when it becomes available. The pandemic highlighted the difficulty in imparting new knowledge in non-traditional ways, causing universities to consider alternative approaches to knowledge transfer. An

example is the way in which UF began engaging educational communities in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as:

- Providing the local college an array of asynchronous seminars (1 hour) and short courses (4 hours) that address topics that range from the Fundamentals & Ethics of AI to the Applications of AI to Business, Agriculture, and Engineering. In addition, syllabi and references used to develop 15-hour short courses across several AI-focused topics are being made available.
- Making the asynchronous short courses available to the county high schools for sharing with students.

Technology that served UF and other institutions well during the pandemic will be harnessed in the post-pandemic world to spread new knowledge.

## Recommendations

1. **Recommendation:** Given the proven effectiveness of the use of remote modalities in medical school operations, further expand their use.

### **Action Steps:**

Deans of Medical Schools:

- Use remote interviews for MD and residency programs to create a more diverse pool of applicants
- Continue/increase use of remote meetings to increase participation by clinically based faculty and staff and save commuting time for more mission-driven effort
- Expand use of remote guest lectureships for critical, timely, and highest-quality professional development

2. **Recommendation:** Create additional partnerships to assist displaced workers and underserved members of the community; conduct community trainings and webinars; and work with academic colleges to develop and deliver new curricula for professional certifications. Action steps could include:

### **Action Steps:**

Continuing Education Directors and Extension Directors:

- Create a deep partnership with Career Source to assist displaced workers seeking to start new careers in different fields.
- Conduct trainings and webinars in collaboration with local and regional Chambers of Commerce.
- Leverage partnership with online training providers to offer free online courses to faculty, students, staff, and community members regularly.
- Identify programs that will help underserved members of the community to improve their opportunities to find sustainable employment.
- Work internally with academic colleges to develop and deliver new curricula for professional certifications.

3. **Recommendation:** Create a statewide committee that includes the SUS, Florida College System, Career and Technical Education schools, CareerSource Florida, Enterprise Florida, and industry representatives to determine what qualifies as a micro-credential, how it will be recognized in specific industries, and how it can be used across all the demographics that are served by continuing education units.

**Action Steps:**

Continuing Education Directors:

- Develop a project proposal for consideration by the Board of Governors.

## *Operating an Efficient Enterprise*

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### **Preamble:**

Over the past year, system-wide groups across the SUS achieved unprecedented levels of inter-institutional collaboration, despite the challenges faced from the COVID-19 Pandemic. This level of cooperation and knowledge-sharing revealed the true strength of the SUS., These groups held regular weekly meetings, leveraging the techniques and efficiencies learned through virtual meetings to ensure continued, sustained, and successful operations of SUS institutions for the continued success of students. SUS leadership has been able to identify common and overlapping areas of impact: University workforce, students, operations, and technology and instructional delivery. Findings in these areas lend a panoramic view of the limitations, successes, and opportunities revealed by the global pandemic.

## **The SUS Experience**

### **Challenges and Limitations:**

*Remote Work:* As with other sectors, SUS universities were forced sooner than expected to confront inevitable workplace changes because of the pandemic. At a moment's notice, the urgency to migrate to remote work meant redefining traditional workplace expectations and practices in real-time. Several limitations were unearthed:

- The difficulties of equipping staff with hardware, connectivity, new policies, etc.;
- The need for adapting effective communication models for employees, leadership, students, and faculty;
- The impact of isolation, stress, grief, and open-ended uncertainties on employee morale and well-being.

Remote work, of course, impacts faculty, too. The move to remote and hybrid instruction required more rapid professional development than most institutions had

anticipated. When that learning curve was coupled with the adversities many people faced during the crisis, there was a disruption in scholarly output among some faculty groups. Some universities have allowed faculty to request a one-year delay in the tenure decision process. Despite it all, most faculty have proven resilient and resourceful during the pandemic and seized opportunities for collaboration between faculty, administrators, and staff to develop and implement innovative learning solutions.

*Student Hardships:* The pandemic caused collegiate plans to be altered in ways no one could have anticipated. Given increased job loss, homelessness, food insecurity, and other adversities, many students found it hard to commit to degree programs. Many SUS institutions were able to support students by varying degrees with increased financial aid, CARES funding, and flexibility in academic policies. Naturally, financial directors across SUS institutions saw a higher demand for financial aid services during the pandemic.

*Technology:* The increased use of technology during the pandemic did alert deans to the digital divide existing in the communities our institutions serve. These include wide gaps in access to high-speed internet, wi-fi, or unlimited data. As broader delivery options for student learning are all but inevitable, it is imperative that SUS institutions bridge the technological divide as much as possible. To do so is to seize an opportunity for targeted research and community outreach, which SUS institutions are especially equipped to do.

### **Strengths and Opportunities:**

*Mental health counseling* offers an especially insightful lens into student impact. Fewer students sought out counseling services in Fall 2020 than in Fall 2019, but the students who did seek out counseling had more significant emotional and behavioral problems and sought out services with more frequency. Counselors agree that the gravity of student needs, in addition to new remote options, reveals an opportunity to balance tele-therapy with in-person counseling, and thereby make accessing services more convenient while enriching treatment for students.

*Disability services* across the SUS present a similar picture. The pandemic resulted in a greater need to continue offering course and service delivery options to students while maintaining success strategies to help them no matter the modality. While mass virtual learning minimized the use of physical accommodations in on-campus disability service centers, there have been improvements in digital accessibility. Captioning, for instance, is now the norm in digital content delivery. Today, disability services leaders across the SUS have worked together with the aim of continuing to push for digital innovations and normalize universal accommodations while also communicating that other services are still available to students on campus.

*Admissions:* The biggest story in admissions is how pandemic-imposed travel limitations and rapidly changing international migration policies impacted international student

admissions and enrollments. International admission leaders have addressed these challenges by developing robust and consistent communication strategies along with dependable migration contingency plans. Admission teams learned that they could use virtual communication tools effectively to address student concerns about travel, safety, and immigration policies. Furthermore, staff discovered that they could engage virtually with larger populations of guests across time zones and regions where they may not have been able to visit in the past.

*Financial Planning:* SUS institutions were able to turn challenges into opportunities as a result of smart financial planning. Financial reserves across SUS institutions are credited for doing what they are designed to do: Guaranteeing SUS institutions' collective resilience during times of crisis. While support from the federal government was generous, there were some early uncertainties concerning the degree of financial support to expect. This had an impact on post-pandemic planning compounded by the unpredictable reallocation of funds as varying needs within each university arose. Overall, most SUS members made decisions based on each university's ability to fund initiatives from existing reserves. This was the right move. Federal funding may not be available into the future to the extent it has been so far. The state was also quick to provide universities with financial support, which revealed another opportunity: a return to spend current E&G reserves with more flexibility to allow universities to react more nimbly to emergencies.

*Campus Police:* The pandemic's impact on university emergency management divisions revealed several opportunities for the SUS to also consider. Prior to the pandemic, for instance, campus police departments were dealing with diminished staffing levels, shrinking applicant pools, and workforce challenges arising from anti-police sentiments. The pandemic only served to exacerbate those difficulties. The opportunity here is to study and implement novel means of retaining officers while rebuilding trust in campus police departments.

*Emergency Management:* Emergency managers have more generally presented a need for a SUS system-wide risk analysis to aid in more efficient sourcing and management of emergency software, mitigation efforts, and supplies. Emergency managers must be seen as crucial to academic continuity and data security. A wide-ranging analysis could ensure that emergency managers are integrated more firmly within the entire university structure.

*Information Technology:* These opportunities can only mean continued modernization of infrastructure and buildings with technological and environmental upgrades. For that reason, SUS institutions all called on increased investments in information technologies infrastructure (IT). In a time when cybersecurity threats are ever more insidious and IT departments are unable to retain staff persons leaving for higher wages across the state, we need to view IT as more than a tech support division; IT is integral to the SUS core academic mission and needs to be resourced as such.

*Remote Work:* Despite obstacles, university employees have expressed greater demand for remote work and flexible schedules. Some campuses find that a significant percentage of their own staff can continue to work remotely quite effectively given appropriate human resources policies and guidance. In addition, many SUS institutions established remote and cost-effective mechanisms for employee recruitment, selection, and professional development. To accommodate a reality in which remote work is here to stay, SUS human resources leaders took the opportunity to work on new guidelines and policies that promote employee satisfaction, savings, and productivity in virtual settings.

### **Lessons Learned and Best Practices:**

*Student Recreation:* As is well known, moderate physical activity has been tied to decreases in mild stress, mild anxiety, and mild depression, and significantly improves cognition. The kind of recreational programming that took to a remote setting most naturally was virtual fitness programming. These included live and recorded group fitness classes, personal training sessions, and virtual 5K races. At the same time, SUS institutions saw a surging interest in outdoor recreational programming like walking, hiking, outdoor yoga, and kayaking. Many campuses created video “how-to” guides for various activities and for proximate outdoor landmarks.

Later, as a more hybrid model became the norm, many students took “explore local” trips within driving or biking distance from campus. These trips served as “meet up” locations where recreational staff members would serve as guides. The trips have proven so successful that many campuses are shifting resources to offer the program more often. As with nearly all student services, SUS recreation directors believe virtual programs will continue as a supplement—but not a replacement—for in-person experiences.

*Equal Opportunity and Diversity:* The social unrest in 2020 led many SUS diversity and inclusion officers to ask what more the SUS could do to ensure equitable opportunities for disadvantaged groups. In response, diversity officers across the SUS initiated numerous online outreach programs addressing diversity and inclusion. An opportunity for ever-closer collaboration among state institutions, these offices worked especially hard to share their respective programs with sister universities.

One common observation was that university communities were more likely to participate in programs that provided a space for sharing thoughts honestly and for hearing from others on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This finding offers us an opportunity to tailor our programming on difficult topics in the most amenable ways possible.

Topical concerns over accessibility on campus have challenged compliance and equity officers to change how they conduct investigations, provide compliance education, provide accommodations, and extend resources. For example: The pandemic saw an increase in incident reports related to social media activity among students. Moving to more remote services was a welcome occurrence that helped adapt compliance offices to meet students where they are.

Other sustainable opportunities are:

- Emergency relief funds for students, faculty, and staff
- Laptop loan programs/Wi-Fi access support
- Food pantries; and
- Clothing exchanges.

*Information Technology:* The rapid move to remote and hybrid instruction required a rethinking of course construction and delivery and afforded faculty the opportunity to operate technology as both a means of course delivery and to professionalize students for the workplaces they now inhabit. This meant investing in substantial faculty training, instructional and student support, and in some cases, significant upgrades in both small and large-scale technology.

As each SUS institution can attest, the increased remote delivery only accelerated efforts already underway at most universities to implement new instructional technologies (especially considering plans set in motion by the SUS Strategic Plan for Online Education). The difference now is that faculty are more inclined than ever to expand their instructional methods into multi-modal delivery or else use technology in novel ways that augment classroom instruction. This has been a boon to instructional innovation and quality outcomes as academic programs across the system take numerous opportunities to add enhanced field experience, simulated labs, and cutting-edge pedagogy.

SUS institutions already have a successful channel for disseminating new instructional practices and faculty development statewide through the TOPkit and Innovation Summit initiatives, but campus-level resources are required to ensure successful implementation. Initial steps would be to identify and begin a dialogue about any system and/or institutional policy that may need to be revised and develop a financial model which supports the infrastructure of these new modalities.

## Recommendations

- 1. Recommendation:** Each university should update policies and practices to support in-person, fully remote, and/or hybrid work and instruction options based on department service needs and demand.



**Action Steps:**

Human Resources Directors:

- Update policies and practices to support all work modalities and instruction options
- Ongoing assessment of the productivity of employees in order to remain agile and competitive as a workforce
- Share best practices in strengthening IT infrastructure and training to maximize employee productivity.

- 2. Recommendation:** Develop and disseminate shared-SUS remote-instruction resources, including optimized technology standards for remote and Flex instruction such as for STEM laboratory classes, faculty and staff development, and outcomes of course modalities involving remote learning.

**Action Steps:**

Innovation and Online Implementation Committee:

- Develop and disseminate shared-SUS remote-instruction resources, including optimized technology standards for remote and Flex instruction, through TOPKit, the Innovation Summit, the Distance Learning Research Consortium, and other SUS resources.

- 3. Recommendation:** The SUS should continue to leverage volume contract savings on software and technology to create efficiencies across institutions.

**Action Steps:**

Chief Information Officers and Purchasing Directors:

- Identify and pursue leveraging volume contract savings on software and technology to create efficiencies and cost savings across institutions.

- 4. Recommendation:** In concert with plans being discussed with key stakeholders, explore easing statewide restrictions on the use of carryforward fund reserves permanently to enable a nimble response to research and student financial needs by universities.

**Action Steps:**

Chief Financial Officers:

- Evaluate regulatory and statutory statewide restrictions on the use of carryforward fund reserves
- Propose recommendations to the Board of Governors.

- 5. Recommendation:** Develop recommendations for when and how to implement emergency aid for SUS students when the effort is not directed by the Federal Government.

**Action Steps:**

Financial Aid Directors:

- Document circumstances under which students have been given emergency aid, lessons learned, and best practices.
- Recommend when and how to implement system-wide emergency aid for students.

### *Planning for Additional Post-Pandemic Analyses*

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The post-pandemic guidance provided to Florida’s Board of Governors in this report was generated prior to the conclusion of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. These findings and recommendations represent a synthesis of observations and experiences primarily by administrators, staff, and faculty and student leadership during the pandemic that were often triangulated across institutions, but the connections to longer-term operational impacts cannot yet be made. Limited performance-based data is currently available to predict the longevity of changes stemming from student and employee outcomes and public expectations.

Data currently being collected suggests that some change witnessed during the pandemic may be sustained into the future. Foot traffic into libraries and campus gyms is trending lower, but online use of libraries and fitness opportunities has increased. Students appear to be using campus dining at lower rates, yet no alternative exists online suggesting a pattern of eating off-campus or at-home. Online classes appear to be filling at much faster rates than in-person classes, suggesting a preference for students to have a more flexible schedule above the increased interpersonal engagement afforded by in-person classes (it is also possible that fear of the pandemic is driving or partially driving this pattern). Data in the State Performance Metrics such as employment, APR, and graduation will be helpful in future analyses, yet the lag time for some of metrics (like employment data) may make other data (e.g., fall to spring retention rates) more important in assessing near term patterns of change. It would be prudent for the SUS to determine what additional data beyond that collected for SUS accountability reports should be collected and analyzed to provide strategic guidance on performance improvement in a post-pandemic Florida.

While the recommendations in this report provide a framework for driving Florida’s universities into and beyond the “new normal,” the associated discussions revealed an overarching theme that reflects well on the SUS: the importance of high adaptability. The next time a pandemic, natural disaster, or other mass disruption upends SUS operations, the mutual support established among SUS institutions should mitigate that challenge and ensure public universities in Florida remain bendable yet stable pillars of our state. During the pandemic, Florida’s public universities shared high-impact operational practices like never before, making the system stronger as a whole. By continuing to share best practices in the spirit of collaboration rather than competition, not only will the pathway to improvement be

accelerated for each institution, but the SUS will also be more resilient to any potential disruption in the future.

# Appendices

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## Appendix A

### SUS Innovation and Online Education Steering Committee 2021 Membership

**Dr. Bret Danilowicz, Chair** (since July 1, 2021)  
Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
Florida Atlantic University

**Dr. George Ellenberg**  
(Vice Chair through June 30, 2021)  
Provost and Senior Vice President  
University of West Florida

**Dr. Sally McRorie**  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
Florida State University

**Dr. Kenneth Furton, Vice Chair**  
(Vice Chair since July 1, 2021)  
Provost, Executive Vice President  
and Chief Operating Officer  
Florida International University

**Dr. Ralph Wilcox** (Chair through June  
30, 2021)  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
University of South Florida

**Dr. Joe Glover**  
Provost and Senior Vice President of  
Academic Affairs  
University of Florida

**Dr. Nancy McKee** (non-voting)  
Associate Vice Chancellor  
for Innovation and Online Education  
Board of Governors

## Appendix B

### SUS Innovation and Online Education Implementation Committee 2021 Membership

**Dr. Cynthia DeLuca, Chair**

Associate Vice President, Innovation Education  
University of South Florida

**Dr. Nancy McKee, *ex officio***

Associate Vice Chancellor  
Innovation and Online Education  
Board of Governors

**Dr. Andy McCollough**

Associate Provost, Teaching and Technology  
University of Florida

**Dr. Tom Cavanagh**

Vice Provost for Digital Learning  
University of Central Florida

**Dr. Tom Dvorske**

Vice Provost, Assessment & Instruction  
Florida Polytechnic University

**Robert Fuselier**

Director, Office of Distance Learning  
Florida State University

**Dr. David Jaeger**

Director, Digital Learning  
Florida Gulf Coast University

**Evangelia Prevolis**

Interim Assistant Vice President FIU Online  
Florida International University

**Dr. Deb Miller**

Assistant Vice President for Digital Learning  
University of North Florida  
University

**Franzetta Fitz**

Director of Instructional Technology  
Florida Agriculture and Mechanical

**Dr. Julie Golden-Botti**

Executive Director for Online and  
Continuing Education  
Florida Atlantic University

**Mariam Manzur-Leiva**

Instructor  
New College of Florida

**Dr. Michelle Horton**

Executive Director Global Online Learning  
and Development  
University of West Florida

## Appendix C

### Presenters for SUS Councils/Committees/Groups Contributing to the Report

**Academic Coordination Group**

Dr. Tom Dvorske (Polytechnic)

**Admissions Directors**

Jody Glassman (FIU)

**Advisory Council of Faculty Senates**

Dr. William Self, Chair (UCF)

**Auxiliaries**

Kyle Clark (FSU)

**Career Center Directors**

Lauren Loeffler (UWF)

**Chief Information Officers**

Mary Banks (FGCU)

**Collegiate Directors for Student Recreation**

Chris Morris (FSU)

**Council of Administrative/Financial Affairs**

Nick Trivunovich, Chair (USF)

**Council of State University Librarians**

Todd Chavez, Chair (USF)

**Council of Student Affairs**

Dr. William Hudson, Chair (FAMU)

**Council on Equal Opportunity & Diversity**

Michelle Douglas (FSU)

**Police Chiefs**

Chris Daniel (USF)

**Public Health Deans**

Dr. Donna Petersen (USF)

**Council on Diversity and Inclusion**

Rick Maxey (Polytechnic)

**Counseling Center Directors**

Jon Brunner (FGCU)

**Dean of Students**

Dr. Larry Faerman (FAU)

**Disability Services Directors**

Jennifer Mitchell (FSU)

**Emergency Managers**

Ruth Rodrigues (FGCU)

**Financial Aid Directors**

Billie Jo Hamilton (USF)

**Health Services/Centers Directors**

Dr. Michael Deichen (UCF)

**Housing Officers**

Ana Hernandez (USF)

**Human Resources Directors**

Renisha Gibbs (FSU)

**Implementation Committee**

Dr. Cindy DeLuca, Chair (USF)

**Medical School Deans**

Dr. John Fogarty (FSU)

**Student Government**

Ally Schneider (UNF)

**Vice Presidents for Research**

Dr. Dan Flynn, Chair (FAU)

## Appendix D

### Timeline of Report

- January 2021: Develop Framework for a possible report: SUS Planning for a Post-COVID World. Lessons Learned, Best Practices, and Future Considerations
- February 2021: Governor Stermon formally proposes a planning workgroup to create this report
- March 2021: Reports from Academic Planning and Faculty Success Administrators
- June 2021: Reports from Student Access, Progression and Learning Administrators and Campus Community Administrators
- August 2021: Reports from Preventive Health Administrators and General Administration and Budget Administrators
- November 2021: Reports from Extension Services Administrators
- January 2022: Final Report and Recommendations provided to the Board of Governors Online Education and Innovation Committee