

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
VIA TELECONFERENCE
September 20, 2023

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1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Levine convened the meeting on September 20, 2023, at 10:01 a.m. with the following members present: Governors Levine, Edge, Frost, Hitchcock, Phalin, and Oliva. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee Meeting: Minutes, June 21, 2023

Chair Levine asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on June 21, 2023. Governor Edge moved to approve, Governor Phalin seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. Programs of Strategic Emphasis: 2023 Update

Chair Levine stated that the next item on the agenda was to hear an update on the 2023 review of the Programs of Strategic Emphasis. The Programs of Strategic Emphasis are one of several tools to ensure the degree production goals of the State University System align with Florida's economic and workforce needs. They are also included in the Performance Based Funding Model. Dr. England provided an abbreviated update to this committee in June with a draft methodology and a draft list of proposed programs. Over the summer, Board staff received significant feedback from the institutions and various industries on the proposed list and methodology.

Chair Levine explained that since the committee was pressed for time in June, he asked Ms. Emily Sikes, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Economic Development, to provide a detailed review of the legislative requirements of the process for updating the list, as well as an update on the feedback received.

Chair Levine recognized Ms. Sikes to provide an overview.

Ms. Sikes explained that this process began in January of this year due to the 2021 Florida legislature amending the statute to direct the Board to adopt the criteria to determine value for and prioritization of degree programs established by the Credentials Review Committee to designate programs of emphasis. The statute also requires the Board to review the programs every three years to ensure alignment with the Credentials Review Committee and the state's workforce needs.

Ms. Sikes elaborated that Board staff has worked closely with the Governor's REACH office, legislative staff, and the staff of the Credentials Review Committee throughout this process to ensure consistent implementation of the legislation. Board staff developed a methodology in collaboration with stakeholders that incorporates the data sources and approaches established by the Credentials Review Committee in August 2022, consistent with the statutory requirements. The methodology is a forward-looking analysis of unfilled job openings and job growth in our state and considers the starting wages for each occupation requiring a bachelor's degree.

Ms. Sikes provided an overview of the methodology, explaining that Board staff reviewed all the occupations in Florida that typically require a bachelor's degree or higher and reviewed long-term employment projections sourced from the Florida Department of Commerce, consistent with the data source required in Florida Statutes. Board staff used the most recent number of graduates from all higher education institutions in Florida to determine the talent supply of graduates and compared that to the number of job openings for new entrants in the employment projections. This calculation determined the projected annual unfilled occupational openings, or gaps, for the next eight years.

Ms. Sikes next reviewed the steps taken to refine the program list. After determining the unfilled openings, Board staff established a series of thresholds to begin refining the list. The process focused on occupations with a gap of at least 100 unfilled annual openings requiring bachelor's degrees for entry, 50 for occupations requiring master's degrees, and 25 for occupations requiring doctoral degrees. Second, staff looked at professions projected to grow by 8.6% or more through 2030, the average projected growth rate for all occupations in Florida. Third, for professions requiring a bachelor's degree for entry, occupations were identified with starting wages of \$40,000 or higher. The \$40,000 threshold aligns with the wage threshold used in Performance-Based Funding metrics and the Board's strategic plan. Occupations meeting these thresholds were then cross-walked to the academic programs that most commonly align with those jobs based on the jointly developed Florida crosswalk used to inform the work of the Credentials Review Committee, which uses both national and Florida-specific information. From there, Board staff checked the list for unnecessary duplication between potential programs and university offerings. For example, State University System institutions typically offer two academic programs for accounting. However, many educational programs on the crosswalk can support accounting. The non-utilized programs were identified and removed from the draft list to make it more relevant and targeted. Finally, Board staff scanned the list for critical programs that may have been missed due to lagging or imperfect labor market data. One of these areas is teachers. Board staff utilized the Florida Department of Education's critical teacher shortage list to help identify educational programs in high demand at the baccalaureate level since many of those occupations did not meet the established thresholds used in the gap analysis phase.

Ms. Sikes described the multiple partners that provided feedback and input regarding the proposed methodology and draft program list, such as the Governor's REACH

office, legislative, business and industry, state agencies, and other stakeholders. Ms. Sikes stated that Board staff has met with these partners multiple times.

Ms. Sikes next summarized the university feedback regarding the draft list and methodology. She explained that Board staff had developed a process comparable to what the Credentials Review Committee used for additions to the Master Credentials List to allow university staff to recommend including additional programs. The universities were required to provide relevant data and document local or regional workforce demand, emerging fields, or industry support for any program they wanted to recommend for inclusion on the list. Board staff continue to review the substantive number of university recommendations, which contain beneficial and relevant feedback. The institutions recommended removing several inactive programs from the list that were considered duplicative of the current programs they offer and would not necessarily help achieve the Board's strategic goals. The institutions also recommended adding several new programs based on evidence of additional occupational linkages, local or regional workforce demand, or pathways to high-demand graduate programs. Finally, the universities provided commentary on the methodology by suggesting enhancements that are either in the process of being added or may be considered for future iterations of the list. Ms. Sikes commented that Board staff is very close to being able to share the revised list based on all the feedback received, and the final review of input received from the universities will be part of the process before the list is presented to the Board in November.

Ms. Sikes stated that over the past several months, there had been some confusion around the list and its purpose, and she addressed some of the misconceptions. First, the Board office has received numerous comments about the Board potentially shutting down programs that do not make the final list. Ms. Sikes clarified that this is entirely false. The Board of Governors does not terminate programs not on the list. The Board of Trustees of the individual universities make decisions regarding the termination of programs. The second major misconception is that programs not on the list are not important or necessary. Ms. Sikes stated that this is also false. The final misconception is that the Board only funds the programs on the list. Ms. Sikes reported that this is also false, as the Boards of Trustees and university leadership make decisions regarding the funding of specific academic programs, not the Board of Governors.

Ms. Sikes explained that the Programs of Strategic Emphasis list is a data-driven tool the Board uses to intentionally incentivize focus on specific programs that support our state's most critical workforce needs. Universities and the Boards of Trustees use this list as a planning tool to focus resources supporting the Board's strategic vision. Students can also reference the list along with other resources like the MyFloridaFuture student outcomes dashboard to help select a program of study with high demand in the workforce, which may help ensure a positive return on their educational investment.

Ms. Sikes addressed the misconception that programs not on the list are unimportant, stating that could not be further from the truth. The universities offer hundreds of essential academic programs that are not on the current list, nor will they appear on the

final version of the new list later this year. She explained that this list serves a particular purpose: to identify academic programs that do not produce enough graduates to meet the most critical demands of Florida's workforce.

Ms. Sikes said that Board leadership and staff have continued to meet with stakeholders on multiple occasions since June and that the next steps will be to finalize the review of the feedback received over the summer and create a final draft list for the Board to consider in November, along with a final version of the methodology.

Ms. Sikes stated that should the Board approve a new list in November of this year, that will set into motion several other processes between now and 2026. The Budget and Finance Committee would need to establish a time to consider any needed updates and scoring adjustments to the Performance Based Funding formula. The new Programs of Strategic Emphasis list would become effective for the 2024-25 academic year, but due to the timing of data submissions for accountability plans, performance results based on the new list would not be published until June of 2026, when that year's accountability plans are presented to the Board. Subsequently, performance on the metrics in the 2026 accountability plans will be used to distribute performance based funding in the 2026-27 fiscal year. Ms. Sikes reiterated that the timeline was a sample scenario based on the Board approving the list in November.

Chair Levine commented that he appreciated the slide detailing what the Programs of Strategic Emphasis update will not do, such as shut down programs. He stated that regardless of the outcome, there would be those disappointed with the final list, but he was happy to see an in-depth review of the process to consider input from all stakeholders to reach this point. He highlighted the Board staff's efforts to dispel rumors and appreciated the effort to address questions about the list.

Governor Lamb seconded the remarks made by Chair Levine. He emphasized the role of the university presidents to reach out to Board members and staff before the update is approved to provide input as needed. Governor Lamb reiterated that it is customary for the Board to routinely review performance metrics and recommend adjustments as necessary when methodology or metrics are modified.

4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Chair Levine concluded the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Alan Levine, Chair

Diego Fermin, Policy Associate