



External Relations Committee
April 25, 2024
FIU, Biscayne Bay Campus, Wolfe University Center, Room 221

MINUTES

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 Francis A. Hondal at 11:40 AM on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the External Relations Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Francis A. Hondal, *Committee Chair*; Gene Prescott, *Committee Vice Chair*; Yaffa Popack (*Zoom*), and Roger Tovar, *Board Chair*.

The following Board members were also in attendance: Board Vice Chair Carlos A. Duart and Trustees Cesar L. Alvarez, Noël C. Barengo, Dean C. Colson, Alan Gonzalez, and Alexander P. Sutton.

Committee Chair Hondal welcomed all Trustees and members of the University administration. She also welcomed Trustees attending via the virtual environment and the University community and general public.

2. Approval of Minutes

Committee Chair Hondal asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the External Relations Committee meeting held on September 14, 2023. Hearing none, a motion was made and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the External Relations Committee meeting held on September 14, 2023.

3. Information/Discussion Items

3.1 Strategic Communications, Government and External Affairs Update

- **Strategic Communications Update**
- **Governmental Relations Update**

Senior Vice President, Strategic Communications, Government and External Affairs Michelle L. Palacio explained that the Strategic Communications, Government and External Affairs team alongside colleagues from across the University, have been focused on ensuring that FIU continues to be visible to peers, potential students and parents, business leaders, key decision makers, current students, and alumni. Sr. VP Palacio shared a video reflecting a preeminent mindset with a focus on being both relevant and visible: from gaining national attention for research on Good Morning America, Fox News, national journals and publications, and every local station, to supporting FIU admissions efforts, increasing social media engagement, and investing in national, state and local advertising and marketing. She highlighted the work of Dr. Diana Azzam - and her lab in the Robert

Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work - whose research was published in *Nature Medicine*.

Sr. VP Palacio commented on the refreshed brand framework, which includes some of the stylistic elements of the REAL brand and a focus to Forward-Thinking, Innovative, and Unstoppable. She highlighted that in 2024, the University's first Research Magazine was launched and consists of a 62-page reflection of the research that makes FIU a Carnegie R1 Research University. She added that the magazine was shared across the country and that the images and stories from the magazine have been extensively repurposed. She shared a photo of a video partnership with Minute Earth on YouTube which was a collaboration with a researcher from the FIU Extreme Events Institute. She noted that the video has been viewed more than 300,000 times in just three (3) months. She presented photos of advertisements placed in Washington's Reagan National Airport and the FIU alumni board of directors during a DC Fly-in.

Sr. VP Palacio remarked on the focus of building affinity with students and parents from the earliest point of their recruitment. She added that in collaboration with University Admissions, a new suite of materials was designed. She noted that the materials and templates will be shared with colleges and programs to ensure admission recruitment materials look uniform. Sr. VP Palacio shared that on November 15, 2023, thousands of students around the country received packages coinciding with their admissions decision welcoming and introducing them to FIU.

Sr. VP Palacio remarked that strategic investments include opportunities to showcase FIU's faculty and students. She presented an example of a recent strategic investment with *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. She shared additional examples including e-blast advertisements to 15,000 higher education leaders showcasing FIU research and advertising welcome messages in the Seattle Airport for the annual meeting of the American Public and Land-Grant University (APLU). Sr. VP Palacio commented that discipline specific investments included lanyards purchased for the Fulbright Conference in Denver and supporting a co-branded event with *Foreign Policy Magazine* through Professor Mario Loyola's initiative.

Sr. VP Palacio presented a collaboration with the FIU Alumni Association, the FIU Foundation, Athletics, and Parking and Transportation to purchase all existing FIU license plates and rebrand them with a new design featuring the signature "FIU Blue", the Panther Head, and the FIU logo mark. She provided an overview of the investments being made to reach key audiences including sponsorships and advertisements. She also highlighted the accomplishments of FIU in D.C. and the federal relations office. She noted that the State has also invested \$100M to be shared by the soon to be four (4) Preeminent Universities. She added that the State has also made additional investments to support the FIU Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom, and \$100M for the FIU health facility. Sr. VP Palacio provided a broad overview of the 2024-2025 communications strategy consisting of 11 campaigns.

4. New Business

No new business was raised.

5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

With no other business, Committee Chair Francis A. Hondal adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees External Relations Committee on Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 12:12 PM.