



Strategic Planning Committee Workshop
April 12, 2024
FIU, Modesto A. Maidique Campus
Management and Advances Research Center (MARC)
Room 290, Earlene and Albert Dotson Pavilion

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

The Florida International University Board of Trustees' Strategic Planning Committee workshop was called to order by Committee Chair Marc D. Sarnoff at 9:01 AM on Friday, April 12, 2024.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Strategic Planning Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Trustees Marc D. Sarnoff, *Committee Chair*; Francis A. Hondal, *Committee Vice Chair*; Noël C. Barengo; Alan Gonzalez (*Zoom*); Gene Prescott (*Arrived after roll call*); and Alexander P. Sutton.

The following Board members were also in attendance: Board Chair Roger Tovar and Trustee Dean C. Colson.

Committee Chair Sarnoff explained that the workshop will focus on FIU's 2030 Strategic Plan, which will serve as a roadmap for the next five (5) years. He mentioned that the final stages of the plan that will be approved includes the involvement and input of the FIU Board of Trustees. He added that the University administration would provide information regarding the development of the plan and the progress to-date, as well as the implementation of the plan, and discussion during the workshop.

2. Discussion Item (*No Action Required*)

2.1 Strategic Plan 2030 Update

University President Kenneth A. Jessell shared that FIU is just into the second 50 years of a century of growth and commented on FIU being in the "maturity phase" of its lifecycle as a university. He added that there is an opportunity to show what FIU will be doing over the next 50 years. He pointed out that the University administration had lofty goals which have been achieved, including the recent designation of FIU as a preeminent university. He added that the mission, vision, and values for the University have served FIU well and will not be re-opened for changes. He explained that they are the right components to lead the direction of the strategic plan. He provided an overview of the framework of the strategic plan including that FIU will be a destination university, be top-ranked, and be an employer of choice. He pointed out the areas of emphasis for the plan where FIU will lead in environment and environmental resilience, health, and technology and innovation. He mentioned the significance of the relationship between health and the environment. He reminded the committee members that the plan would not be developed during the workshop

noting that the university administration will be taking into account the Board of Governors (BOG) State University System (SUS) Strategic Plan to ensure that FIU is in alignment with the state system.

Bridgette Cram, Vice President for Academic Affairs: Student Success Operations and Integrated Planning, provided an overview of the strategic plan pillar-framework: the FIU experience, research excellence and mission-aligned engagement and partnerships. VP Cram shared that several listening sessions were held on campus which were well attended. She added that there were several leadership meetings held to ensure that the feedback received from the listening sessions was understood as it was incorporated into the presentation for the strategic planning committee workshop. She added that there will be a visioning session on April 17, 2024, to go through the strategic areas of focus. She also mentioned that additional workshops with the strategic planning committee will be held as needed. She added that the feedback received from the listening session included clear articulation of the vision through defining and communicating the mission, values, and commitment of FIU to economic and social mobility. She explained that feedback also included being clear about who FIU is and serves and focusing on the achievements of the University over the past five (5) years. She mentioned the feedback that was received based on each pillar. VP Cram provided an overview of what the strategic plan would contain. VP Cram defined the three (3) strategic plan pillars which include the FIU experience, research excellence and mission-aligned engagement and partnerships. She then delineated the goals, objectives, example initiatives, and example supporting metrics associated with each of the strategic plan pillars. Trustee Francis A. Hondal inquired about the potential for collaboration with private enterprise regarding research to expand funding and power. In response to Trustee Hondal, Senior Vice President, Research & Economic Development and Dean, University Graduate School Andres G. Gil shared that the University is seeking partnerships.

Provost and Executive Vice President Elizabeth M. Bejar acknowledged the pillar committee leaders and co-chairs present at the meeting. She emphasized the importance of deciding where the focus will be in the next five years to set the foundation for subsequent 50 years. She touched upon various areas of strength at FIU, including health, innovation and technology, and environment and environmental resilience. These are strategic areas of focus, and Provost Bejar encouraged the committee members to attend the visioning session taking place on April 17th to continue to be part of the conversation. She provided an overview of the anticipated timeline. She added that in the fall 2024 semester the plan will be taken to the FIU Board of Trustees for review and approval and subsequently to the BOG for review and approval in October. She explained that the development of the strategic plan takes into account the human, physical, and financial considerations and investments. She shared that a core strength of FIU is that it is a young institution which provides for a greater ability to innovate and respond in a strategic way. Provost Bejar shared sample questions that were developed through meetings with deans and key institution leaders, opening the floor for discussion and questions.

Committee Chair Sarnoff proposed questions regarding what technology and health will look like in 2035. Trustee Dean C. Colson mentioned that five (5) years ago an initial strategic planning committee meeting was held without having a standing committee on the board. He emphasized that it is important to approach the process with the understanding that FIU is working under the umbrella of the BOG strategic plan and performance funding metrics and as a result FIU will need

to adapt. He noted that the FIU and Baptist partnership with the FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) will also lead to an increase in research funding. He added that having faculty, students, staff, and administrators engaged in the strategic planning process is important and that the strategic plan pillars will align with the BOG strategic plan. Trustee Colson suggested that trustees should be provided with copies of the BOG strategic plan and recent strategic plans of other universities in the SUS. Trustee Hondal commented that the University leadership should be trying to anticipate the future context that FIU will be in. She added that a relative competitive assessment of the rankings is a rich part of the strategic planning conversation. She pointed out that areas where FIU has distinguished itself in should be built upon. She emphasized the idea of understanding where the University leadership wants FIU to be in the future, and how to implement a plan to get there.

Board Chair Roger Tovar pointed out the importance of FIU in Miami and how individuals, other universities, and companies want to be here. He mentioned athletics and a focus on what can be done to be more relevant. Board Chair Tovar mentioned the work of Dr. Diana Azzam and commented the community impact. He encouraged finding ways to invest in more projects like the work of Dr. Azzam. He mentioned assessing the return on investment for positions currently filled in the University. He also encouraged compensating employees when they are doing a great job. He stressed the idea of being collaborative. He mentioned FIU Law and the opportunity for investment. He encouraged delegating tasks and being surrounded with individuals that help facilitate that. Board Chair Tovar touched upon the concept of environmental resilience and commented on pythons in the everglades and the environmental impact they are having as a potential research project that FIU can focus on.

Trustee Alexander P. Sutton mentioned undergraduate research and increasing preparation and opportunities for undergraduate students. Provost Bejar explained that it is part of the conversation under the FIU experience pillar. Trustee Noël C. Barengo commented on the FIU experience pillar and the importance of creating easily identifiable recognition for the University. He mentioned recent local and international efforts to promote FIU at community events. Trustee Alan Gonzalez expressed that sports (*athletics*) can impact university affinity. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a focus on academics. Trustee Gonzalez mentioned business partnerships and the impact that paid program internships for students has on their education and future careers.

Committee Chair Sarnoff supported the idea mentioned by Board Chair Tovar regarding eliminating the pythons that are invading the Florida Everglades. He touched upon the concept succession planning. Committee Chair Sarnoff expressed that the university administration has done a great job at capturing and telling the story of FIU over the past two (2) years. He reinforced the idea mentioned by Trustee Gonzalez regarding paid internships for undergraduate students.

Board Chair Tovar suggested having a designated person that knows how to connect with businesses and individuals in the community. He added that there should be greater efforts to connect with business moving to Miami and telling the story of FIU and why the University is so important to the community. Trustee Hondal concurred. She mentioned articulating core competencies that FIU currently does not have and what it looks like to be a partner-facing institution. Senior Vice President, University Advancement Kenneth C. Hall mentioned

philanthropy and corporate engagement as part of the implementation of the strategic plan. Board Chair Tovar shared that prior to philanthropy it is important to look at the community impact of the University. Provost Bejar provided context in comparison to other institutions regarding partnerships and philanthropy and explained that the framing of the conversation should be different as individuals are now questioning the value proposition of higher education.

Dean and Sr. VP Gil commented on the challenges researchers face. He provided a personal account regarding a research proposal. He shared that many grant applications to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are not reviewed or funded. He advised that it is important to make it easier for researchers to conduct their research and to reduce bureaucracy to help facilitate it. He pointed out that the strategic plan provides guardrails around research. Dean and Sr. VP Cendan touched upon the FIU experience and how schools have arts or athletics as their affinity piece for students, which can also be seen in the field of healthcare. Committee Chair Sarnoff commented that the FIU medical school has strengthened and pointed out that there will be changes as a result of the partnership with Baptist. Dean and Sr. VP Cendan commented on the capacity of the partnership with Baptist health and provided a comparison to the University of South Florida and their partnership with Tampa General Hospital. Committee Chair Sarnoff shared a personal account.

Trustee Sutton commented on the usage of the FIU Biscayne Bay Campus (BBC). Board Chair Tovar mentioned that it is important to conduct a needs assessment of the pressing issues and how FIU can make an impact. He mentioned the issue of pythons in the Florida Everglades as a start for collaboration and focusing on other issues that are going on in the community and Dean and Sr. VP Gil concurred. Provost Bejar mentioned that environmental resilience is very broad and that she wants to find out how FIU can contribute and elevate a national conversation on it. President Jessell pointed out that the significance of ensuring that the FIU curriculum and research are truly aligned with community needs. He noted that the location of FIU is a strength, and that collaboration is essential within the topic of the environment and environmental resilience. He also mentioned additional investments for FIU Law to set the University apart from other institutions through collaboration. President Jessell commented on potential and current uses of Artificial Intelligence to find solutions. He added that now, when students graduate, they are equipped with knowledge across multiple disciplines. He concurred with the idea shared by Board Chair Tovar of an informational storybook telling the story of FIU. Committee Chair Sarnoff highlighted that the *Wall Street Journal* ranked FIU the No. 4 Public University and that this should be the front-page story on marketing materials used by the University.

3. New Business

No new business was raised.

4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

With no other new business, Committee Chair Marc D. Sarnoff adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees Strategic Planning Committee on Friday, April 12, 2024, at 11:19 AM.