

MINUTES  
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE  
Florida Atlantic University  
November 4, 2021

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

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Tim Cerio convened the meeting on November 4, 2021, at 8:33 a.m. with the following members present: Governors Levine, Edge, Frost, Huizenga, Jordan, Lamb, Self, and Silagy. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

Chair Cerio asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2021, committee meeting. Governor Levine moved to approve, Governor Silagy seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Civil Discourse Initiative Update

Next, Chair Cerio provided an update on the Board's civil discourse initiative. He noted that in the Board packet, there was a project outline that proposed a format for a report that would be provided to the full Board at the January 2022 meeting. One section of the report would highlight best practices for civil discourse initiatives that have been identified through outreach to specific universities and local, state, and national authorities on civil discourse. He added that Board staff would continue to identify national models of civil discourse in an effort to continue to highlight best practices. Another section of the report would contain Board expectations of stakeholders, including board of trustees members, university presidents, academic leaders, faculty, and students. The expectations are that civil discourse programs and initiatives take priority and are evaluated and reevaluated for effectiveness. He added that the process was not just about best practices but about evaluating and holding universities accountable for how leadership deals with incidents.

Board Chair Kitson expressed the importance of providing institutions with guidance and policies to ensure continuity throughout the System.

4. Pillars of Excellence, 2021-22 Quarter 1 Spending Report

Chair Cerio announced that the next item on the agenda was to hear an update on the Pillars of Excellence first quarter spending reports for the 2021-22 fiscal year for the four institutions that received recurring funding under the Pillars of Excellence framework. Both Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) and the University of North Florida (UNF)

received recurring funding under Universities of Distinction, and both Florida State University (FSU) and the University of Florida (UF) received funding under preeminence and national rankings enhancements. Chair Cerio recognized Dr. England to provide the update.

Dr. England reminded the committee that June 30, 2021, marked the end of the first year of spending for the four institutions that received allocations from the 2020 Legislature for their Pillars of Excellence initiatives. As all four institutions received recurring funds and had carryforward funds from the 2020-21 fiscal year, the committee heard and approved spending plans for the 2021-22 fiscal year at the August 2021 meeting. She explained that the presentation would review the first quarter spending for year two, which ended September 30. Dr. England then gave an overview of each institution's total 2021-22 fiscal year budget, which included the recurring and carryforward funds from the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Dr. England gave an overview of FGCU's first quarter spending on the Water School initiative. The Water School expended approximately \$1.6 million of its approximately \$4.7 million budget during the first quarter or 34%. These expenditures were primarily used for hiring initiatives, financial aid, and existing outreach and external partnerships. As of September 30, 2021, FGCU has hired one of 13 faculty positions and three of five staff positions. Florida Gulf Coast University has also advertised 12 faculty positions and one staff position. Additionally, FGCU has used funds to retain current faculty and staff. She added that FGCU invested in financial aid by awarding seven graduate students research assistantships and distributing a request for proposals for undergraduate research awards. The university has also invested in additional library resources. Dr. England noted that a recent hire, Noah Valenstein, the former Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, would work on existing community outreach initiatives such as the Southwest Florida Regional Resiliency Compact and facilitate student internships.

Governor Self asked if the institution was receiving responses to the advertised positions. Dr. Michael Martin, FGCU President, noted that the institution had received quite a few applications.

Dr. England then provided an overview of UNF's first quarter spending on its MedNexus initiative. As of September 30, UNF spent approximately \$1.5 million of an approximately \$6.4 million budget or 24%. The University of North Florida has used these funds to hire additional faculty and staff, award scholarships, and renovate facilities. In the first quarter, UNF hired four assistant professors, one instructor, three staff positions, and five student interns. The university has also provided stipends to the nursing director and assistant director. In terms of scholarships, UNF awarded \$100,000 in financial aid to undergraduate and graduate students. Lastly, she explained that UNF had completed construction of the Palm Coast facility, which opened in fall 2021, and plans to complete construction on the Jacksonville Deerwood facility this fall.

Next, Dr. England provided an overview of FSU's first quarter spending on preeminence and national rankings enhancements. She announced that in the 2022 U.S. News and World Report rankings, FSU was ranked 19<sup>th</sup> among public universities. As of September 30, FSU has spent approximately \$1.7 million of an approximately \$15.8 million budget or 11%. She explained that FSU focused its spending on improving student success by hiring 25 learning assistants for STEM and key gateway courses, improving graduate student compensation, and hiring additional student support staff. Additionally, FSU hired 21 faculty members and advertised for 23 additional faculty positions. To improve faculty retention, FSU invested in faculty raises. University leadership expects that these investments will help increase the capacity of its honors program.

Chair Cerio asked about the hiring timeline for the remaining 23 faculty positions. Dr. Richard D. McCullough, FSU President, answered that the goal is to fill all remaining positions this academic year, though it could take longer due to a variety of factors.

Governor Lamb noted that FSU had only spent 11% of its budget and inquired how quickly FSU plans to move on its initiatives. President McCullough expressed that FSU will continue implementing these initiatives and hiring at a rapid pace and did not have concerns regarding their ability to use the preeminence funding. He added that the institution cut back its spending during the start of the pandemic and is now moving forward on initiatives that may have been delayed during the pandemic.

Governor Silagy inquired if the institution experienced any challenges hiring faculty, such as the candidates preferring remote work and preferring not to move. President McCullough stated that the institution had offered the remote work option to all faculty as a health and safety issue; however, few faculty members have chosen to work remotely.

Next, Dr. England provided an overview of UF's first quarter spending. She announced that UF has moved up in U.S. News and World Reports rankings and is now ranked 5<sup>th</sup> among public universities. As of September 30, 2021, UF has spent approximately \$3.8 million of an approximately \$15.9 million budget or 24%. The University of Florida has spent a majority of these funds to support the continued cost of faculty raises, including an across-the-board 1% raise and 2% merit-based increases. She added that UF continues to support two moonshot programs, one which focuses on cancer research and reducing health disparities and the other program on improving K-12 STEM education.

Chair Cerio asked if UF had any additional faculty searches. Dr. Joseph Glover, Provost of the University of Florida, said they are in the process of hiring 100 additional faculty in the area of artificial intelligence and applications; however, their salaries were not a part of the 2020 allocation or the year two spending plan.

## 5. Discussion on Employment and Wage Data

Chair Cerio announced that the next item on the agenda was to hear a presentation on the wage and employment data used by the Board office when assessing performance on performance based funding metrics. Chair Cerio recognized Dr. England to provide the presentation of the wage and employment data available to the Board to study graduate workforce outcomes.

Dr. England reminded the committee that at the October 2019 meeting, the committee recommended, and the Board approved, increasing the Board's strategic plan goal for median wages of bachelor's graduates employed full-time one year after graduation. The change would increase the wage threshold from \$25,000 to \$30,000. She added that the Budget Committee would be considering the possibility of increasing the related performance based funding metric threshold to \$30,000 so that both would be aligned.

Dr. England also noted that at the August 2021 meeting, committee members asked about the impacts of minimum wage increases, how wages of System graduates compared to those with technical training, and the impact of using a higher wage threshold. While the Board office plans to provide additional information to address these questions over the course of the coming year, she explained that her presentation would focus on the current wage and employment data that the Board office currently has access to and the available information regarding the impacts of minimum wage increases.

She explained that the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) provided the employment and wage data, and the data comes from two sources: the Reemployment Assistance Program and the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS). For graduates working in Florida, the data comes from the Reemployment Assistant Program administered by the Florida Department of Revenue. Employers must report data to the Department of Revenue for state and federal unemployment compensation programs. For graduates living in other states, comparable data comes from the U.S. Department of Labor through SWIS, a voluntary data exchange program.

To gather wage and employment data, the Board office creates a list of graduates from each institution. The list is sent to the National Clearinghouse, which compares the list to a national database of students enrolled and graduated. The Clearinghouse adds information about enrollment or additional degrees earned and sends the list back to the Board office. These files are sent through a secure file transfer system. This list is then sent to DEO along with a blank table template of the types of information that is being requested. The agency will send back summary data for each institution. Since data cannot be added after DEO provides the summary data, it is important to have a list of comprehensive questions and data needs prior to making the request from DEO.

Dr. England added that DEO has reported that the Florida Reemployment Assistance Program data includes more than 95% of all people working in the State of Florida. Additionally, SWIS now contains data from all 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, which is an improvement on previous data sources. The State Wage Interchange System includes data from employees from employers who

participate in the federal unemployment insurance program as well as employees of nonprofit organizations that employ four or more workers.

Then Dr. England explained which types of data were missing from the Florida Reemployment Assistant program and the SWIS data. The types of missing data included individuals employed outside the United States, those employed by the military or federal government, those employed in temporary positions, those employed by an institution that they are enrolled and taking courses at, and those performing services such as student nurses or in nurse training school. Despite these limitations, the Board office is still able to collect data on approximately 90% of graduates.

Governor Lamb inquired how frequently the data was updated and if the data was timely. Dr. England responded that data for the accountability plans are obtained annually. For instance, for the 2021 Accountability Plan presented in August, the data used to assess performance was for graduates in the 2018-19 academic year and their employment and enrollment one year after graduation. The data was received from DEO last winter, and institutions included that data in their institutional accountability plans in June of this year.

Governor Stermon commented that the current data was probably a better reflection than if the Board office reached 100% as some outliers could skew the data.

Governor Self asked if the Board office was able to get information on the industry people are employed in or if the data was just focused on employment and salary. Dr. England noted that a couple of other limitations were the industry and occupation data. Although there are industry codes on the data, not all employers fill in this data. The Board office will continue to look into the industry codes. Another limitation is that the employers do not report information on the type of occupation, which means the Board cannot verify if the person is working in the occupation for which the person got a degree. However, she is currently looking into other avenues to locate this information. Lastly, the Board office is working to develop a career planning tool for students called MyFloridaFuture.org. This new database will allow a student to look at academic programs by institution and their potential career outcomes based on actual Florida graduates. MyFloridaFuture.org will go live on January 1, 2022.

Next, Dr. England provided an overview of the timing of the minimum wage increases and how it could impact the wage threshold. She noted that, in 2019, a person working full-time at minimum wage would earn \$17,500 compared to the performance based funding wage threshold of \$25,000, which means that the wage threshold is 142% of the minimum wage earnings. By 2027, the minimum wage will increase to \$15 per hour. A person working full-time at minimum wage would earn \$31,200 compared to the wage threshold of \$30,000, which means that the wage threshold would be 96% of minimum wage earnings.

Governor Levine commented that the problem with the data is that the market is constantly changing. He asked the committee to consider what needs to be done as there is a delay in wage data appearing on the accountability plan. Governor Lamb

responded that there is a disconnect between the outcomes that the Board is trying to drive and the wage data. He commented that the Board needs to discuss the standards and wages that are expected for System graduates.

Governor Stermon noted that minimum wage was a political issue, and minimum wage could change with politics. He suggested that the Board put a consumer price index indicator in the goal so that as the index moves, the wage threshold moves.

Dr. England noted that the Board office would continue to provide additional information at future committee meetings that will help inform discussions regarding making changes to the wage threshold.

6. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment.

Having no further business, Chair Cerio adjourned the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

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Timothy Cerio, Chair

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Director, Planning & Policy