

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF
FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY
March 28, 2023

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1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Vice Chair Lydecker convened the meeting on March 28, 2023, with the following members present: Governors Jordan, Edge, Jones, Levine, Oliva, and Scott. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of the January 25, 2023, Committee Meeting

Vice Chair Lydecker requested a motion to approve the January 25, 2023, committee meeting minutes. Governor Scott moved to approve, Governor Oliva seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. SUS Research and Innovation Dashboard Update

Vice Chair Lydecker stated the next item on the agenda was an update regarding the State University System Research and Innovation Dashboard. He reported that at the September 2016 meeting, the Board approved a 19-metric dashboard to monitor the System's progress toward achieving national and international prominence in research. The dashboard includes metrics that quantify research activity and growth in the categories of Research Contracts and Grants, Innovation, People, and Return on Investment. Vice Chair Lydecker explained the first dashboard was presented to the Academic and Research Excellence Committee at the March 2018 meeting, with annual updates. He acknowledged that the world-class faculty are essential to the System's success in research and innovation and Florida's status as the number one state for higher education. The metrics in the dashboard demonstrate the impact that world-class faculty have in areas that are important to Florida.

Vice Chair Lydecker recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Economic Development, to present the 2023 Research and Innovation Dashboard results to the committee.

Ms. Sikes explained that the Board had been committed to elevating the System's research profile over the past few years. The category of Research Grants and Contracts focused on system-wide totals of research grants and contracts activity, and System performance has increased in all recorded metrics. Ms. Sikes pointed out that total research expenditures increased by 11 percentage points to \$2.56 billion in 2023, up from \$2.31 billion in 2022. In previous years, this metric had not demonstrated such a large change in value. Ms. Sikes attributed this to high-performing faculty and

researchers and collaboration between institutions. Ms. Sikes reported a 26 percentage point increase in federal expenditures in the last five years. These research expenditures are related to competitive awards granted by federal agencies. Ms. Sikes commended the institutions for becoming more competitive in seeking out and receiving federal research funding.

Ms. Sikes clarified that due to delays in data reporting at the federal level, comparisons to other public higher education systems related to research lag a year behind. During the fiscal year ending in 2021, the System ranked fifth nationally and was very close to Pennsylvania, the fourth-ranked state. Regarding research collaborations, Ms. Sikes reported 169 within the System, 20 more than in previous years. The System's performance on this metric demonstrates that faculty work cooperatively across the System instead of competitively to seek federal funding.

Ms. Sikes explained that most metrics in the Innovation category showed growth. She highlighted the year-over-year increases of 16 percentage points in the number of industry-related contracts and grants and 12 percentage points in expenditures. Regarding Innovation metrics compared to other states, the System ranked number two in technology transfer, which occurs when research exchange leads to the commercialization of products and services.

Ms. Sikes moved on to the People category, which includes doctoral and faculty activity metrics. The System saw increases in three of these metrics. Ms. Sikes noted that Board staff are still working on better ways to assess the extent to which undergraduate students participate in research.

Ms. Sikes presented the metrics in the Return on Investment category, which includes the number of jobs supported by external funding and the economic impact of state and federal funding. The System increased by nine percentage points in the Total Number of Jobs Supported by External Funding, 14 percentage points in the Economic Impact of State Funding, and 19 percentage points in the Impact of Federal Funding. Ms. Sikes asserted that these metrics demonstrate that as research expenditures have increased in the past five years, the funding secured by faculty is significantly impacting the state's economy.

Ms. Sikes concluded the presentation with key takeaways from this year's dashboard. The System has seen an 11 percentage point increase in total research, faculty collaboration has yielded more federal research awards, and the return on investment metrics show a strong economic impact of research on the state of Florida.

Vice Chair Lydecker commented he was excited to see the progress made in all metrics, particularly the Return on Investment category. He also thanked faculty for their efforts and encouraged the continued monitoring of these metrics.

Vice Chair Lydecker asked Board staff to work with universities to identify faculty producing research on topics critical to Florida's future and invite them to present some of their research to the committee. He noted that in the past, the committee had heard presentations on topics like artificial intelligence, healthcare, and water. These

presentations have helped the Board understand how to identify and address local and global problems and how their research impacts the state of Florida's economy.

4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Vice Chair Lydecker adjourned the meeting.

Charles Lydecker, Vice Chair

Diego Fermin, Intern
Academic and Student Affairs