MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND CYBERSECURITY TASK FORCE
March 25, 2026

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https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/3-25-26-florida-board-of-governors-meeting/

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Haddock convened the meeting at 3:41 p.m., with the following Governors present: Broxson, Dunn, Lukis, Okaty, and Perry. A quorum was established.

2. AI Opportunities and Risks

Board Chair Levine commented on the importance of identifying the opportunities, risks, and workforce implications associated with the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education. Chair Haddock stated that the Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity Task Force would develop a work plan for the remainder of 2026 to address the implications of AI use in universities with feedback from students and faculty, and considerations of AI in institutional accreditation, with the goal of publishing a final report on recommendations for the use of AI across the System.

Chair Haddock introduced the panelists participating in the discussion. The panelists included Mr. Chris Hein, Field Chief Technology Officer at Google Public Sector; Dr. Prasant Mohapatra, Provost and Executive Vice President at the University of South Florida (USF); Dr. Elizabeth Bejar, Provost, Executive Vice President, and Chief Operating Officer at Florida International University (FIU); and Dr. Joe Glover, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Florida (UF).

Mr. Hein began by stating that AI will be integrated across academic fields, leading to the diffusion of technology throughout the educational landscape. He discussed AI's ability to simultaneously solve complex problems beyond current human capabilities, as well as its limitations in basic tasks. Mr. Hein noted that AI's uneven performance underscores the importance of thoughtful policy implementation.

Mr. Hein highlighted AI’s potential to improve efficiency in higher education. He stated that AI tools can enable faculty to recapture significant amounts of time by reducing administrative burdens and routine tasks, allowing professors to focus more on academic work. Mr. Hein highlighted the benefits of AI for students, noting that these tools enable new and enhanced ways of learning, allowing students to engage more deeply with course material and explore information through innovative formats.

Mr. Hein identified research as a major area of opportunity for AI, noting that AI systems are increasingly capable of solving highly complex problems. He cited recent breakthroughs in molecular biology, including the use of Google's AlphaFold 2 system, highlighting AI-driven advances that have enabled significant scientific research. Mr. Hein expects that AI would function as a secure and supportive research assistant, explaining that such systems could assist with experimental design, ideation, and other research processes, enabling closer collaboration between human researchers and AI tools to accelerate discovery and innovation.

Chair Haddock asked about opportunities to improve operational efficiency in higher education institutions through AI and whether standards for best practices have emerged from schools or industry partners. Mr. Hein responded that many institutions are realizing efficiency gains through AI tools. He emphasized the importance of adopting secure AI systems to protect institutional data, intellectual property, and overall system integrity while enabling access to advanced AI capabilities.

Mr. Hein cited examples of universities, including the University of California, Riverside, Purdue University, and the University of Alabama, that are implementing enterprise AI solutions to support staff in offloading routine administrative and knowledge-based tasks, such as reviewing requests for proposals and processing grant applications. He noted that these applications have led to improved efficiency driven by expanded capacity for more critical work.

Board Chair Levine asked about student use of AI, specifically whether guardrails have been put in place to ensure consistency and the quality of the technologies being used. Mr. Hein responded that establishing clear guardrails is essential to guide students in understanding appropriate and inappropriate uses of AI tools. He stated that Google has been partnering with higher education institutions to provide secure access to its Gemini AI platform, aiming to ensure student access to frontier AI models.

Mr. Hein noted the complexity of determining the appropriate level of AI usage in academic settings. He cited emerging industry practices, including measuring AI usage as part of employee performance evaluation. Mr. Hein suggested that this trend indicates a broader shift in workforce expectations that higher education institutions should consider when preparing students for future professional environments.

Mr. Hein also acknowledged the challenges of assessing student work in the context of AI use and emphasized the importance of evaluating student understanding through interactive, iterative assessment methods. He referenced Google's "Learn LM" initiative, highlighting its intentional design to incorporate pedagogical principles into AI systems, enabling models to engage students through guided learning, comprehension checks, and active engagement, rather than simply providing direct answers.

Chair Haddock shared that AI has transformed coding and programming, eliminating the need for technical programming knowledge and connecting end programming to idea generation. Mr. Hein commented that more than 50 percent of code within Google's systems is now machine-generated, while still subject to human review and quality assurance. He explained that this trend indicates a broader shift in which AI systems are increasingly capable of producing technical outputs at scale, with human roles evolving toward oversight, evaluation, and objective-setting. Mr. Hein emphasized that, across disciplines, individuals will increasingly be responsible for defining objectives, effectively communicating requirements to AI systems, and critically evaluating outputs for quality and accuracy.

Mr. Hein shared that the United States currently shows comparatively lower public enthusiasm for AI than other regions, stating that China is pursuing rapid, large-scale integration of AI across its education system and broader economy through centralized government initiatives. He explained that this reflects a coordinated effort to embed AI into daily use across multiple sectors, including higher education. Mr. Hein emphasized the importance of increasing AI literacy and adoption within the United States to maintain global competitiveness in the development and application of artificial intelligence technologies.

Chair Haddock asked Provost Mahapatra to explain the motivation for establishing the Bellini College of Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, and Computing. Provost Mohapatra stated that it was created in response to the rapid growth of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and advanced computing. He mentioned the importance of the college operating as a central "hub" within USF's system of colleges, explaining that it is designed to address workforce supply-and-demand gaps, advance multidisciplinary research, and promote the responsible and ethical use of AI.

Board Chair Levine asked the panelists about what the Board should consider when addressing potential challenges AI poses to graduate employment. Provost Mohapatra responded by emphasizing the importance of making American workers and businesses AI-ready. Additionally, Provost Bejar emphasized the need for AI integration across disciplines and an emphasis on critical thinking skills. Interim Provost Glover recommended that the Board turn to individual university departments for their expertise. He explained that department-level directors and professors understand how AI is impacting their disciplines and can offer recommendations on how higher education can adapt to address these challenges.

Board Chair Levine asked if institutions are collecting data on employment outcomes by major and adjusting enrollment in fields where job placement is declining. Interim Provost Glover shared that universities are gathering extensive feedback through career centers, which provide insight into job placement success. He noted that AI-driven changes in the job market are still emerging, while demand for certain skills, such as coding, has declined rapidly. Interim Provost Glover emphasized that a broad-based education allows students to adapt and shift their career paths as needed. Provost Bejar added that co-curricular programming focused on professional development can help students adjust to the changing job market. Governor Good commented that education focused on critical thinking and communication skills can help graduates adapt to AI and other future technological changes that will affect the job market. Interim Provost Glover noted that while AI will eliminate jobs, new jobs will also be created.

Provost Bejar stated that AI is helping break down barriers between academia and industry. She highlighted efforts at FIU to collaborate with industry partners, including the creation of an artificial intelligence and innovation committee. Provost Bejar reported that these partnerships expand student opportunities through real-world experiences and support the development of critical thinking and mentorship. Mr. Hein added that the current generation of students is highly adept at using AI, often integrating it into daily life, and is therefore well-positioned to adapt quickly to evolving job markets. He expressed optimism that strong critical thinking skills and familiarity with AI will support student success.

Governor Dunn asked about the differences between integrating AI across all curricula versus embedding AI within specific disciplines. Provost Mohapatra explained that USF's approach focuses on incorporating AI into existing fields, such as business and criminology, to enhance students' foundational knowledge and better prepare them for the workforce. He commented that this integration makes graduates more competitive for emerging job opportunities. Interim Provost Glover reported that, beginning in 2020, UF adopted a strategy of integrating AI across disciplines, recognizing its impact on nearly all fields and occupations. He described how faculty embedded AI into existing curricula, such as introductory business courses and agriculture programs, where students learn to apply AI tools within their areas of study, which emphasizes discipline-specific applications.

Governor Dunn asked how faculty developed the expertise needed to integrate AI into their disciplines and how instructors without prior AI experience were supported. Interim Provost Glover stated that the process evolved over several years, beginning with existing faculty experts in various departments who helped lead early integration efforts. He noted that additional faculty with AI expertise were hired and that professional development modules were created to help instructors build relevant skills. Interim Provost Glover also highlighted the importance of peer-to-peer learning among faculty and explained that smaller departments without in-house expertise are also supported through a university-wide certificate program.

Governor Sinatra described AI as bringing both significant opportunities and risks for higher education, research, faculty roles, and workforce preparation. He noted the rapid pace of change and emphasized that, depending on how it is integrated, AI could either greatly enhance university research and teaching or significantly disrupt traditional academic and employment structures. Governor Sinatra noted the need for curricula and institutional responses to adapt quickly to avoid negative student outcomes, while also positioning students for leadership in emerging fields. He suggested that a task force could help to facilitate the real-time sharing of best practices and challenges across universities, ensuring faster coordination and more consistent implementation across the System.

Provost Mohapatra acknowledged the need for increased coordination across the System. He also noted that the benefits of AI cannot be fully realized without appropriate cybersecurity measures and commented on the need to prepare for cybersecurity challenges AI may pose.

Interim Provost Glover reported that the University of Florida has expanded access to its AI supercomputer, HiPerGator, to all universities in the System. He explained that the use of HiPerGator for teaching AI is provided at no cost, while use for research follows the same cost structure as for UF faculty.

Provost Bejar noted the importance of proper governance for AI and stressed the need for long-term thinking to create sustainable, effective governance that encourages innovation. Interim Provost Glover also noted that the responsible use of data is important for AI and encouraged adopting measures to define its proper use.

3. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Haddock adjourned the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

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Ed Haddock, Chair

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Rajendra Indar, Student Intern