

MINUTES  
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA  
November 5, 2020

*Video or audio archives of the meetings of the Board of Governors  
and its committees are accessible at <http://www.flbog.edu/>.*

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Alan Levine convened the meeting on November 5, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. with the following members present: Governors Jordan, Edge, Lydecker (9:35 a.m.), Stermon, and Tripp. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of the Academic and Research Excellence Committee Meeting

Chair Levine called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the committee's May 5, 2020, meeting. Governor Stermon moved to approve the minutes, Governor Jordan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. COVID-19 Research Update

Chair Levine explained that research sets the State University System (SUS) of Florida apart and is vital to Florida and the System's mission. He reported that more than \$2 billion in research is spent in Florida each year, and the research is not just for the sake of knowledge, although that is a large component. He stated that it is also to contribute to the human condition and that the COVID-19 pandemic had provided an opportunity to highlight the capabilities and essential work of the SUS in the research arena.

Chair Levine stated that the first item on the agenda was to hear an update on the activities of SUS institutions in regards to COVID-19. He reported that SUS institutions had been actively engaged in a variety of research related to COVID-19, and the committee would hear an update on selected research activities across the System.

Chair Levine recognized Dr. Gary Ostrander, Chair of the SUS Vice Presidents for Research and Vice President for Research at Florida State University, to provide a System overview and talk about initiatives related to COVID-19 at Florida State University.

Dr. Ostrander first described how the Vice Presidents for Research throughout the System started meeting weekly along with Board staff after the COVID-19 pandemic hit. He reported that these meetings were used initially to discuss best practices for ramping down research, but as the summer progressed, they began to discuss best practices for

expanding research in key areas during the pandemic. He explained that while there was a period of time when laboratories and campuses were closed, researchers and faculty were nevertheless still active in analyzing data, writing manuscripts, and drafting research proposals. He noted that in the first quarter of this year, faculty across the SUS submitted 3,227 research proposals totaling \$1.7 billion, and that was an increase over last year at the same time.

Dr. Ostrander stated that vice presidents also discussed opportunities for COVID research and collaboration between institutions at the weekly meetings. He reported that in addition to medical research on treatments and vaccines, other disciplines contributed to the body of knowledge as well, including law, public health, journalism, education, engineering, business, social work, veterinary medicine, and others. Dr. Ostrander described the FSU virtual “collaborative collision” they used to jump-start the discussion on COVID and determine how best to distribute quick-start seed funding. He reiterated that faculty have been very active and collaboration between the institutions was a critical component of the work.

Chair Levine thanked Dr. Ostrander for his presentation and noted how quickly the SUS institutions had reacted and moved to begin working on COVID-related research.

Chair Levine next recognized Dr. Kristen Hicks-Roof, Assistant Professor, Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of North Florida, to present research on the impact of COVID-19 on the health professions workforce.

Dr. Hicks-Roof pointed out that the high number of hospitalizations due to COVID has dramatically impacted the healthcare system in Florida, with particular down-stream effects on ICU and other critical care staff. However, she reported that the numbers for routine care and elective procedures were down in many cases, leading to furloughs and layoffs for some health care professionals depending on the sector.

Dr. Hicks-Roof spoke about new modes of care, including telemedicine. She said telemedicine is becoming more prevalent. Dr. Hicks-Roof reported over a 600% increase in tele-visits compared to last year. She emphasized the need for specific training in telehealth for clinical-based providers like physicians and nurses.

Chair Kitson asked why there was no telehealth training for clinical providers. Dr. Hicks-Roof stated that it was because most clinical education programs have historically focused on person-to-person interactions rather than technology or alternative care delivery mechanisms.

Chair Levine thanked Dr. Hicks-Roof for her presentation.

Chair Levine next introduced and recognized Dr. Duane Mitchell, Director of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University of Florida, to provide an overview of COVID-19 research, specifically vaccine research.

Dr. Mitchell walked the committee through the University of Florida's COVID-19 response and highlighted various university initiatives and efforts. He explained several key research projects and summarized them by saying that UF researchers and collaborators are pioneering efforts in COVID-19 prevention, therapeutics, virology, and population sciences that will have far-reaching impacts on the resolution and recovery from the global SARS-Cov-2 pandemic.

Chair Levine thanked Dr. Mitchell for his presentation.

Finally, Chair Levine recognized Dr. Summer Decker, Vice Chair for Research and Director of 3D Clinical Applications, Department of Radiology, Morsani College of Medicine at the University of South Florida (USF) to provide a brief presentation on a 3D-printed nasal swab created by USF faculty that is used by hospitals, academic medical centers, state governments, international agencies, and health care facilities for COVID-19 testing.

Dr. Decker described the COVID-19 test kit crisis and her institution's unique approach to alleviating the shortage of testing materials available by utilizing 3D printing technology. She highlighted that the printed swabs designed and produced by USF were much less costly than standard swabs and that the designs were provided to hospitals and medical centers free of charge. Dr. Decker reported that there are over 40 million USF Health designed swabs in the world, which has directly impacted the national response to COVID.

Chair Levine thanked Dr. Decker for the presentation.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Levine adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

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Alan Levine, Chair

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Roger Strickland  
Director, Economic Development