

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
January 29, 2026

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<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/1-29-26-florida-board-of-governors-meeting/>

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks.

Chair Anastasios Kamoutsas convened the meeting at 9:01 a.m., with the following Governors present: Broxson, Bell Barnett, Dale, Dunn, Edge, Good, Haddock, Lukis, and Okaty. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to approve the committee meeting minutes for November 6, 2025. Governor Good moved to approve, and Governor Edge seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. 2026-2027 State University General Education Course Lists

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to provide an overview of the general education course lists.

Ms. Sikes provided background on the statutory framework for general education. She stated that Florida law requires students to complete 36 credit hours of general education as part of a bachelor's or associate degree and noted that these requirements have been in statute since the 1990s. Ms. Sikes explained that the legislature later added requirements that students complete at least five core courses, totaling 15 of the 36 total credit hours. The remaining general education credit hours may be fulfilled through general education course options identified by each university, which may vary by institution. Ms. Sikes explained that two statutes establish criteria and standards for general education courses and stated that course content must meet the standards outlined in the statutes.

Ms. Sikes reported that the Board approved each university's general education list for the first time in January 2025, noting that institutions undertook significant work to align their lists with statutory requirements. Following that approval, institutions began developing their 2026–27 Academic Year lists using their approved lists as a starting point. Ms. Sikes reported that each institution's full 2026-2027 list was reviewed and approved by each board of trustees. The university list was submitted to the Office of Articulation and forwarded to the Chancellor for consideration and approval by the Board of Governors.

Ms. Sikes summarized the overall changes to the 2026–27 university general education lists, reporting that 50 courses were removed and 100 courses were added. She noted that some additions reflected courses approved on other universities' lists, while others were new course offerings.

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to approve all 12 universities' 2026–27 general education course lists as presented in the materials. Governor Broxson moved to approve, Governor Bell Barnett seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Chair Kamoutsas requested a second motion to delegate to the Chancellor the authority to approve universities' requests to remove courses from the approved general education lists. Governor Dunn moved to approve, and Governor Broxson seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

4. Common Prerequisites Update

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Ms. Sikes to provide an update on the review of common prerequisites.

Ms. Sikes began by emphasizing the importance of general education and common prerequisites as mechanisms that support student transfer from the Florida College System to the State University System, and that these components are intended to support efficient time-to-degree and a smooth transition for transfer students, thereby promoting student success.

Ms. Sikes stated that Board staff have worked in coordination with the Florida College System and the Office of Articulation staff over the past few months to review program prerequisites. She explained that common prerequisites represent lower-division coursework required for admission into upper-division programs. In addition to the common prerequisites being offered and accepted across both colleges and universities statewide, the course requirements should be consistent for the same program offered by multiple institutions. Ms. Sikes added that, where appropriate, prerequisites should include general education courses so that a course could satisfy both general education and program requirements.

Ms. Sikes noted that Florida statutes require the maintenance of a statewide common prerequisites manual. She explained that the manual is intended to provide clear, consistent guidance on lower-division coursework required for entry into upper-division programs. Ms. Sikes reported that, over time, the manual has become increasingly complex, with variations in course requirements, the addition of course alternatives, programmatic changes, and institution-specific tracks. There is also information in the manual that is inconsistent with the information in the institutions' catalogs.

Ms. Sikes noted that the manual is a public-facing resource relied upon by students and families when making academic planning and transfer decisions. She stated that ensuring the accuracy of this information is critical to support informed decision-making and student success.

Ms. Sikes reported that, because of these findings, a comprehensive statewide review of common prerequisites was necessary. She stated that this effort was undertaken to ensure statutory compliance, improve statewide consistency, and provide students and families with the most accurate information.

Ms. Sikes reported that there are more than 240 programs in the statewide database and that the review began with the top 15 transfer programs, given their significance for transfer students moving from Florida College System to State University System institutions. Ms. Sikes stated that education programs were also reviewed due to statutory changes impacting entry requirements for teacher certification programs. She reported that approximately half of all programs have been reviewed to date.

Ms. Sikes commented that the review of common prerequisites is ongoing and that the Board will receive updates at future meetings.

5. Education Locations Update

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Dr. Lynn Nelson, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Innovation, to provide an overview of the proposed changes to education locations.

Dr. Nelson provided an overview of Board of Governors Regulation 8.009, Educational Locations, noting that it establishes definitions and criteria for educational locations. She stated that the regulation identifies six classifications of locations. Dr. Nelson noted that the Board approved an amendment to the regulation at its September 2024 meeting that removed special purpose sites from the list of educational locations and made several technical revisions. She reported that, following the amendment, universities conducted a review of their educational locations and submitted reclassification requests.

Dr. Nelson stated that Florida International University, Florida State University, the University of Central Florida, and the University of South Florida requested reclassification of additional campuses based on student enrollment. She noted that details on campus reclassification requests were included in the meeting materials.

Dr. Nelson reported that Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Florida Gulf Coast University, and the University of South Florida requested the reclassification of certain locations as special purpose centers. She explained that these locations were previously approved as special purpose sites, but that classification was removed in the recent amendment to Regulation 8.009.

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to approve the requests for the campus reclassifications and the reclassification of special purpose sites to special purpose centers. Governor Broxson moved to approve, Governor Dale seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

6. Academic Program Requests

a. CIP Change Request, University of Florida

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of the proposed request.

Dr. Nelson summarized the University of Florida's request to change the CIP code for the Ph.D. in Zoology to the CIP code for Biology, citing the department's broadened, interdisciplinary research across plant, animal, microbial, and theoretical systems. She noted that the biology classification better reflects the department's academic organization. Dr. Nelson stated that the change would have no impact on the program's budget, faculty, curriculum, or resources, and that approved graduate tuition rates will remain unchanged.

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to approve the University of Florida's request to change the CIP code for the Ph.D. in Zoology from CIP 26.0701 to CIP 26.0101, at the currently approved graduate tuition rate for resident and nonresident students, effective summer 2026. Governor Broxson made a motion to approve, Governor Edge seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

7. 2+2 TSC to FSU Best Practices

Chair Kamoutsas introduced a panel discussion on Florida State University (FSU) and Tallahassee State College's (TSC) 2+2 articulation pathway program. He recognized Dr. Joe O'Shea, Vice President for Student Academic Success at FSU, to begin the discussion.

Dr. O'Shea expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share FSU's work supporting transfer students and acknowledged the Board's continued emphasis on 2+2 partnerships with state colleges. He reported that approximately 25% of FSU's student body consists of transfer students and noted the institution's commitment to work with students who wish to graduate from FSU. Dr. O'Shea recognized Dr. Heather Bishop, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Director of Transfer Student Services at FSU, to continue the presentation.

Dr. Bishop explained that FSU works to make the transfer student process distinctive and supportive through a strong partnership with TSC. She noted that, while the institutions have long had a positive relationship, FSU has taken steps to further enhance collaboration through targeted policies and closer coordination. Dr. Bishop introduced Ms. Margaret Bowman, Director of Transfer Services at TSC, who emphasized that sustained leadership commitment from both institutions has also been a key factor in strengthening the partnership.

Ms. Bowman explained that this support has been translated into tangible actions, including rebranding the 2+2 pathway as the ASPIRE program and allocating dedicated space and staffing for transfer services. She reported that TSC now maintains a transfer-focused office with multiple staff members devoted to advising students. Ms. Bowman added that close coordination between the institutions, often through direct communication on behalf of students, helps ensure responsive support in a highly competitive admissions environment. She reported that services include pre-orientation workshops, curriculum maps, application workshops with FSU staff on site to assist with correct submission, and workshops focused on avoiding transfer shock.

Dr. Bishop stated that effective transfer success begins at the first stage of a student's enrollment at TSC, with early goal-setting and consistent advising that encourages students to use TSC resources while maintaining a clear focus on the long-term objective of graduating from FSU. She characterized the partnership as two institutions, one goal, noting that students benefit from the resources and support services at both institutions from entry through completion. Dr. Bishop remarked that FSU has also worked to foster pride among transfer students and noted that this is reflected in the Thrive 25 initiative, recognizing that about 25 percent of undergraduates are transfer students and are supported by targeted programming.

Dr. Bishop described a first-semester course for transfer students that introduces information on campus resources, builds connections in a small-class setting, and highlights opportunities at FSU. She emphasized the importance of early engagement given transfer students' shorter time to degree. Dr. Bishop added that many supports are peer-led, including a transfer mentoring community that has grown from about 20 to roughly 100 volunteer mentors, reflecting a peers-helping-peers model.

Dr. Bishop then recognized the student speakers, who shared their experiences.

Ms. Nashrah Pierre-Louis introduced herself as an FSU student who transferred from Broward College and is a senior majoring in psychology with plans to become a physician assistant. She stated that upon arriving at FSU, she made extensive use of available resources, including academic success coaching and peer mentoring. Ms. Pierre-Louis noted that this support provided an encouraging environment during her transition and helped her feel valued as a student. She explained that her positive experience motivated her to become involved in transfer services, and that she now serves as a peer mentor, teaches the first-semester course for transfer students, and is president of the Transfer Student Union, which provides leadership opportunities and community for transfer students.

Mr. Nathan Sanborn introduced himself as an FSU student who transferred from Seminole State College and is a history major. He stated that he initially felt apprehensive about transferring without an established peer group but found community in the first semester course, where he connected with other transfer students and learned about campus resources. Mr. Sanborn noted his interest in research and shared that he presented at the Transfer Leadership Summit and participated in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program. He added that he is now training as a peer mentor, describing the experience as valuable preparation for his goal of becoming a history teacher.

Mr. Joseph Lacayo introduced himself as an FSU student who transferred from TSC and is a junior political science major. He stated that, although he is from Tallahassee, transitioning to FSU was initially intimidating. Mr. Lacayo credited the ASPIRE program with providing strong academic planning and curriculum mapping that helped him move to FSU without any issues. He noted that he is a fourth-generation Seminole and second-generation transfer student and remarked that the support he received from both TSC and FSU has been invaluable. Mr. Lacayo explained that these experiences are helping him build communication skills and preparing him for his goal of attending law school.

Ms. Angel Wildgoose, an FSU student, introduced herself as a media communications major graduating this semester. She shared that, as a transfer student, her initial goal was to complete her degree quickly, but her perspective changed after enrolling in the first semester course for transfer students. Ms. Wildgoose explained that the course introduced her to campus resources and opportunities that enhanced her experience. She noted that, through information shared in the course, she studied abroad in Canada and became an honors scholar. She also reported that serving as a peer leader has allowed her to support other transfer students and added that these experiences strengthened her communication and teamwork skills.

Chair Kamoutsas thanked the students and presenters for their remarks and expressed appreciation for their participation. He stated that he and Chancellor Rodrigues remain committed to continued collaboration between the Florida College System and the State University System to ensure seamless transfer pathways for students across the state.

Vice Chair Broxson expressed appreciation for the discussion, noting the importance of Florida's 2+2 system in providing opportunities for students who may not have been academically or financially prepared for university admission but demonstrate the ability to succeed. He shared that he personally benefited from the 2+2 pathway program and stated that Florida is well served by emphasizing access and pathways.

8. Academic and Student Affairs Updates

a. Florida Student Association (FSA)

Governor Dale reported that the FSA recently hosted a Rally in Tally event, bringing nearly 60 student government leaders from across the State University System to Tallahassee to advocate for continued and strengthened support for public higher education. He stated that students from all 12 universities met with legislators, gaining hands-on experience in policy advocacy while sharing student priorities. Governor Dale remarked that the event highlighted the value students place in civic engagement and their role as partners in higher education policy.

Governor Dale commended Board Chair Alan Levine, on behalf of Florida's students, for a student-centered approach to Board leadership and expressed optimism about the Board's direction under Board Chair Levine and Board Vice Chair Cerio. He also expressed appreciation for the inaugural engagement between the Florida Student Association and the Board of Governors, held with Board Chair Levine and the Chancellor, noting that the opportunity for direct dialogue was meaningful and could become a lasting tradition.

b. Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS)

Governor Dunn highlighted the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, administered by Carnegie in partnership with the American Council on Education, which recognizes institutions demonstrating sustained commitment to community engagement through teaching, research, and service. She explained that this designation reflects meaningful, reciprocal partnerships that benefit both universities and their communities. Governor Dunn emphasized that faculty play a central role through community-engaged curricula, service learning, clinical experiences, engaged scholarship, and applied research.

Governor Dunn noted that the University of Central Florida and the University of West Florida were the first institutions in the System to receive this classification in 2004 and reported that seven additional SUS institutions were recognized this year. Governor Dunn stated that these recognitions underscore the strength of public universities and the faculty's role in advancing student learning and community impact. Governor Dunn concluded by encouraging institutions not yet recognized to pursue the designation.

9. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Kamoutsas adjourned the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

Anastasios Kamoutsas, Chair

Tyler Aldinger, Assistant Director, ASA