



Full Board
July 31, 2024
Zoom

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

Board Chair Roger Tovar convened the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, July 31, 2024.

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*; Noël C. Barengo; Francesca Casanova; Dean C. Colson; Alan Gonzalez; Francis A. Hondal; Natasha Lowell; Gene Prescott; Chanel T. Rowe; and Alberto R. Taño.

Trustees Yaffa Popack and Marc D. Sarnoff were excused.

Board Chair Tovar welcomed all Trustees, members of the University administration, and the University community.

Board Chair Tovar welcomed and introduced Trustee Alberto R. Taño, who was appointed to the FIU Board of Trustees on June 28, 2024 by Governor Ron DeSantis. Board Chair Tovar noted that Trustee Taño has been working, teaching, and volunteering in the field of Neonatology since 1989 and is a co-founder and Medical Director of KIDZ Medical Services and Emergency Pediatric Services, and that he serves as the Director of multiple Neonatal units in South Florida. Board Chair Tovar stated that Trustee Taño succeeds Mr. Cesar L. Alvarez on the Board.

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 President Kenneth A. Jessell and he agreed 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 requests for public appearances.

3. Action Items

3.1 Legislative Budget Requests, 2025-2026

Trustee Francis A. Hondal, Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee Chair, explained that the Florida Board of Governors requires that all State University system institutions submit their

institutional legislative budget requests for review and approval. Provost and Executive Vice President Elizabeth M. Bejar presented for the Board's review and approval the 2025-2026 Legislative Budget Requests (LBRs), which included: Operational Excellence; Investing in FIU Health Innovation District; Category 6 Initiative: Infrastructure Testing, Disaster Management and Recovery; and Innovative Technology Hub and Academic-Industry Partnerships Initiatives. She commented on each LBR.

Provost Bejar stated that the University is requesting \$65M in recurring funds for Operational Excellence to continue the leadership and momentum of FIU as a top public research university. She commented on the \$50M request pertaining to the Health Innovation District. She noted that the request is a split of recurring and non-recurring dollars and intends to broaden FIU Health's clinical research in strategically aligned areas that correspond with the state's health priorities. Provost Bejar remarked on the \$60M request, \$10.5M recurring and \$49.5M non-recurring, relating to the Category 6 Initiative: Infrastructure Testing, Disaster Management and Recovery. She added that funding will support one-time investments that will expand industry partnerships, expand testing, provide for the establishment of the leading Category 6 testing facility, and integrate work currently being done at the Institute of Environment, Extreme Events Institute, and the Academy for International Disaster Preparedness. Provost Bejar commented on the \$30M request, \$18M recurring and \$12M non-recurring, pertaining to the Innovative Technology Hub and Academic-Industry Partnerships Initiatives. She noted that the request focuses on growing the University's research portfolio, leveraging internal expertise and strategic industry partnerships and alliances.

Provost Bejar commented that investing in FIU is investing in excellence for Florida's future and advances FIU's student excellence and research capabilities and fortifies Florida's national reputation as a hub for economic growth, research, and innovation in higher education. President Jessell pointed out that the University's Legislative Budget Requests tie into FIU's strategic plan in terms of health, environment, environmental resilience, innovation, technology, and artificial intelligence. He added that FIU has demonstrated its capacity in terms of being a solutions-center for areas of critical importance to the state. Board Chair Tovar added that the requested funding helps to address past funding gaps and are also forward thinking in terms of addressing the critical needs of the community and state.

A motion was made and unanimously passed by the FIU Board of Trustees to approve the 2025-2026 Legislative Budget Requests.

3.2 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Proposals, 2024-2025

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 indicated that, subject to available funds and selection and approval by the Florida Board of Governors (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 2024-2025 LINE fund proposals for Board of Trustees review. She pointed out that this year, FIU is submitting three (3) proposals from three (3) health care partners. She commented that the first proposal and commitment is \$100,000 from Memorial Healthcare System for 10 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students who will have a commitment to work at Memorial Healthcare System facilities. She added that the matching funds would increase the support to \$20,000 each. Provost Bejar commented that the second request is from Nicklaus Children's Hospital providing \$108,000 to support a shared graduate nursing faculty position focused on establishing a new Post Master's Certificate in Pediatric Acute Care. She noted that the total commitment, if matched, would be \$216,000 to support that faculty member through the development of said certificate and the beginning of teaching for a total of 20 months. Provost Bejar indicated that the final LINE request is \$20,000 from Riviera Health Resort/Victoria Nursing and Rehabilitation to provide support for one traditional or accelerated option BSN student's cost of tuition and fees in exchange for a work commitment post-graduation. She stated that the matching funds would double the investment, and then allow the program to support two (2) students.

A motion was made and unanimously passed by the FIU Board of Trustees to approve the 2024-2025 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Proposals:

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| ▪ Memorial Healthcare System | \$100,000 |
| ▪ Nicklaus Children's Hospital | \$108,000 |
| ▪ Riviera Health Resort/Victoria Nursing and Rehabilitation | \$ 20,000 |

3.3 Proposed Amendment to Regulation FIU-110 Expressive Activities in Outdoor Areas on Campus

General Counsel Castillo presented the proposed amendment to Regulation FIU-110 Expressive Activities in Outdoor Areas on Campus for the Board's review. He noted that the Board of Trustees unanimously approved several amendments to Regulation FIU-110 at its June meeting. He explained that at said meeting, President Jessell indicated that the University administration would continue reviewing Regulation FIU-110. General Counsel Castillo pointed out that the proposed amendment is consistent with President Jessell's comments at said meeting and consists of changing the time period during which certain expressive activities on campus are prohibited, which, if approved by the Board of Trustees, would be from sunset to 8:00 AM, unless there is prior approval from the Vice President for Student Affairs. General Counsel Castillo acknowledged and thanked the Student Affairs department, University Police, and Associate General Counsel Ryan Kelly.

A motion was made and unanimously passed by the FIU Board of Trustees to approve the proposed amendment to Regulation FIU-110 Expressive Activities in Outdoor Areas on Campus and delegate authority to the University President to approve any subsequent non-material amendments based on comments to the Regulation received from the Florida Board of Governors.

3.4 Review and Approve General Education Course Offerings

Trustee Hondal explained that General Education Courses must be reviewed and approved to be in compliance with Florida statutes. Provost Bejar explained that in addition to Florida statutes, BOG Regulation 8.005 requires, effective this year, that each State University System (SUS) president and Board of Trustees annually review and approve the courses offered by the institution that meet the general education requirements. She noted that, in accordance with BOG regulation, the University

must ensure that the general education courses comply with course standards. She delineated the course standards across the five (5) general education subject areas, including communication, humanities, social science, natural science, and mathematics. Provost Bejar added that within said general education subject areas, there are a number of courses both statewide and institutional core. She pointed out that at each SUS institution, with the standard undergraduate degree being 120 credits, general education is comprised of 36 credits. She added that there is a statewide core course portion of the general education, which encompasses 15 credits, one course per each of the previously mentioned subject area categories. She stated that the University Core Curriculum (UCC), the remaining 21 credits, is the focus of what is currently being reviewed.

Provost Bejar commented that the University's two-part review process, consisting of data clean up and regulatory compliance, began last fall and at the conclusion of said process, 272 courses were reviewed collaboratively across Academic Planning and Accountability, deans, chairs, faculty departments, UCC Oversight Committee, and the FIU Faculty Senate. She added that in October 2023, faculty work groups were convened to review the UCC courses against the standards. Provost Bejar commented that the review process has been iterative throughout the fall and spring semester across the state. She pointed out that in February, the BOG forwarded to each SUS institution a course offerings list in which every institution has to address each of the courses listed by affirming no updates, updating, or recommending removal. Provost Bejar remarked that FIU was not recommending updates to 45 courses, has updated 80 courses, and of the 145 courses being recommended for removal, 123 courses are part of data clean up and 22 are compliance related. She further stated that 113 courses are being proposed for general education effective Fall 2025-26. She remarked on the removal of general education designation for seven (7) courses that the Faculty Senate recommended be retained. Provost Bejar indicated that said courses would continue to be part of the University catalog offered as electives solely without the general education designation. She mentioned that as BOG Regulation provides for an annual review, there will be an opportunity to revisit the University's offerings in coming academic years.

Provost Bejar delineated next steps. She indicated that, if approved by the Board of Trustees, the University President and Board Chair will concurrently sign the certification form and then the signed form and Statewide Course Numbering System General Education Course Report will be submitted to the Florida Department of Education Office of Articulation for review. She added that the Florida Department of Education Office of Articulation will then remand it to the BOG once ready for review and approval.

President Jessell commented on his review of the recommended courses. He noted that particular attention was given to the seven (7) courses Provost Bejar previously mentioned. He also remarked on his review of the meeting minutes from the Faculty Senate. President Jessell indicated that of the seven (7) courses, three (3) were recommended by the units for removal and in terms of the remaining four (4) courses, most, if not all, SUS institutions are not offering them as general education courses. President Jessell certified that he has reviewed and met the requirements of BOG regulation and Florida statute in his recommendation to the Board of Trustees for approval of the University's general education courses.

Trustee Barengo commented on the review process as a constructive and respectful collaboration between the University's administration and faculty. He noted that after the Faculty Senate approved changes to the UCC at its meeting in April, the Office of Articulation staff identified courses, mainly in the Humanities and Social Science categories, that may not be approved based on language used in course descriptions and learning outcomes, but that this feedback was not provided in writing. He remarked that during the past six (6) weeks, faculty, chairs of departments and deans reviewed 49 courses and of said courses, 42 were modified according to the feedback received and were approved by the Faculty Senate. Trustee Barengo added that the Faculty Senate voted and advised to keep seven (7) courses that did not make the UCC list, because said courses are deemed important for the general education of the University's students and align with the stated goals of the UCC, including providing "broad foundational knowledge to help students develop intellectual skills and habits that enable them to become more effective and lifelong learners." He stated that based on the faculty's interpretation of state statutes and the written guidelines received, the aforementioned courses may remain part of the UCC as none of the said courses included "distort historical events," nor are their curriculum's "based on unproven, speculative, or exploratory content." He further stated that the faculty does not agree with the exclusion of the aforementioned seven (7) courses under question from the list, based on a straightforward reading of the law as written. He thanked the faculty for their hard work during the last nine (9) months, as well as for their continued commitment to the students, the University, and community.

Board Chair Tovar noted that the minor difference in the courses recommended for inclusion in the UCC listing was reflective of a collaborative effort between the University's administration and the faculty.

A motion was made and passed by the FIU Board of Trustees, after completing its review, to approve the general education course offerings.

Trustee Barengo voted against the motion.

3.5 Updated Continued Exclusions of Trustees other than the Board Chair and Updated Continued Exclusion of the Board of Trustees Corporate Secretary

Provost Bejar commented that FIU has, and desires to continue to enter into contractual obligations with agencies of the United States Government, including contractual obligations requiring security clearance. She noted that by previous resolutions, the Board of Trustees excluded all of the Board of Trustees members except for the Board Chair from the requirements for personnel security clearance. Provost Bejar added that the Board of Trustees also excluded the Board of Trustees Corporate Secretary from the requirements for a personnel security clearance. She indicated that the composition of the Board of Trustees has changed since the last exclusion resolution with the appointment of Trustee Alberto R. Taño, and therefore the exclusion of the Board of Trustees members must be updated.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees (BOT) adopt a Resolution that updates the exclusion of the named members of the FIU BOT and continues the exclusion of the BOT Corporate Secretary from the requirements for a personnel security clearance.

4. New Business

Board Chair Tovar commented on the University's commencement ceremonies. He commended the graduates for their hard work and dedication and also recognized the work of the FIU faculty, administration, and staff.

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 Wednesday, July 31, 2024, at 1:54 PM.