



Governance Committee
September 17, 2026
FIU, Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham University Center Ballrooms

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

The Florida International University Board of Trustees' Governance Committee meeting was called to order by Board Chair Carlos A. Duarte at 3:27 p.m. on Thursday, September 17, 2026.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Governance Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Trustees Carlos A. Duarte, *Board Chair*; Alan Gonzalez, *Board Vice Chair*; Jesus Lebeña; Yaffa Popack; and Albert R. Taño.

Trustees George Heisel and Fred Voccola were excused.

The following Board members were also in attendance: Trustees Noël C. Barengo; Patrick McDowell (via Zoom); Alyssa Mederos; and Alexander M. Peraza.

2. Approval of Minutes

Board Chair Duarte asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the Governance Committee meeting held on February 26, 2026. Hearing none, a motion was made and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the Governance Committee meeting held on February 26, 2026.

3. Action Items

G1. Board of Governors' Statement of Free Expression Endorsement Resolution

Vice Provost for Faculty Leadership and Success Heather D. Russell presented the State University System of Florida Statement of Free Expression for the Committee's annual review and endorsement. She noted that the State University System of Florida and its 12 public postsecondary institutions, through their respective presidents, adopted the Statement on April 15, 2019. Vice Provost Russell referenced the update provided earlier in the day by Interim Chief Compliance Officer Luz Cabrera-Frias regarding the University's ongoing implementation of its civil discourse plans. She added that the Board of Governors' 2022 Civil Discourse Report included seven recommendations, the third of which called for the leadership of each university board of trustees to annually review and endorse the Statement of Free Expression and recommit to the principles of civil discourse.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Governance Committee, having reviewed the State University System of Florida Statement of Free Expression, recommend FIU Board of Trustees endorsement of such statement.

G2. Board Appointments, Florida International University Foundation, Inc.

Senior Vice President for University Advancement and CEO of the FIU Foundation, Inc., Kenneth C. Hall, presented the appointments of Emina Cunmulaj Nazarian; Eduardo “Eddie” V. Hondal ’88, MS ’00; and Jeffrey Taraboulos ’96, MAcc ’00 to the FIU Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors for initial one (1)-year terms. He commented on the appointees.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Governance Committee recommend FIU Board of Trustees approval of the appointments of the individuals as presented and included in the Board materials to the FIU Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors.

G3. Ratification of the Reopener to the 2024-2027 FIU Board of Trustees and the United Faculty of Florida-FIU Collective Bargaining Agreement

Executive Vice President and Provost Elizabeth M. Bejar presented the 2026-2027 reopener to the 2024-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the FIU Board of Trustees and the United Faculty of Florida-FIU. She explained that the salary reopener was activated after recurring state funding was determined to be insufficient to support the previously negotiated salary commitments. Provost Bejar highlighted a one-time, non-recurring merit bonus of \$6,500 for bargaining-unit employees who were employed before January 1, 2026; remained continuously employed; were not in receipt of a notice of termination or non-reappointment; and received a satisfactory or better rating on their 2025-26 annual evaluation. She also highlighted publication and creative works completion awards and policy revisions concerning faculty assignments, performance evaluations, employee records, leave administration, professional development, and sabbaticals. She added that scrivener’s errors were corrected throughout the agreement for consistency and accuracy.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Governance Committee recommend FIU Board of Trustees ratification of the 2026-2027 reopener to the 2024-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the FIU Board of Trustees and the United Faculty of Florida-FIU.

G4. President’s Annual Performance Evaluation and Bonus

Board Chair Duart explained that the Committee’s role was to discuss President Jeanette M. Nuñez’s performance, assign a rating using the Board’s established executive performance rating system, and recommend a performance bonus for final action by the full Board. As required by Florida Board of Governors regulations, he discussed the President’s annual performance with Board of Governors Chair Alan Levine, who was highly complimentary of President Nuñez and the work being done at FIU. Board Chair Duart noted that the President’s Performance Goals

align with the University's Accountability Plan. He highlighted FIU's first-place ranking in the State University System on the Board of Governors' Performance-Based Funding Metrics for the fourth consecutive year, continued advancement in student success and economic mobility, standing as a preeminent research university, and progress in health, research, innovation, and resilience. He added that the President's employment agreement authorizes the Board, in its discretion, to award a performance bonus of up to \$400,000 based on the achievement of specified goals and objectives.

President Jeanette M. Nuñez reviewed progress and accomplishments related to her 2025-26 goals in the areas of increasing funding, philanthropy, enhancing FIU's national reputation, student success, and operationalizing the strategic plan. She reported that FIU met or exceeded nearly every established target. Highlights included increases in state and federal funding; growth in the research proposal pipeline despite significant challenges in the federal funding environment; approximately 200 days of cash on hand and reductions in operating expenses; \$96.2 million in total gifts and new commitments; advancement in national rankings and earned media; continued leadership in performance-based funding and experiential learning; progress in the University's use of artificial intelligence; and completion of partnership agreements with Baptist Health and Nicklaus Children's Health System.

Board Chair Duarte stated that, based on President Nuñez's performance and vision, the University's progress during the year, her leadership, and his consultation with Board of Governors Chair Levine, a superior performance rating was warranted. He separately recommended awarding President Nuñez the full \$400,000 performance bonus based on the outcomes achieved under the approved Performance Bonus Goals.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Governance Committee recommend FIU Board of Trustees approval of a superior performance rating and \$400,000 performance bonus for President Nuñez.

G5. President's Goals

President Nuñez presented her proposed Performance Bonus Goals for the 2026-27 academic year, organized around the themes of protect, grow, elevate, and deliver. She reviewed the five goal areas of increasing funding, philanthropy, enhancing FIU's reputation, student success, and strategic execution. President Nuñez highlighted targets related to maintaining state funding and securing support for Board priorities; increasing federal appropriations and the research proposal pipeline; achieving \$90 million in philanthropic support; advancing key rankings and earned media; sustaining top-tier student outcomes and developing strategic corporate alliances; and advancing priorities in national security, disaster management, innovation, housing, and campus engagement. In response to a question from Trustee Jesus Lebeña, President Nuñez discussed existing and planned student housing, affiliated housing, the

pedestrian bridge to Sweetwater, and the University's efforts to identify workforce housing opportunities.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Governance Committee recommend FIU Board of Trustees approval of actions related to the President's Performance Goals and Performance Bonus Goals, specifically, that the Board (i) affirm that the President's Performance Goals continue to align with the Accountability Plan and (ii) adopt the President's Performance Bonus Goals for the 2026-27 academic year.

4. New Business

No new business was raised.

5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

In his concluding remarks, Board Chair Duarte placed the President's compensation in the context of peer institutions within the State University System and noted that FIU continued to perform above expectations. He commended President Nuñez and the administration for delivering strong results while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

With no other business, Board Chair Carlos A. Duarte adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees Governance Committee on Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 4:16 p.m.