



External Relations Committee  
December 8, 2021  
FIU, Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham Center Ballrooms and via Zoom

MINUTES

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

The Florida International University Board of Trustees' External Relations Committee meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Gene Prescott at 11:33 a.m. on Wednesday, December 8, 2021.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the External Relations Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Gene Prescott, *Committee Chair*; Carlos Trujillo, *Committee Vice Chair*; Donna J. Hrinak; Chanel T. Rowe (*via Zoom*); and Roger Tovar, *Board Vice Chair*.

Trustee Jose J. Armas was excused.

Board Chair Dean C. Colson and Trustees Cesar L. Alvarez, Carlos A. Duarte, Natasha Lowell, Joerg Reinhold, Alexander Rubido, and Marc D. Sarnoff, and University President Mark B. Rosenberg also were in attendance.

Committee Chair Prescott welcomed all Trustees and members of the University administration. He also welcomed Trustees, University administrators, and staff attending via the virtual environment and the University community and general public accessing the meeting via the University's webcast.

Committee Chair Prescott commented on the appointment of Michelle L. Palacio as Senior Vice President for Strategic Communications, Government and External Affairs and recognized Sandra B. Gonzalez-Levy for her leadership.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Committee Chair Prescott asked that the Committee approve the Minutes of the meeting held on April 21, 2021. A motion was made and unanimously passed to approve the Minutes of the External Relations Committee Meeting held on April 21, 2021.

**3. Information/Discussion Item**

**3.1 Strategic Communications, Government and External Affairs Update**

• **Strategic Communications Update**

Sr. VP Palacio commented that, as part of its vision, the Division of Strategic Communications, Government, and External Affairs will showcase FIU's excellence in student success, social mobility, research, teaching, and innovation. She remarked on the divisions' focus on building affinity with current students, showcasing researchers and teaching faculty, educating prospective students and

their parents about FIU, and informing alumni, external stakeholders, and academic peers about FIU's excellence. Sr. VP Palacio commented on the strategic framework that was developed to execute said vision. She described the new division's work flow, which she noted drives from the strategic plan. She added that the new division will continue to utilize the marketing committee along with the newly formed rankings committee, which will seek guidance and approval on expenditures specifically relating to rankings.

Sr. VP Palacio described the division roadmap as strategically focused, not siloed, tailored content creation, reimagined account manager model, and movement towards developing a student to employee talent pipeline and integrating data collection, analysis, and usage. She remarked on a data driven approach that will be based on quantitative and qualitative feedback, commenting on the annual peer survey and on investments in a weekly tracking poll conducted by Harris Consulting. She explained that the division is currently developing the content for a seven-month campaign sprint, stating that significant media buy of print, digital, social, and targeted ads will be supported by 160/90. Sr. VP Palacio commented on a \$1.35M ad buy aimed at sharing the accomplishment of FIU faculty, students, and alumni with peers and influencers. She presented a media buy breakdown and described the partnership with Applecart. She introduced a video depicting the division's vision.

Sr. VP Palacio indicated that FIU sponsored the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) conference with the goal of connecting with peers, adding that the University sent all registered presidents a coffee break box from President Rosenberg. She added that FIU was able to track the related data and provided an overview of email and landing page data. She highlighted examples of strategy and college collaboration, specifically the College of Law and the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work.

- **2022 Legislative Priorities**
- **FIU Day 2022**

Sr. VP Palacio commented on the start of the 2022 Legislative Session, highlighting FIU's legislative priorities, including Engineering Building Phase II, Honors College building, Program of Distinction in Environmental Resilience, FIU Strategic Degree Implementation Plan, and deferred maintenance. Committee Chair Prescott urged Trustees to attend the next FIU Day, scheduled for February 16, 2022.

In response to Trustee Natasha Lowell, Senior Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer Kenneth A. Jessell explained that while additional priorities are presented to the Board of Trustees, the Florida Board of Governors only accepts the top two (2) university priorities. He added that FIU's top two (2) priorities are the Engineering Building Phase II and the Honors College Building. Trustee Donna J. Hrinak commended the unification of the communications and government relations function under the same division.

Sr. VP Palacio provided a federal update, specifically highlighting the federal priorities and the expected completion and opening of FIU in Washington D.C. (recently leased premises located at 601 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, D.C.) in the summer of 2022.

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

No new business was raised.

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

With no other business, Committee Chair Gene Prescott adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees External Relations Committee on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 12:11 p.m.