

MINUTES  
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
March 26, 2026

*Video or audio archives of the meetings of the Board of Governors and its committees are accessible at:*

<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/3-26-26-florida-board-of-governors-meeting/>

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks.

Chair Anastasios Kamoutsas convened the meeting at 10:19 a.m. with the following Governors present: Broxson, Dale, Dunn, Edge, Good, Haddock, Lukis, Okaty, and Perry. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to approve the committee meeting minutes for January 29, 2026. Governor Good moved to approve, and Governor Dale seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. General Education Update

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to provide a general education update.

Ms. Sikes reported that Board staff have received requests from universities to remove general education courses from the 2026-2027 general education approved list. Specifically, she reported that the University of Florida requested to remove two business courses and one music course, Florida State University requested removing one music course, and the University of North Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and the University of South Florida each requested removing Introduction to Sociology.

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Governor Kimberly Dunn to make a comment. Governor Dunn requested a motion to be considered to delegate the authority to the Chancellor to approve universities' requests to not only remove courses from their general education list, but also universities' requests to add courses to their general education list, so long as the additional courses went through the required Board of Trustees process. Governor Dale seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Chair Kamoutsas provided context on the general education sociology course, noting that the sociology work group created the framework for Introduction to Sociology, which is compliant with Florida statute for general education. He reported that the work group created a resource document for the course based on an existing open textbook, including instructor notes and a sample syllabus. Chair Kamoutsas explained that, to comply with Florida statute, introduction to sociology courses and course resources must be free of

identity politics, distortion of historical events, and discrimination. He reported that colleges in the Florida College System (FCS) were instructed that the framework is required for FCS institutions for introduction to sociology courses for general education beginning summer 2026, and that content compliant with statute may be added. He noted that the resource document is optional. Chair Kamoutsas stated that feedback from FCS presidents and faculty about the course and course materials has been positive.

Chancellor Rodrigues provided historical context on general education core courses, noting that in November 2023, the Board voted to remove Introduction to Sociology from Florida's approved general education core course list. He added that the American Sociological Association objected to the removal of the course and provided a statement defining the sociology discipline as "the scientific study of social life, interested in the causes and consequences of human behavior." Chancellor Rodrigues reported that the sociology course was replaced with a history course.

Chancellor Rodrigues shared that after the Board removed Introduction to Sociology from the general education core, the System formed a faculty workgroup to revise course descriptions and learning outcomes for general education courses to ensure alignment with Section 1007.25, Florida Statutes, which included non-core sociology courses. He explained that the revised course recommendations were reviewed by staff from the Board, FCS, and the Florida Department of Education, and upon Board approval, the descriptions were added to the course numbering system. Chancellor Rodrigues noted that the institutions were instructed to use the general education core course descriptions beginning in fall 2024. He stated that institutions were permitted to include Introduction to Sociology on their institutional general education lists, provided they complied with the state descriptions and learning outcomes.

Chancellor Rodrigues commented that at the provosts' request, Board staff worked with FCS staff to facilitate an additional workgroup of sociology faculty to develop a framework for Introduction to Sociology that aligned with Sections 1007.25 and 1007.55, Florida Statutes. Chancellor Rodrigues added that a faculty subunit of the workgroup curated a textbook that aligns with state statute, which has been disseminated to the sociology faculty.

Chancellor Rodrigues noted that System faculty provided feedback on the course framework and textbook to their respective faculty senates, faculty unions, and the media, and he shared some examples of comments. He stated that faculty expressed negative perspectives on the revised course framework and textbook, as did an article published in the media. Chancellor Rodrigues shared that he reviewed the American Sociological Association's mission statement and annual media agendas, finding the association's focus to be centered on political and social activism intended to transform society, which is not aligned with state statute for general education. Chancellor Rodrigues recommended removing the 1000- and 2000-level sociology courses from all general education classifications, retaining them as electives for students who choose to study them.

Chair Kamoutsas commented that the universities and colleges have made significant progress in implementing this legislation and noted that while several universities have requested the removal of Introduction to Sociology from the general education course list, he stated that, to align with legislation, all universities would need to remove the course.

Governor Dunn expressed her support for the Board's focus on rigorous and relevant general education courses and commended faculty for their work in developing resources. She stated that removing sociology courses from general education may be premature and overly broad. Governor Dunn stated that Board of Governors' Regulation 8.005 establishes the framework for approving general education course lists, and colleagues have expressed concern about removing a course outside that framework. She suggested a pause to consider whether revisions to Regulation 8.005 are warranted to address changes, such as removing a course from general education. Governor Cerio stated that the course is still available as an elective. Governor Good commented on the differences between sociology and history courses, stating that the purpose of general education is to learn factual information.

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to remove SYG 1000 and SYG 2000 from all universities' approved general education course lists for the 2026-2027 Academic Year. Governor Perry moved to approve, Governor Broxson seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

#### 4. Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.017, Criteria for Awarding the Baccalaureate Degree

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Ms. Sikes to provide an overview of the proposed changes to Board of Governors' Regulation 6.017.

Ms. Sikes noted that at the Board's September 2025 meeting, an amendment to Regulation 6.017 was approved, specifying that a state university may not impose a university-wide graduation requirement that conflicts with the provisions outlined in Section 1007.253 (C), Florida Statutes. She reported that Board staff are proposing an amendment to further specify that any course identified by a university to meet a state-mandated, university-wide graduation requirement must align with the provisions outlined in the statute for general education courses. Ms. Sikes noted that this is to ensure that no student must take a course that conflicts with this requirement. She further noted that the amendment would include courses identified by the universities to meet the required credit hours in college-level English language writing skills and courses that meet the civic literacy competency requirement, and that it excludes graduation requirements for a specific degree program or major.

Chair Kamoutsas requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors Regulation 6.017, Criteria for Awarding the Baccalaureate Degree.

Chancellor Rodrigues emphasized that Board staff have been working with Governor Dunn to ensure the language in Regulation 6.017 does not result in unintended consequences. Governor Dunn presented a proposed amendment, which included the elimination of item (1)(d), “courses identified by the universities to meet requirements in (b) and (c) must meet the requirements of Section 1007.25(3)(c), Florida Statutes”. She suggested the addition of language paragraph two to include, “For purposes of this provision, institution-wide graduation requirements mean designated courses or curricular components that apply uniformly to all students. This does not include credit hour thresholds, residency requirements, GPA standards, or other graduation conditions that do not consist of a specific course or course-based requirement.” Governor Dunn moved to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Regulation 6.017, incorporating the change presented, Governor Dale seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

## 5. Specialized Admissions Overview

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Dr. Lynn Nelson, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Innovation, to provide an overview of Specialized Admissions.

Dr. Nelson explained that undergraduate programs that require additional admission criteria must be approved by the Board for specialized admissions status. She noted the two main criteria for the status are limited resources, which include programs where the number of applicants exceeds available resources, and minimal skills, which include programs where students must demonstrate, through an audition or portfolio, that they possess the minimum skills to benefit from the program. Dr. Nelson added that Board of Governors’ Regulation 8.013 establishes criteria for programs to qualify for specialized admissions status and outlines the process and timeline for reaffirmation of that status. She noted that the status is approved for four or five years, depending on the criteria under which the program was approved. Dr. Nelson explained that at the end of a program’s approval period, the university reviews its programs to determine whether to seek reaffirmation or remove the status.

Dr. Nelson stated that programs approved for specialized admissions status in the limited resources category were approved in the 2023-2024 Academic Year and will expire in the 2026-2027 Academic Year. She reported that institutions are currently reviewing 50 programs with specialized admissions status in the limited resources category, including architecture, nursing, and clinical lab sciences, and that those seeking reaffirmation will be presented to the Board at the November meeting for consideration.

## 6. Reduced Credit Hour Degrees Overview

Chair Kamoutsas recognized Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of reduced-credit-hour degrees.

Dr. Nelson described the national context for 90-119 credit-hour baccalaureate degrees. She reported that several states have implemented initiatives and legislation allowing institutions to offer bachelor's degrees requiring fewer than 120 credit hours. She noted that Ohio passed legislation requiring its public universities to establish at least one 90-credit-hour baccalaureate degree, and that Utah directed its higher education board to develop a process for offering accelerated degrees. She stated that private institutions also offer these degrees. Dr. Nelson reported that these degrees have been approved in accordance with their state's approval process and their institutional accreditors.

Dr. Nelson stated that offering reduced-credit-hour degrees in the System would align with the SUS 30 Strategic Plan goal for universities to develop innovative and efficient pathways to a degree. She described the requirements for awarding a baccalaureate degree in the System and the approval processes for new degree programs and degree program changes. Dr. Nelson reported that the approval process for reduced-credit-hour degrees in the System would follow the same process as for 120-credit-hour degrees, noting that exceptions to 120 credit hours require Board approval. She explained that the curriculum and program quality must remain essential, and the degree must be clearly distinguishable from traditional 120-credit-hour degrees. She highlighted potential impacts on admission to graduate and professional school that the degrees may have. Dr. Nelson provided a timeline for Board staff to work with universities to establish criteria for offering reduced-credit-hour degrees, which will be presented to the Board in June.

Chair Kamoutsas asked university presidents to comment on whether their institutions intend to offer reduced-credit-hour degrees. Most of the SUS presidents indicated that their institutions are either planning to develop a reduced-credit-hour degree or researching the possibility. Florida Polytechnic University President Dr. Devin Stephenson shared that they are working with industry partners and their accreditors to develop a reduced credit hour degree program that will offer students varying pathways to earn a degree. Chair Kamoutsas expressed a concern for maintaining program quality and rigor when developing these degrees. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University President Johnson explained that developing the degrees may involve applying courses differently within the program rather than removing courses from the curriculum. Governor Dunn commented on the importance of following established university curriculum development processes. She expressed concern about how these degrees may affect university performance metrics and recommended incorporating a process for students transferring from a reduced-credit-hour degree to a traditional 120-credit-hour degree. Governor Good expressed concern about the branding of a reduced-credit-hour degree among prospective employers. Board Chair Levine explained that the primary challenge is that the System has more student applicants than it has capacity, adding that resident students are expressing frustration over access to the System's institutions. He stated that being innovative with reduced-credit-hour degree programs increases access for in-state students, noting that there are successful models for offering reduced-credit-hour degrees.

## 7. 2+2 UWF Transfer Student Panel

Chair Kamoutsas introduced the next item on the agenda, a student panel from the University of West Florida (UWF) to discuss the 2+2 transfer pathway program. He recognized Dr. Jaromy Kuhl, Provost at the University of West Florida, to introduce the students and begin the discussion.

Dr. Kuhl expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share UWF's work on the 2+2 transfer program, and he introduced Ms. Bianca Malone, Mr. Nguwen Quach, and Ms. Kahlin Peay.

Ms. Malone described her college journey, which began in Alabama, with a challenging start, but led her to transfer to UWF. She stated that she needed strong support, which she found at UWF, along with a sense of community in which she is seen and heard by her professors, staff, and peers. Ms. Malone commented that UWF has provided financial, academic, and personal support, which has led her to pursue a degree in chemistry.

Mr. Quach stated that he is an international student who transferred to UWF from Northwest Florida State College and is pursuing an engineering degree. He reported receiving excellent support from UWF in learning to navigate the university setting. He added that UWF hosts activities and events for transfer students, through which he has met friends and become involved in university life.

Ms. Peay introduced herself, stating that she is a transfer student from Pensacola State College and that she chose UWF for its efforts to foster community. She commented that the UWF Honors Program has helped her connect with faculty and fellow students and has also supported her in conducting research projects. She highlighted that UWF's transfer program has helped her find her place on campus, where she assists in leading a transfer task force that supports other transfer students.

Chair Kamoutsas thanked the panel and commented on the importance of keeping students first and providing them with an excellent education, of which the 2+2 Transfer program is an integral component.

## 8. Academic and Student Affairs Updates

### a. Florida Student Association (FSA)

Governor Dale reported that his tenure on the Board is nearing its end and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent over 330,000 students. He shared that it has been an honor to serve alongside the Board members and expressed his appreciation for the leadership of the Board, university administrators, and staff. Governor Dale provided updates from some of the institutions' student governments, which have held elections, assisted with funding robotic food delivery on campus, hosted events to enhance student experiences, and participated in lobbying events. Governor Dale noted that the FSA will soon hold its election for the next chair who will serve as the student representative on the Board.

Chair Levine expressed that Governor Dale has been a great leader, an effective communicator, and has articulated positive perspectives. He congratulated him on his upcoming graduation.

b. Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS)

Governor Dunn acknowledged faculty trustees elected to their positions and serving in constitutionally established roles, collectively representing 163 years of service to the System. Governor Dunn described faculty trustees' expertise, contributions, problem-solving, and leadership, which strengthen the Board's work.

9. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Kamoutsas adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

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Anastasios Kamoutsas, Chair

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Catherine Oakley, Director, Academic and Student Affairs