

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
INNOVATION AND ONLINE COMMITTEE
June 30, 2022

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Edward Haddock convened the meeting at 9:04 a.m. on June 30, 2022, with the following members present: Commissioner Manny Diaz, Jr., Aubrey Edge, Nimna Gabadage, Charles Lydecker, Craig Mateer, and Dr. William Self. A quorum was established.

2. Approval of Committee Meeting Minutes

Governor Mateer moved that the committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 29, 2022. Governor Self seconded the motion, and the members concurred.

3. Preparing for a Post-Pandemic World in the State University System

a. Inter-SUS Tele-counseling Support

Dr. Mitch Cordova stated that the Council of Student Affairs and the counseling center directors collaborated to address the recommendation regarding tele-counseling in the report "Preparing for a Post-Pandemic World in the State University System." He said that each institution will report on the capacity of tele-counseling services it provides and then will develop plans for extending those services to other campuses in times of crisis. Each institution will document and share information regarding who used the tele-counseling services in specific times of crisis. He said the Council will develop a mechanism for how these services will be offered at each of the institutions.

Dr. Cordova said the Council has already developed a draft of best practices for how tele-counseling services will be offered in the SUS, and, when finalized, the document will be shared among institutions' respective staffs in the SUS. He said the Council will edit the existing mutual aid agreement to reflect tele-counseling services that universities have on their respective campuses. The document will then be reviewed and signed by the appropriate designee for each campus.

Dr. Cordova said that each of these action steps will be completed by October 1, 2022.

b. Human Resources Policies on Work Modalities

Ms. Renisha Gibbs said the biggest issue the human resources executives were working on across the system was remote work - updating policies that allow for remote work, while balancing the needs of the education and work environments. All institutions in the system have policies for working remotely, but there are variations in how those policies are being implemented. She said institutions have to be able to compete in the market, while not interrupting business operations. She said they have to provide counteroffers not only for salary increases, but also for opportunities for more flexibility in remote work.

Ms. Gibbs said they are also looking at practices and policies to ensure they are equitable and fair, tracking implementation so employees are treated the same, where appropriate. She said they are

looking at how faculty fit into all of this. Remote work policies have typically not applied to faculty. Because of the nature of their work, faculty have had additional flexibility in how they perform their duties. Now, policies are being reviewed to make sure there are expectations for in-person office hours for students and ensuring student success.

Ms. Gibbs said that many institutions have enhanced their flexibility for schedules, leave policies, and enhanced training on distance learning, but are also making sure there are requirements for in-person instruction.

She said that universities are providing training for supervisors in how to manage employees in a hybrid work environment. Different skills are needed for managing teams that are remote vs. hybrid vs. in-person.

She stated that there are a lot of approaches to strengthening the information technology infrastructure as it pertains to employee productivity. A lot of approaches used by universities during the pandemic have remained and have increased efficiency in the workplace.

4. Ensuring Quality in Online Education in the SUS

a. Florida International University

Ms. Evangelia Prevolis said the majority of FIU's fully online degree-seeking students are female and over the age of 25, and almost half attend full-time. She said FIU has over 70 degrees of strategic emphasis and just over 180 total learning products.

Ms. Prevolis stated that FIU has woven accessibility, universal design, and quality throughout their training and development opportunities. FIU has subscribed to the Quality Matters nationally recognized rubric to certify their courses and has held the number one spot in the nation for the second year in a row with over 600 certified courses. She said that FIU has built and evolved a technology tool kit for faculty to engage with and build digital experiences in their courses.

b. University of South Florida

Dr. Cynthia DeLuca said that USF has a robust online unit called Digital Learning that has experts which partner one-on-one with faculty through the design and delivery process, offering expertise in learning design, multimedia and video production, and faculty support optimized for each instructor. She said that the unit had certified over 2,000 faculty in the online instructor certification course. Dr. DeLuca explained that USF had a rubric that met the criteria for high quality online course design and one that went beyond high quality to include additional standards for diversity and inclusion and student engagement. She said that USF had 41 online graduate certificate and 79 online graduate programs, and that 72% of those programs were in programs of strategic emphasis.

Dr. DeLuca said that USF Online is partnering with the College of Engineering to pilot an initiative that is designed to meet workforce needs, increase access, and extend geographical boundaries by offering fully online, high quality certificates that include high-touch student support. These online programs will allow students to earn both credit certificates and degrees and non-credit industry certifications.

c. Quality Design of Courses

Dr. Deb Miller said that Goal 1 in the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education is to create a culture of quality for online education, and one of the ways that is done is to recognize the development of high quality education statewide. She said the Florida Online Course Design Quality Review Process relies on the Quality Matters rubric (Quality Matters is a nationally recognized industry standard for online course design). She said the review process, which is specific to Florida, is time-consuming for faculty and involves training and substantial interaction with instructional designers; faculty and instructional designers work together until the course has met all standards and is ready for external reviewers. She said faculty have said that they have taken what they have learned in the review process and applied it to traditional courses. She said the quality designations are effective for five years, at which time the process begins again. It is a continual improvement process. Dr. Miller said that reporting on these designations will begin next year and will be included in future online education annual reports.

Governor Self said that universities received Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds and funds to help the IT infrastructure. He said these additional funds could be used for professional development and asked if they were being used that way across the System. Dr. Miller said that all institutions are engaged in the process, and she believed most institutions were giving stipends for training and online course development.

5. 2021 Annual Report for Online Education

Regarding the Access performance indicators and goals, Dr. Nancy McKee said that in 2019-20, 78% of undergraduate students in the SUS took at least one distance learning course. That percentage spiked to 99% during 2020-21 because of the pandemic and included both planned distance learning enrollments and remote distance learning enrollments. Of the 99%, 50% took only distance learning enrollments and 49% took a mix of distance learning and face-to-face enrollments. She indicated that the Steering Committee would bring to the Innovation and Online Committee a recommendation for a performance indicator and goal for online programs/majors.

Regarding the Quality performance indicators and goals, Dr. McKee stated that 10 of the 12 institutions had attendees at the Innovation Summit in 2021 and 11 had attendees at the recent 2022 Summit. She said that the University of Central Florida had hosted the Summit on behalf of the System for the past four years and the Summit provided an opportunity for faculty and staff to share their research in online education, as well as best practices and innovations. She said that the online student success rate was comparable to those of students in classroom courses, and the online student course withdrawal rate was comparable to the rate from classroom courses, as well. Dr. McKee stated that there were four performance indicators and goals for which the system did not have data, but the data would be available and collected next year and would be reported in the next annual report.

She presented the data for the Affordability performance indicators and goals, indicating that 59% of courses in Spring 2021 had textbooks and instructional materials that were free or cost \$20 or less per credit hour. She said that all institutions collaborate on course design and development. She also presented a table that reflected time-to-degree for undergraduate students who graduated in the 2020-21 year, saying that, in general, distance learning helped students stay on track for a timely graduation.

Governor Self said he hoped universities were marketing their online programs outside the state. He suggested universities reach out to their alumni who are living out of state and would be paying out-of-

state tuition. He said it was important for universities to remain competitive in this environment and market both their graduate and undergraduate programs.

Governor Lydecker moved that the committee approve the 2021 Annual Report for Online Education. Governor Mateer seconded the motion, and the members concurred.

6. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Chair Haddock adjourned the meeting at 10:09 a.m. Governor Silagy encouraged universities to give Governor Self's idea consideration. He said that staying connected to alumni as they move around the world by offering them online courses as a significant benefit from a tuition standpoint, in-state vs. out-of-state, if that can be done, would strengthen the bond with them, which would lead to more than just incremental tuition.

Edward Haddock, Chair

Nancy C. McKee, Ph.D.
Associate Vice Chancellor