



SUS Planning for a Post-COVID World: Lessons Learned, Best Practices, and Future Considerations

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SUS Planning for a Post-COVID World



...the coronavirus has confirmed the case for fast and fundamental change. It has also demonstrated that change is possible. When the pandemic hit, many US colleges and universities moved quickly to remote learning and other delivery models, launched affordability initiatives, and found creative ways to support their students. Now is the time to build on these lessons to reimagine the next five to ten years and beyond.

*Reimagining higher education in the United States, McKinsey & Company,
October 26, 2020*

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Key questions:

- Is the SUS response going to be a return to the status quo or adapting to sustained change? How do we build excellence and greater resilience for the future?
- What potential opportunities has the global pandemic revealed across the SUS and how successful have we been in addressing them over the past nine months?
- What are the most significant “lessons learned” with relevance to higher education? What “best practices” have emerged across the SUS that we may wish to share and adopt?
- What might the post-COVID “new normal” look like for higher education in Florida, and what innovations are most likely going to gain traction and sustain in the mid- to long-term?
- How can the 12 SUS institutions collaborate most effectively in anticipation of a potential paradigm shift in higher education?



Student Access, Progression and Learning (Academic Continuity)

- Admissions and enrollment – national and international student mobility
- Student retention, timely progression and assessment of learning outcomes
- Responding to financial hardship through financial aid
- Equity in digital access: broadband, hardware and software solutions (geography and socioeconomic status) – online instruction and learning platforms
- Student support services:
 - Academic advising
 - Student health services
 - Mental health: responding to study anxiety, stress, fatigue and burnout – disproportionate impacts
- Experiential learning and high impact practices (research, community-based learning, study abroad)



Faculty Success

- Faculty (and staff) professional development and performance
 - Course design and delivery; new pedagogies
 - Supporting a world class instructional and learning workforce
 - Strengthening digital literacy and competence
- Mental health: Responding to faculty (and staff) anxiety, stress, fatigue and burnout (work-life balance: competing priorities) – disproportionate impacts



Preventive Health

- Mitigation strategies
 - Progress of vaccine and treatment
 - Continuity of on-campus protocols
 - Student Health Insurance
- Mental health – support services
- Seeking solutions through strengthening the research enterprise



Strengthening Campus Communities

- Building engaged, safe, healthy and sustainable communities in higher education:
 - Physical and digital
- As an antidote to:
 - Isolation
 - Loss
 - Loneliness, and
 - An appetite for connectedness and belonging
- Changing work preferences: adaptability, flexibility and innovation
- Rebuilding campus identity and student life
 - Out of class engagement – co-curricular programming
 - Commencement



Budgetary Considerations

- Funding sources and uses in the midst of COVID-19: Lessons learned
- Auxiliaries: Athletics, student housing, parking, food services, bookstores
- DSOs



Academic Planning

- Impact of COVID-19 on institutional and system-wide planning and performance
- Implications of COVID-19 for addressing workforce needs
- Enhancing employment rates:
 - Reskilling
 - Upskilling
 - Diversifying the workforce



Recommendations:

- Establish a Planning Workgroup for the SUS in a post-COVID World (and an accompanying work plan) to assist the BOG's Innovation and Online Committee:
 - Assuring institutional and system-wide readiness for the next pandemic or like crises:
 - Academic continuity (teaching and learning) – Provosts
 - Student success and support – Vice Presidents of Student Affairs
 - Research capacity – Vice Presidents of Research
 - Fiscal health – Vice Presidents of Business and Finance
 - Examining the need for changing budget models, BOG regulations etc.
 - Guiding priorities for future investment:
 - Instructional technology platforms; Bricks and mortar: classrooms, research laboratories, student life
 - Revisiting the BOG's 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education in the face of COVID-19



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