



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC POLICY AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 23, 2021**

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

The Florida International University Board of Trustees' Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Natasha Lowell on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 10:33 a.m. at the FIU, Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham Center Ballrooms and via Zoom.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Trustees Natasha Lowell, *Committee Chair*; Donna J Hrinak, *Committee Vice Chair (via Zoom)*; Cesar L. Alvarez (*via Zoom*); Jose J. Armas, *Health Affairs Liaison (joined after roll call)*; Dean C. Colson, *Board Chair*; Joerg Reinhold; Marc D. Sarnoff; Roger Tovar, *Board Vice Chair and Athletics Liaison*; and Alexandra Valdes.

Trustees Leonard Boord, Gene Prescott, Claudia Puig, and Chanel T. Rowe and University President Mark B. Rosenberg were also in attendance.

Committee Chair Lowell welcomed all Trustees and members of the University administration. She 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.

Provost and Executive Vice President Kenneth G. Furton commented on the search for the next Dean of the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, adding that after six (6) years at the helm, Founding Dean John F. Stack Jr. is stepping down as the School's dean. Provost Furton indicated that the search and screen committee will be led by Brian Schriener, Dean of the College of Communication, Architecture + The Arts.

2. Approval of Minutes

Committee Chair Lowell asked that the Committee approve the minutes of the meetings held on October 28, 2020 and December 3, 2020. A motion was made and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee meetings held on October 28, 2020 and December 3, 2020.

3. Action Items

AP1. Tenure as a Condition of Employment Nominations

Provost Furton presented the Tenure as a Condition of Employment (TACOE) nominations for Committee review, noting that TACOE is reserved for individuals that have achieved highly prestigious academic careers at comparable institutions. He explained that the TACOE candidates already have achieved tenure or are eligible for tenure at their respective institutions at the time of hire. Provost Furton pointed out that TACOE candidates understand that they will be hired with tenure pending a review by the department, the College, the Provost, the President, and finally, the Board of Trustees. He remarked that the respective departments and colleges have completed the tenure review process and have vetted the candidates' scholarly qualifications, stating that he and the President recommend Dr. Haiwei Gu, Dr. Mark Myring, and Dr. Tong Zhou for TACOE. Provost Furton briefly commented on each of the TACOE candidates.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees the approval of three (3) candidates for Tenure as a Condition of Employment (TACOE) as specified in the Board materials.

AP2. Approval of Notice of Change to Approved Revised Regulation FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) and Sexual Misconduct

General Counsel Castillo presented the Notice of Change to the approved revised Regulation FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) and Sexual Misconduct for Committee review. He explained that on August 12, 2020, the Board approved revisions to the regulation under the emergency rulemaking authority process. He pointed out that subsequently, on October 28, 2020, the Board of Trustees approved the revised regulation that is currently being presented and limited the approval through the current meeting with the purpose of allowing for further review. In terms of the due process concerns in relation to cross-examination mechanisms provided for in the regulation, General Counsel Castillo thanked Trustee Marc D. Sarnoff who worked with the administration in the review of the regulation. General Counsel Castillo remarked that Trustee Sarnoff confirmed at the Committee's December meeting that he was satisfied with the regulation as revised, adding that approval is now being requested to make the revised regulation effective without such date restriction.

Trustee Sarnoff commented on engaging with the administration on a robust review of the University's Title IX (105) and Student Code of Conduct (2501) Regulations, particularly as it pertained to due process inclusive of the ability to have some form of cross-examination for FIU 105. He commended and thanked Assistant Dean of Students Michelle Horvath, Dean of Students Bronwen Pelaez, and Associate General Counsel Iris A. Elijah, noting that only minor revisions are anticipated for FIU-2501.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees the approval of the amendment of Regulation FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) and Sexual Misconduct without a date restriction and delegate authority to the University President to approve

any subsequent amendments that are based on comments to the Regulation received from the Florida Board of Governors and as a result of the regulation-making process.

AP3. Amendments to Regulation FIU-1103 Textbook Affordability

Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Elizabeth M. Bejar presented the amendments to Regulation FIU-1103 Textbook Affordability for Committee review. She explained that Regulation FIU-1103 was being updated to align with changes made by the Board of Governors (BOG) to BOG Regulation 8.003. She indicated that BOG Regulation 8.003 provides, in relevant part, that “Each university board of trustees shall adopt a regulation that establishes textbooks and instructional materials affordability policies to minimize the cost of required or recommended textbooks and instructional materials for students while maintaining the quality of education and academic freedom”.

Sr. VP Bejar delineated the proposed amendments to FIU-1103. She specifically mentioned that the amendments omitted the requirement for state university boards of trustees to examine the cost of textbooks and instructional materials by course and course section for all general education courses; omitted the requirement for institutions to report the selection process for general education courses identified with a wide cost variance in the board of trustees' annual report that is submitted to the Chancellor in September; added a provision related to efforts to provide textbooks and instructional materials for students who cannot otherwise afford the required and recommended textbooks and instructional materials; and added the requirement that innovative pricing techniques and payment options for course materials include an opt-out provision in addition to the opt-in provision. She remarked that, at a subsequent meeting, she would apprise the Committee of the University's innovative pricing technique that is being developed in partnership and collaboration with the Office of Business Services and Barnes & Noble.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees the approval of the amendments to Regulation FIU-1103 Textbook Affordability and delegate authority to the University President to approve any subsequent amendments that are based on comments to the Regulation received from the Florida Board of Governors and as a result of the regulation-making process.

AP4. New Program Proposal: Bachelor of Arts in Global Educational Studies (CIP 13.0701)
AP5. New Program Proposal: Bachelor of Arts in Global Sustainable Tourism (CIP: 30.3301)
AP6. New Program Proposal: Master of Science in Research Design and Analysis (CIP: 13.0603)

Sr. VP Bejar pointed out that the programs being proposed for Committee review¹ are considered strategic according to the BOG. She commented on the University's comprehensive process for developing new degrees and explained that as part of said process, a feasibility study is developed, and a concurrent process is initiated with BOG staff.

¹ Specifically, AP4 and AP5 are considered strategic according to the BOG.

AP4. New Program Proposal: Bachelor of Arts in Global Educational Studies (CIP 13.0701)

Sr. VP Bejar presented the Bachelor of Arts in Global Educational Studies new program proposal for Committee review. She remarked that the proposed BA will provide a degree for students who are interested in education-related careers in a global or local context, but not in teaching in the classroom. She indicated that the proposed BA will provide flexibility among several potential career opportunities, including international/intercultural education, educational policy, educational outreach in corporations, and national education and agencies. Sr. VP Bejar mentioned that the proposed BA will address the State of Florida's category of critical workforce and global competitiveness of economic development, adding that there are currently no other undergraduate degrees within the State University System (SUS) in this category. She commented that the proposed degree is an acknowledgment that employees who are sufficiently equipped with the foundational base of an American higher education are sought after by educational organizations around the globe.

Committee Vice Chair Donna J. Hrinak commended the work on the proposed degree, commenting on the emergence of professions in the areas of international education.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees approval of the Bachelor of Arts in Global Educational Studies (CIP 13.0701) new program proposal.

AP5. New Program Proposal: Bachelor of Arts in Global Sustainable Tourism (CIP: 30.3301)

Sr. VP Bejar presented the Bachelor of Arts in Global Sustainable Tourism new program proposal for Committee review. She explained that the primary purpose of the proposed program is to provide Florida's top industry with a new stream of candidates for employment who will understand the most current needs and demands of the traveling public, imbued with the appropriate content knowledge and critical-thinking skills needed to guide the industry into better, more sustainable stewardship of the natural environment, and operationalize with that a higher respect for and relationship with the communities where the industry operates. Sr. VP Bejar pointed out that the proposed degree provides graduates who can work as part of their industry to ensure that the tourism industry can flourish while not negatively impacting the natural environment. She mentioned that major hospitality and tourism corporations have adopted and aligned their sustainability programs to support such aims. She mentioned that, if approved by the Board of Trustees, there will be seven programs in the nation with this degree option.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees approval of the Bachelor of Arts in Global Sustainable Tourism (CIP: 30.3301) new program proposal.

AP6. New Program Proposal: Master of Science in Research Design and Analysis (CIP: 13.0603)

Sr. VP Bejar presented the Master of Science in Research Design and Analysis (RDA) new program proposal for Committee review. She explained that the RDA proposal is for a fully online degree

covering research design, statistics, measurement, qualitative research, and evaluation. She indicated that the RDA program places emphasis on building research knowledge, expertise, and practical experience to help RDA graduates fill a void to align relevant data with specific problems, design cutting edge data collection methods, analyze data for practical solutions, and suggest rigorous research techniques. She mentioned that RDA graduates will have an impact on both public and private sectors that deal with contemporary challenges regarding education, health, and technology issues. Sr. VP Bejar pointed out that the proposed program boasts a strong national demand, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, adding that Florida estimates growth above 30%.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees approval of the Master of Science in Research Design and Analysis (CIP: 13.0603) new program proposal.

AP7. Placing the Name “Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences” on a Portion of the Exterior of the Building Housing the FIU School of Computing and Information Sciences on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus

Provost Furton presented the request for the placing of the name “Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences” on a portion of the exterior of the building housing the FIU School of Computing and Information Sciences on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus for Committee review. He mentioned that the FIU community should anticipate a major announcement the next day pertaining to a generous grant from the Knight Foundation to fund additional faculty positions in the FIU College of Engineering building, to be constructed on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. He mentioned that said investment will catalyze the development of the local tech ecosystem by attracting top faculty researchers in areas such as artificial intelligence, smart robotics, bioinformatics, biodevices, and digital forensics.

Provost Furton indicated that in light of this significant grant, the University proposes to (i) rename the FIU School of Computing and Information Sciences as the “Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences” and (ii) prominently display “Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences” on the exterior of the building housing the School.

A motion was made and unanimously passed that the FIU Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee recommend to the Florida International University Board of Trustees approval of placing the name “Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences” on a portion of the exterior of the building housing the FIU School of Computing and Information Sciences.

4. Information and Discussion Items

4.1 Academic Affairs Regular Reports

There were no questions from the Committee members in terms of the Academic Affairs regular reports included as part of the agenda materials.

4.2 SACSCOC Reaffirmation of Accreditation

Sr. VP Bejar commented that the University is currently undergoing the comprehensive 10-year review of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). She remarked that there are two (2) components to reaffirmation, compliance certification and quality enhancement. She mentioned that the University's Compliance Certification Report is a comprehensive report that demonstrates the extent of FIU's compliance with each core requirement and standards as set forth by SACSCOC, adding that said report was submitted as part of the off-site review. She pointed out that the off-site review process resulted in three (3) preliminary findings of initial concern, stating that the audit-related finding pertained to a timing issue that resulted in the State of Florida accelerating the review of FIU's Financial Statement Audit. Sr. VP Bejar explained that the review process culminates with an on-site review that is scheduled for March 2021, noting that in anticipation of said review, the University provided additional documentation and responded to the findings. She stated that while the on-site review will take place virtually due to COVID-19 precautions, an on-site visit is required to take place within the next 12 months.

Sr. VP Bejar remarked on the quality enhancement component of the review process, adding that SACSCOC requires that universities identify an initiative that can significantly impact student learning. She referred to the University's prior QEP, Global Learning for Global Citizenship, noting that said QEP led to a sustained office at FIU, launched a number of careers, resulted in a published book, and caused FIU to be the recipient of numerous awards for the related outcomes. She explained that Critical Skills for the 21st Century is the proposed QEP, adding that the proposed QEP aims to enhance student preparation for the 21st century workforce by certifying through microcredentials, the student's attainment of knowledge, skills, abilities, and values around and related to artificial intelligence, data science, and emotional intelligence. Sr. VP Bejar explained that the proposed QEP is an academically focused and research-designed five-year project, which will culminate in an impact report that will be submitted to SACSCOC in 2026. She presented a table that summarizes five-year scaling projections for increasing faculty development to support the calculated range of total student enrollment. She commented that FIU's proposed QEP will be reviewed during the virtual site visit in March, noting that with SACSCOC approval after the March on-site visit, the University will then be ready to launch the QEP in fall 2021.

Committee Chair Lowell welcomed Mr. Alberto Ibarguen, CEO of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Mr. Ibarguen commented that Miami is emerging as an international tech hub, adding that the demand for technical talent is rising and that the investment (*referring to AP7. Placing the Name "Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences" on a Portion of the Exterior of the Building Housing the FIU School of Computing and Information Sciences on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus*) will assure that there will be a deep pool of talent for Miami's growing tech sector.

4.3 Student Conduct and Honor Code

Sr. VP Bejar referred to Trustee Sarnoff's earlier comments (*referring to AP2. Approval of Notice of Change to Approved Revised Regulation FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) and Sexual Misconduct*), adding that minor improvements will be presented for review at the Committee's next regularly scheduled meeting.

5. Student Government Updates

Trustee Alexandra Valdes, Student Government President, commented on the approval of new governing documents, which, as of February 1, 2021, unified student government into one (1) University-wide government for the student body. She mentioned that the Student Government Budget Committee met over the past several weeks to review Activity and Service Fee (A & S) budget requests and as a result, a final budget detailing A & S fee allocations has been presented to Sr. VP Bejar. Trustee Valdes mentioned that the University-wide alumni association mentorship program is now open to all students. She remarked on repopulating FIU campuses, specifically opening dining tables around the campuses and eliminating the Recreation Center's reservation system. She mentioned the mid-term study break event currently taking place in the Graham Center, adding that student government continues its efforts to increase on-campus engagement while also increasing student presence at University athletic events.

In response to Trustee Sarnoff, Trustee Valdes remarked that physical distancing requirements and the unavailability of numerous on-campus dining establishments serve as deterrents for students who wish to spend time on campus. In response to Board Vice Chair Roger Tovar, Senior Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer Kenneth A. Jessell pointed out that there are approximately 10 available on-campus food venues, and he commented on plans being developed with Chartwells to expand the number of available on-campus food venues, as this would provide for increased variety and options. Sr. VP and CFO Jessell further commented that the university will likely have to cover the losses of the expanded venues and that the university is prepared to do so. Board Vice Chair Tovar asked Trustee Valdes for additional recommendations that can help to further repopulation efforts. Trustee Valdes remarked that traditional on-campus, in-person learning should be an option for students that prefer said modality. In response to Committee Chair Lowell, Trustee Valdes mentioned that outdoor student events have been taking place but with limited attendance.

6. Faculty Senate Updates

Trustee Reinhold, Faculty Senate Chair, reflected on the prior 11 months that began with the directive to transition to remote instruction. He commented that while in-person instruction does not require certification, prior to being considered for hybrid course instruction, certification is required. He added that during said certification training, faculty members are exposed to evidence-based teaching practices, curriculum development, and assessment planning. He remarked that due to the transition to remote, training courses were oversubscribed, which resulted in additional sections being offered and ultimately, three times as much faculty becoming certified. Trustee Reinhold indicated that, in addition to the hybrid teaching certification, faculty members engaged in other available training opportunities such as the remote readiness certification. He stated that while not necessarily an indicator of student learning outcomes, passing rates for remote courses are comparable to that of online or in-person courses. He referenced a controlled comparison that analyzed a specific math course over the last three spring semesters, adding that student learning outcomes were generally consistent.

Trustee Reinhold commented on the fall student poll, pointing out that approximately half of respondents indicated that they preferred remote instruction for the spring semester. Trustee Reinhold mentioned that most students are electing to participate remotely for classes that have an

in-person option, despite the availability of space in the classroom. He remarked on increased student satisfaction rates as they relate to remote instruction. He referred to the recent Miami Herald article, commenting on faculty concerns regarding the related push to repopulate FIU campuses in the spring semester. He added that faculty are more receptive to returning to pre-COVID conditions in the fall semester.

Trustee Valdes remarked that remote learning incentivizes academic dishonesty and added that while there may be a section of the student population that is satisfied with remote instruction, an even greater number is dissatisfied. She commented that remote instruction was borne out of necessity and the circumstances of the moment and that moving forward, students should continue to have the same learning options as they did prior to COVID-19 conditions, specifically, in-person, online, and hybrid.

Trustee Reinhold reiterated that students are opting for remote learning despite having the option of attending class in-person. Trustee Valdes commented that there is increased comfort in attending classes remotely and added that removing remote instruction as an option helps to ensure that students have a presence on campus, thereby allowing them to benefit from the available on-campus resources.

Board Chair Dean C. Colson suggested to Committee Chair Lowell that the discussion be continued at the Full Board Meeting that is scheduled later in the day. There were no objections.

7. New Business

No new business was raised.

8. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

With no other business, Committee Chair Natasha Lowell adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 11:54 a.m.