

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
January 24, 2023

Video or audio archives of the meetings of the Board of Governors and its committees are accessible at <http://www.flbog.edu/>.

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Vice Chair Lydecker convened the meeting on January 24, 2023, at 3:22 p.m., with the following members present: Governors Corcoran, Edge, Jones, Jordan, Levine, and Oliva. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Academic Research and Excellence Committee Meeting: Minutes, September 13, 2022

Vice Chair Lydecker requested a motion to approve September 13, 2022, committee meeting minutes. Governor Jones moved to approve, Governor Frost seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. World Class Faculty and Scholars Report Update

Vice Chair Lydecker explained that section 1004.6497, Florida Statutes, requires that the Board of Governors submit a report on the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program to the legislature by March 15 each year. The legislature provided \$90.5 million in 2021-22 to support the efforts of the State University System institutions in recruiting and retaining exemplary faculty and research scholars.

Vice Chair Lydecker recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Economic Development, to present an overview of the 2023 report.

Ms. Sikes expanded on the program's purpose, stating that along with the recruitment and retention of highly productive faculty, the program's long-term goal was to elevate the national competitiveness of the State University System. Ms. Sikes reported that most of the funding was used for faculty recruitment and retention initiatives, such as cluster hires. State universities also used funds for high-performing faculty awards and research, such as infrastructure enhancements and student research initiatives. A portion of the funds was devoted to financial aid, advising, and recruitment packages for doctoral fellows.

Ms. Sikes described the impacts of the World Class Faculty and Scholars Program, citing a net positive return for the State University System and Florida. Across the State University System, continuous funding has led to an increase in research awards.

Additionally, Florida State University, the University of Florida, and the University of South Florida have all been recognized by the National Science Foundation in the top 100 universities for research expenditures. Ms. Sikes explained that the State University System is ranked number two nationally regarding patents and tech transfer. Ms. Sikes noted that this translated into increased research opportunities and academic experiences for students, leaving them better prepared for the workforce.

Ms. Sikes presented that because of the World Class Faculty and Scholars Program, 88 faculty members were recruited, and 1,400 faculty were retained. Furthermore, she reported lower faculty turnover rates for those hired through the World Class Faculty and Scholars Program. Finally, Ms. Sikes stated that these faculty had transferred approximately \$25 million in research funding to State University System institutions and are working on new research proposals totaling over \$250 million.

Vice Chair Lydecker commented that the numbers presented regarding faculty hires, faculty retention, and research awards were notable and impressive and showed promising progress toward the Board's strategic goals.

Vice Chair Lydecker requested a motion to approve the World Class Faculty and Scholars Program Report. Governor Jones moved to approve, and Governor Scott seconded. The motion passed.

4. Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program Report

Vice Chair Lydecker stated that section 1004.6498, Florida Statutes, requires that the Board of Governors submit a report on the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program to the legislature by March 15 each year. The legislature provided \$60 million in 2021-22 to enhance the quality and excellence of professional and graduate schools and degree programs in medicine, law, and business. Vice Chair Lydecker remarked that this program allows institutions to enhance and grow graduate programs by recruiting and retaining faculty and providing additional financial aid to students, which helps the State University System meet its research goals.

Vice Chair Lydecker recognized Ms. Emily Sikes to present an overview of the 2023 report.

Ms. Sikes explained that six medical schools, four law schools, and ten institutions with graduate-level business programs received funds from the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program. Each institution receives funding based on identified performance indicators, such as licensure exam pass rates, employment outcomes, and the number of graduates. In the 2021-22 year, State University System institutions awarded 702 medical degrees, 766 law degrees, and 5,844 graduate-level business degrees. Ms. Sikes noted that New College of Florida and Florida Polytechnic University do not receive funding from this program.

Ms. Sikes described that 60% of funding is devoted to faculty recruitment and retention, mainly through salaries and infrastructure improvements. Universities reported using 24% of the funding for student support mechanisms like financial aid and licensure exam preparation.

Ms. Sikes noted that universities spent about \$24.5 million on graduate-level business education, with 89% of funds supporting faculty and students. In medicine, universities spent \$20.7 million, mainly for faculty recruitment and retention, student support, and medical research. In law, universities spent most of the \$14.9 million to support faculty and student support initiatives. State universities invested the remaining funds for law schools into licensure exam preparation and infrastructure improvements.

Ms. Sikes highlighted the increased number of graduates at the institutions receiving funds from the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program. The graduates in the areas of medicine, law, and business support critical workforce needs for Florida. Ms. Sikes mentioned a rise in rankings for Florida State University's law program and the medical programs at the University of Central Florida, the University of Florida, and the University of South Florida. Ms. Sikes concluded that the Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program provided an opportunity for state universities to support and enhance professional and graduate education in the state.

Vice Chair Lydecker requested a motion to approve the Graduate and Professional Degree Excellence Program Report. Governor Scott moved to approve, and Governor Jordan seconded. The motion passed.

5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Vice Chair Lydecker adjourned the meeting at 3:33 p.m.

Charles Lydecker, Vice Chair

Diego Fermin, Academic and Student Affairs Intern