MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
September 3, 2026

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https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/9-3-26-florida-board-of-governors-meeting/

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks.

Chair Doug Broxson convened the meeting at 10:38 a.m. with the following Governors present: Dunn, Good, Haddock, Lukis, Mack, Okaty, Perry, and Seibert. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting

Chair Broxson requested a motion to approve the committee meeting minutes for June 24, 2026. Governor Dunn moved to approve, and Governor Haddock seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors' Regulations

    a. 8.005, General Education Course Options

Chair Broxson recognized Dr. Lynn Nelson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Innovation, to provide an overview of the proposed changes to Board of Governors' Regulation 8.005.

Dr. Nelson explained that Regulation 8.005 defines the process for the annual review and approval of the general education courses offered at each institution. She noted that Board staff propose an amendment to align with the provisions of HB 5601E. She stated that this legislation authorizes the Board to amend a general education course list.

Dr. Nelson noted that the proposed amendment also incorporates two motions passed at previous meetings of the Academic Affairs Committee. At the January 2026 meeting, the committee authorized the Chancellor to approve an institution's request to remove courses from its approved general education course list. At the March 2026 meeting, the committee authorized the Chancellor to approve an institution's request to add courses to its approved list, provided the courses went through the required board of trustees process. Dr. Nelson stated that Board staff recommend a small change to revise dated language, which was shared in the highlighted version of the proposed amendment.

Chair Broxson requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors' Regulation 8.005, General Education Course Options. Governor Okaty moved to approve, and Governor Haddock seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

b. 8.014, Bachelor's Degree Exceptions to 120 Credit Hours Requirement

Chair Broxson recognized Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of the proposed changes to Board of Governors' Regulation 8.014.

Dr. Nelson explained that Regulation 8.014 establishes criteria for baccalaureate degrees offered at state universities to exceed the 120-credit-hour requirement set forth in the Florida statute. She stated that Board staff propose an amendment to allow the Board to consider requests from boards of trustees to approve degree programs with fewer than 120 credit hours.

Dr. Nelson noted that the amendment specifies that these programs must meet minimum criteria, including maintaining program rigor and meeting the general education, civic literacy, and statewide graduation requirements outlined in Florida Statutes and Board of Governors' regulations. She explained that universities must provide students with the possible implications for future graduate and professional education opportunities when completing these programs. Dr. Nelson noted that students transferring from a reduced-credit-hour program to the traditional bachelor's program must be able to carry over all earned credits. Additionally, she explained that a program must use a designation, determined by the Board, to distinguish it from the traditional baccalaureate degree.

The Board discussed the amendment. Governor Seibert asked whether employers are recruiting students who graduate with reduced-credit-hour degrees. Chancellor Ray Rodrigues stated that, according to an analysis, the proposal is driven not by workforce demands but by institutions attempting to reduce degree costs and completion time. He noted that he has been in contact with the Florida Chamber of Commerce and the Florida Council of 100 to identify what employers in Florida are looking for. Chair Levine provided an example from the healthcare sector, noting that employers were pleased with nurses completing two-year programs before a bachelor's degree in nursing became the expectation. He stated that in fields facing workforce shortages, many employers would welcome accelerated degrees. Chair Levine noted that the proposed regulation does not mandate these programs but gives institutions a flexible option to address localized workforce needs.

Chancellor Rodrigues noted that, as states adopt 90-credit-hour degrees, there is still no national consensus or uniformity on degree titles. He stated that there might be confusion in the marketplace about exactly what these programs are. Chair Broxson requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors' Regulation 8.014, Bachelor's Degree Exceptions to the 120-credit Hour Requirement. Governor Mack moved to approve, and Governor Okaty seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

c. 1.001, University Board of Trustees Power and Duties

Chair Broxson recognized Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of the proposed changes to Board of Governors' Regulation 1.001.

Dr. Nelson stated that Board staff propose an amendment to require each university board of trustees to adopt policies that maintain institutional neutrality on political and social issues. She noted that faculty, staff, and students are free to express their opinions on issues as individuals but not on behalf of the university. She explained that the proposed amendment will also require the boards of trustees to establish policies requiring all course syllabi to include faculty disclosure on the use of artificial intelligence and the permitted use by students.

Chair Broxson requested a motion to approve the Public Notice of Intent to Amend Board of Governors' Regulation 1.001, University Board of Trustees Power and Duties. Governor Haddock moved to approve, and Governor Okaty seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

4. Educational Location Reclassification, Florida International University

Chair Broxson recognized Dr. Nelson to provide an overview of the request for Educational Location Reclassification for Florida International University.

Dr. Nelson stated that Board of Governors' Regulation 8.009 establishes the definitions and criteria for educational locations. She noted that the Board approved an amendment to the regulation at the September 2024 meeting, removing special-purpose sites from the list of educational locations. She explained that FIU is requesting reclassification of the National Forensic Technology Center to a special-purpose center, which was previously approved as a special-purpose site. Dr. Nelson noted that this request meets the updated classification requirements.

Chair Broxson requested a motion to approve Florida International University's request to reclassify the National Forensic Science Technology Center as a special purpose center. Governor Perry moved to approve, and Governor Haddock seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

5. FGCU Internship Highlights

Chair Broxson recognized President Timur to provide an overview of the university's internship program.

President Timur emphasized that the goal of internships is to prepare students for success in the classroom, their careers, and their personal lives. She stated that this commitment at FGCU begins on day one and that all students leave with more than a degree. She highlighted how the university connects classroom learning to the outside world through experiential learning, internships, applied research, service-learning, and community partnerships. President Timur shared that FGCU's regional network encompasses over 5,700 internship partners, and students completed more than 1,800 internship courses last year.

Ms. Brianna Martinez, Ms. Ashley Fierday, and Ms. Maya Finney, current students or recent graduates of Florida Gulf Coast University, described their experiences as students. They all credited FGCU's academic programs, faculty mentorship, and institutional partnerships with providing access to advanced research opportunities, high-profile internships, and dynamic hands-on learning experiences both locally and internationally. They highlighted how these undergraduate experiences prepared them for competitive professional roles and graduate study while inspiring them to mentor and support the next generation of students.

6. Academic and Student Affairs Updates

    a. Florida Student Association (FSA)

Governor Seibert reported significant progress toward the Florida Student Association's annual goals, noting that its structure expanded from 12 student body presidents to over 50 student leaders across five System-wide committees. He detailed committee initiatives focused on statewide mental health advocacy, student engagement, legislative priority compilation, finance workshops, and student-athlete NIL representation.

Governor Seibert highlighted achievements across individual state university student governments, including attendance at Welcome Week and food pantry initiatives at FIU; record-setting election turnout and first-year leadership programs at USF; and expanded textbook grants and athletic game transportation at FAU. He noted UNF's local partnerships and upcoming student recognition weeks, New College's advocacy for affordable housing and transportation, and UWF's student engagement surrounding its transition to NCAA Division I. He also shared updates regarding FSU's research grants, campus facilities, local business discounts, and its 175th-anniversary programming, and thanked FGCU for hosting the association's recent meeting.

    b. Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS)

Governor Dunn expressed gratitude to fellow board members, Chancellor Rodrigues, staff, administrators, trustees, and faculty colleagues for supporting the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates System-wide initiatives. She reported that ACFS continues to strengthen key partnerships, noting recent collaborative discussions with university presidents regarding institutional missions and with Governor Mack regarding Florida's evolving workforce needs. She highlighted System-wide working groups focusing on general education guidance, faculty success measures, and collaborative research resource sharing.

Governor Dunn highlighted the inaugural faculty leadership retreat led by Trustee Riddell to enhance communication and leadership effectiveness among elected faculty. She detailed significant strategic engagement across member universities, noting Trustee King's selection as UCF's inaugural presidential faculty fellow, as well as faculty involvement in presidential search committees and strategic planning leadership at UF and FIU. Governor Dunn concluded by commenting that these roles demonstrate the immense value faculty leaders bring to the System and reaffirmed ACFS's commitment to continuous improvement.

7. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Broxson adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

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Doug Broxson, Chair

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Isabella LoBianco, Policy Analyst, Academic and Student Affairs