



Full Board  
July 25, 2023  
Zoom

## MINUTES

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### 1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

Board Chair Roger Tovar convened the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees at 10:01 AM on Tuesday, July 25, 2023.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Florida International University Board of Trustees and verified a quorum. Present were Roger Tovar, *Board Chair*; Carlos A. Duarte, *Board Vice Chair*; Cesar L. Alvarez; Jose J. Armas; Deanne Butchey; Dean C. Colson; Alan Gonzalez; Francis A. Hondal; Natasha Lowell; Gene Prescott (*joined after roll call*); Marc D. Sarnoff; and Alexander P. Sutton.

Trustee Chanel T. Rowe was excused.

Board Chair Tovar welcomed all Trustees and members of the University administration. He also welcomed the University community accessing the meeting via the webcast.

Board Chair Tovar stated that the Board's Bylaws provide that the Board Chair may, in consultation with the University President, allow an item to be presented to the Full Board without prior consideration by a Board committee when circumstances warrant. Board Chair Tovar added that he and President Kenneth A. Jessell were in agreement that to proceed directly to a Full Board meeting without a prior committee meeting would provide the most expeditious and efficient means by which to review the time-sensitive agenda items.

### 2. Public Appearances

There were no public appearances.

### 3. Action Items

#### 3.1 Legislative Budget Request, 2024-2025

Trustee Natasha Lowell, Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee Chair, explained that the 2024-2025 Legislative Budget Request (LBR) has been formally submitted to the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) for review and approval. She added that the BOG requires that each board of trustees approve its university's LBR. Provost and Executive Vice President Elizabeth M. Bejar pointed out that the LBR is a result of an assessment of needs developed by the BOG, in cooperation with State University System of Florida (SUS) institutions. She indicated that the BOG requires that SUS institutions submit their LBR to their respective boards of trustees for review and approval before they can be presented to the BOG. Provost Bejar noted that the BOG will review

the university LBRs at its August meetings.

Provost Bejar highlighted University successes accomplished in the past year, including that FIU is projected to achieve Preeminence in 2023-2024 and has increased the First Time in College (FTIC) four-year graduation rate, from 33.8% in 2018 to currently 59.8%. She commented on reputational accomplishments, including that FIU has ranked in the top three (3) among SUS institutions in performance funding for the past three (3) years, jumped 60 spots in the last five (5) years in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, ranked in the top four (4) by *U.S. News & World Report* for social mobility, and ranked No. 8 in national universities by *Degree Choices*.

Provost Bejar presented for Board of Trustees approval the 2024-2025 Legislative Budget Request. She indicated that, if approved by the Board of Trustees, FIU is submitting one (1) LBR, which is a request for \$85M recurring for operational excellence to propel FIU to the next level of academic and research excellence and continue investing in student success. She explained that operational excellence is defined into three (3) major categories. Provost Bejar commented that the first category pertained to investments in student success and is envisioned as \$30M for its continued and accelerated investments in student success, which have been identified primarily as scholarships and recruitment of students, continuing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) success in curricular innovation and impact, and student support and industry career placement initiatives.

Provost Bejar indicated that the second category related to research faculty recruitment and FIU's health initiative and is also envisioned at \$30M for supporting investments in the research enterprise, while simultaneously recruiting faculty clusters in key areas, as well as ensuring that the University has startup funds and other investments to support faculty who are leaders in their disciplines and fields. She added that FIU continues to be focused on academic and research investments in strategic areas, including but not limited to health, environmental resilience, and technology and innovation. She noted that said investments will help to address the state of Florida's critical shortages in key economic industries that support growth and enhance development to address burgeoning business needs.

Provost Bejar pointed out that the final category pertained to infrastructure investments and is envisioned at \$25M and serves as the blueprint for operational needs to ensure that FIU can support the University enterprise by addressing inflationary-related investments in retention of academic and support staff as well as address the ongoing and increasing continuity costs, including, but not limited to, information technology security enhancements, infrastructure costs, the increasing cost of compliance, and needed ongoing investments in services in key areas.

Provost Bejar commented that said investments, if approved, will help Florida become a top 10 global economy and support FIU's role in attracting top academic students and research faculty, not only in environmental resilience, innovation and tech and health care to Florida, to the region, but also burgeoning fields in artificial intelligence and cyber. She added that the state's already outstanding record of attracting out of state industry partners, businesses, and entrepreneurs will add to Florida's innovation ecosystem and support FIU's goals to become a top 50 public university. Provost Bejar remarked that investing in FIU stimulates economic growth as FIU alumni power Florida's main population center in South Florida and beyond. She noted that FIU is a key

institution and organization in the state that acts as a catalyst for economic prosperity for the citizens of Florida. She indicated that FIU alumni, nearly 80% of whom become employees, professionals, entrepreneurs, and business owners in Florida fill crucial positions in major industries and contribute to the overall economic growth, innovation, and prosperity of the state. Provost Bejar indicated that the plan is also designed to accelerate the pace of innovation, not only at FIU but to support the Florida goals of the educational and industry-related enterprise.

Board Chair Tovar stated that while FIU appreciates the support of the legislature, there remains a significant gap in how FIU is funded per full-time equivalent (FTE) and how other SUS institutions are funded. He commented that FIU is in an area with a very high cost of living. He remarked on the University's needs in areas of increasing research, compensating the University's faculty, and attracting accomplished faculty. He urged Trustees to begin reaching out to members of the state's legislature immediately and noted that articulating FIU's accomplishments and why the University is requesting \$85M is critical. Board Vice Chair Carlos A. Duart added that data related to the long-term economic impact from making said investments can also be part of the messaging to the legislature. President Jessell conveyed his support of the University's LBR and stated that FIU's advocacy efforts are underway, and data driven. Board Chair Tovar commented on his appreciation of the BOG's support of FIU and its accomplishments. He added that SUS Chancellor Raymond Rodrigues and BOG Chair Brian Lamb recognize the funding complexities.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees approve the 2024-2025 Legislative Budget Request:

- Operational Excellence \$85,000,000

### **3.2 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Proposals, 2023-2024**

Provost Bejar explained that LINE funding is intended to incentivize collaboration between nursing education programs and health care partners to meet local, regional, and state workforce demand by recruiting faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the capacity of high-quality nursing education programs and increasing the number of nursing education program graduates who are prepared to enter the workforce. She pointed out that last year was the initial year of this program, and at that time FIU proposed requests totaling \$2.9M, which included multiyear commitments. Provost Bejar stated that last year's proposals have been closely monitored by the University and have been thus far successful. She pointed out that, this year, the legislature provided a maximum of \$6M to SUS institutions for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. She indicated that, subject to available funds and selection and approval by the BOG, for every dollar contributed to an institution by a healthcare partner, the fund will provide a dollar-for-dollar match from the state's LINE fund.

Provost Bejar presented FIU's 2023-2024 LINE fund proposals for Board of Trustees review. She pointed out that this year, FIU is submitting four (4) proposals from three (3) health care partners, and if fully funded, matched one-to-one by the state, FIU would potentially have approximately \$1.65M to dedicate to this effort. She commented that the first proposal and commitment is \$100,000 from Nicklaus Children's Hospital for support of 10 generic Bachelor of Science and Nursing (BSN) students who will have a commitment with Nicklaus Children's Hospital upon graduation. Provost Bejar indicated that Memorial Health Care System provided two (2) individual commitments: \$200,000 dedicated to support for BSN students, which includes a work commitment

at Memorial Health Care System that would fund up to 20 nursing scholarships in the amount of \$10,000 each; and a philanthropic proposal of \$273,000 to support a named undergraduate faculty in pediatrics which will be focused and dedicated to Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital to foster and support the education program of the University's nursing students once they get into that facility. She stated that the fourth proposal is a \$250,000 commitment with Baptist Health South Florida to support the University's undergraduate nursing students with a work commitment for two (2) years, and flexibility in providing either a mixed use of scholarship and nursing clinical faculty support, depending on anticipated needs.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees approve the 2023-2024 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Proposals:

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|--------------------------------|-----------|
| • Nicklaus Children's Hospital | \$100,000 |
| • Memorial Healthcare System   | \$200,000 |
| • Memorial Healthcare System   | \$273,000 |
| • Baptist Health South Florida | \$250,000 |

#### **4. New Business**

Board Chair Tovar recognized Trustee Deanne Butchey's service on the Board, which concludes on July 31, 2023.

#### **5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**

With no other business, Board Chair Roger Tovar adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees Full Board on Tuesday, July 25, 2023, at 10:35 AM.