

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
January 24, 2024

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<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/1-24-24-board-of-governors-meeting/>

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Chair Cerio convened the meeting at 12:56 p.m. on January 24, 2024, with the following Governors present: Governors Edge, Bell Barnett, Diaz, Frost, Haddock, Hitchcock, and Phalin. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of the September 20, 2023, and November 9, 2023, Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Chair Cerio requested a motion to approve the committee meeting minutes for September 20, 2023, and November 9, 2023. Governor Phalin moved to approve, Governor Frost seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. Civil Discourse Initiative Updates

Chair Cerio recognized the universities that have implemented all phases of the Board of Governors' 2022 Civil Discourse Final Report recommendations. These universities were Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida Polytechnic University, Florida State University, the University of Central Florida, the University of North Florida, and the University of West Florida. Chair Cerio clarified that these institutions' boards of trustees, faculty senates, and student government associations have all endorsed the Board's statement of free expression.

Chair Cerio recognized university presidents to provide specific updates.

President Ken Jessell of Florida International University reported that the university's board of trustees and student government association have reviewed and endorsed the Board's Statement of Free Expression and committed to the principles of civil discourse.

Interim President Stacy Volnick of Florida Atlantic University stated that she would present to faculty on the initiative and that she intended for the university to be fully compliant by March.

President Richard Corcoran of the New College of Florida explained that the institution was revising its mission statement and intended to fully comply with the recommendations.

President Rhea Law of the University of South Florida conveyed that the university's faculty senate was still reviewing the initiative and that the university was working to align fully with the initiative's recommendations.

President Ben Sasse of the University of Florida relayed that the university was aligned with the initiative's objectives and that a more detailed update would be provided when the Board meets in Gainesville in March.

Board Chair Lamb asked if universities could feasibly reach full compliance with the initiative by the Board's next meeting in March. President Corcoran responded that New College of Florida anticipated meeting that goal by March or April. President Jessell noted that recommendations from the initiative have been incorporated into the Florida International University's policies except for the university's strategic plan. He added that the strategic plan would be updated sometime next year.

Chair Cerio acknowledged that each university president has already affirmed an agreement with the initiative and requested that universities reach full compliance with the initiative by summer.

4. Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 8.011, Authorization of New Academic Degree Programs and Other Curricular Offerings

Chair Cerio recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to provide an overview of the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 8.011, Authorization of New Academic Degree Programs and Other Curricular Offerings.

Ms. Sikes explained that Board of Governors Regulation 8.011 outlines the criteria and process for approving a new academic program. In collaboration with university staff, a comprehensive amendment to Regulation 8.011 was developed to offer universities more flexibility in proposing new degree programs, add a pathway for the approval of academic programs with a longer implementation timeline, and better organize the steps in the approval process by folding Regulation 8.004 into Regulation 8.011.

Ms. Sikes reported that the proposed amendment would remove the requirement for universities to include new academic degree programs in their accountability plans. Instead, boards of trustees will be required to review a list of new programs for the next academic year, and universities must submit their lists to the Board of Governors' office. Ms. Sikes added that these lists may be changed during the academic year so long as the boards of trustees and the Board of Governors' office are informed. She further noted that such lists would be discussed with university provosts and their staff each June to avoid program duplication.

Next, Ms. Sikes addressed how the proposed amendment would allow universities to plan for new programs that do not have existing resources or infrastructure. She referenced that last year, the Board considered a proposal for a dental program at

Florida Atlantic University. This proposal was for a new program that would require legislative budget requests, new faculty hires, and a process for program accreditation. She described how the proposed changes to Regulation 8.011 would codify the process used for this new program, ensuring that the Board of Governors oversees and approves any plans for acquiring funding, hiring faculty, and developing new curricula while allowing for the Board to receive regular updates on the implementation.

Ms. Sikes explained that the proposed amendment clearly identifies all steps in the process and organizes them in a logical order. Some steps of the process are included in Regulation 8.004, Academic Program Coordination, and the proposed amendment folds in those steps. The proposed amendment incorporates the quarterly reviews of pre-proposals for new degree programs, as well as a comprehensive review of all academic programs every three years. She noted that upon approval of the proposed amendment, staff would begin to prepare Regulation 8.004 for repeal at the March Board meeting. Due to the proposed restructuring, Ms. Sikes recommended that the regulation name be changed to Academic Degree Program Coordination and Approval.

Chair Cerio asked if the proposed changes to Regulation 8.011 had been vetted with the universities. Ms. Sikes responded that the universities had been extensively involved in the amendment to this regulation, and the amendment had been revised to reflect their feedback.

Chair Cerio requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 8.011, Authorization of New Academic Degree Programs and Other Curricular Offerings. Governor Hitchcock moved to approve, Governor Diaz seconded, and the motion passed.

5. Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.013, Military Veterans and Active Duty

Chair Cerio recognized Dr. Lynn Nelson, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to provide an overview of the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.013, Military Veterans and Active Duty.

Dr. Nelson explained that the proposed changes to Regulation 6.013 are in response to Senate Bill 274, signed into law last year, which allows for postsecondary credit to be awarded for training acquired while serving as a military combat medic. She added that the law directed the Articulation Coordinating Committee to develop a process for awarding postsecondary credits to combat medics, which was approved by the Board on November 9, 2023. Dr. Nelson reported that the proposed amendment to Regulation 6.013 recognizes the policy approved by the Board and aligns with the statute. She added that in the spring, the Articulation Coordinating Committee would recommend course equivalencies to be brought to the Board for consideration.

Chair Cerio requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.013, Military Veterans and Active Duty. Governor Diaz moved to approve, Governor Edge seconded, and the motion passed.

6. Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.001, General Admissions

Chair Cerio next asked Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.001, General Admissions.

Dr. Nelson stated that the proposed amendment to Regulation 6.001 aligns with the changes from House Bill 931, which was passed during the previous legislative session. She explained that the proposed amendment prohibits higher education institutions from instituting a political loyalty test for the admission of students and requires each board of trustees to ensure that admissions processes comply with the law.

Chair Cerio requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.001, General Admissions. Governor Diaz moved to approve, Governor Bell Barnett seconded, and the motion passed.

7. University of Florida Specialized Admissions Request

Chair Cerio recognized Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of a specialized admissions request from the University of Florida for a Bachelor of Science in Music Business and Entrepreneurship, CIP code 50.1003.

Dr. Nelson explained that Board Regulation 8.013 allows universities to establish specialized criteria for admission into specific undergraduate degree programs. The proposed program at the University of Florida is designed to prepare skilled musical performers with business skills. She noted that the program would address a market need for talented musicians possessing business and entrepreneurial skillsets. She added that due to the musical component of the program, admission would require a musical audition and portfolio to demonstrate instrument or voice proficiency. Dr. Nelson clarified that because of the audition and portfolio requirements for admission, the program qualifies for specialized admission under the minimal skill requirement. She stated that upon approval, the status for the program would be effective in the fall of 2024 for five years before requiring reaffirmation.

Chair Cerio requested a motion to approve the request for specialized admissions from the University of Florida for the Bachelor of Science in Music Business and Entrepreneurship in CIP code 50.1003. Governor Phalin moved to approve, Governor Hitchcock seconded, and the motion passed.

8. Bachelors' Degree Exceptions to 120 Credit Hour Requirement

Chair Cerio asked Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of bachelor's degree programs in the System exceeding the 120 credit hour requirement outlined in Regulation 8.014.

Dr. Nelson explained that for bachelor's degree programs to exceed 120 credit hours, at least one of three criteria outlined in Regulation 8.014 must be met. The criteria include additional courses required for accreditation standards, additional courses required for professional licensing, or the degree program offering a unique and innovative learning experience. Dr. Nelson noted that of the 102 programs currently approved to exceed 120 credit hours, 60 are in engineering. She added that other fields with programs exceeding 120 credit hours include education, visual and performing arts, and health professions. Dr. Nelson reported that no process exists for the Board to review programs exceeding 120 credit hours and that most (96) of the approved programs were approved before 2015. Dr. Nelson remarked that given the high workforce demand associated with many of these programs, Board staff recommended that institutions review the rationale for programs exceeding 120 credit hours and determine if those programs should maintain that status. If the institutions determine such a status is necessary, new requests may be appropriate for the Board to consider for approval.

Chair Cerio supported Dr. Nelson's recommendation, requesting that staff present a plan and timeline at the Board's next meeting to reaffirm programs exceeding 120 credit hours. He noted that this process should resemble reaffirming programs with specialized admissions.

9. Academic and Student Affairs Updates

A. Florida Student Association

Governor Hitchcock reported that the Florida Student Association would meet with members of the Florida Legislature the following day to advocate for combatting antisemitism, amending name, image, and likeness laws, and expanding federal research grant opportunities for students.

B. Advisory Council of Faculty Senates

Governor Phalin reported how media coverage of academic work at Florida universities had increased this past semester. She highlighted the work of faculty at the University of Florida, which led the Food and Drug Administration to discontinue Phenylephrine as cold medicine. She updated the committee on how faculty at the University of South Florida have used artificial intelligence to identify disease-carrying mosquitos before they can infect humans and animals. Governor Phalin expressed her enthusiasm regarding the System's faculty members and their groundbreaking work.

10. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Cerio adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Tim Cerio, Chair

Vincent Scuteri,
Policy Associate, Academic and Student Affairs