



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
DECEMBER 3, 2020**

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

The Florida International University Board of Trustees' Strategic Planning Committee meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Roger Tovar at 10:20 AM on Thursday, December 3, 2020 via Zoom.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Strategic Planning Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Trustees Roger Tovar, *Chair*; Leonard Boord; Donna J. Hrinak; Gene Prescott; Joerg Reinhold; and Alexandra Valdes.

Trustee Cesar L. Alvarez, *Committee Vice Chair*, was excused.

Board Chair Dean C. Colson, Trustees Jose J. Armas, Gerald C. Grant, Jr., Natasha Lowell, Claudia Puig, and Marc D. Sarnoff and University President Mark B. Rosenberg also were in attendance.

Committee Chair Tovar welcomed all Trustees and members of the University administration. He also welcomed FIU Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors member Richard Brilliant, noting that Director Brilliant serves as the Foundation liaison to the Committee. Committee Chair Tovar explained that Trustees and University administrators and staff were attending via the virtual environment and that the University community and general public had access to the meeting via the University's webcast.

2. Approval of Minutes

Approval of prior meeting Minutes was deferred until the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting.

3. Informational and Discussion Items

3.1 Strategic Hiring Plan

Provost and Executive Vice President Kenneth G. Furton presented the proposed plan to strategically hire 100 faculty members within five years to achieve Top-50 in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. He indicated that 66 are incremental hires and 34 are replacement hires, adding that 37 of said faculty will be direct hires for preeminent and emerging preeminent programs where over 60% of the University's research funding is generated. He provided a breakdown of the faculty classifications, noting that the proposed plan calls for 33 Assistant Professors, 50 Associate Professors, and 17 Professors. Provost Furton pointed out that the total cost of 100 faculty

positions over the next five years is \$37.7M, stating that \$12.6M would be funded from the \$32M legislative allocation and that matching funds from Academic Affairs (\$14.9M), Office of Research overhead (\$7.7M), and College reallocations (\$2.5M) would cover the remaining \$25.1M. He added that the distribution of lines is focused on reaching overall Top-50 ranking for the University while raising select programs and colleges to Top-25.

Provost Furton explained that, at Committee Chair Tovar's suggestion, the University has prioritized and refined the 18 metrics that comprise *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking methodology into seven (7) major categories. He provided an overview of each of the overarching categories and their related weight, specifically graduation and retention rates (35%), peer assessment score (20%), faculty resources (20%), spending per student (10%), freshman class metrics (7%), a newly-added metric relating to graduate indebtedness (5%), and average alumni giving (3%). He commented on the University's impact scores and how the scores are based on five (5) factors, namely, importance, resource requirement, time to realization, positive effect on other systems, and additional points. He mentioned that each initiative is first evaluated in order to determine the relevance to the Next Horizon 2025 Strategic Plan, the University's mission and vision, and Florida Board of Governors (BOG) metrics, including Performance Based Funding and preeminence funding.

In terms of the high-level categories relating to learner success and institutional affinity and preeminence and research and innovation, Provost Furton presented an overview of the revised impact scores for currently proposed faculty recruitment initiatives, which are included under both high-level categories. He indicated that because, generally, half of their assignment pertains to teaching, tenure-earning faculty allow for reductions in class size, and in terms of research, they generate scholarship citations and research dollars. He pointed out that all allocations will be reviewed each year for their impact on Top-50, adding that any remaining balances will be reinvested in Top-50 initiatives. He commented that \$1.9M remained from the prior fiscal year, noting that the balance was rolled into the University's carryforward balance.

Provost Furton highlighted the University's preeminent programs and emerging preeminent programs in terms of potentially positioning for Top-25 and Top-50 rankings. He indicated that the University is proposing to invest in 37 faculty hiring lines for preeminent/emerging preeminent programs and 12 for FIU's Center for Translational Science, adding that 34 will be funded by Academic Affairs and 17 will be funded by the various colleges. He presented a detailed distribution, over five years, of the 37 faculty positions across the preeminent/emerging preeminent programs. Provost Furton provided an overview of the distribution of faculty positions across National Science Foundation (NSF) broad research areas relative to the targeted 2025 unit rankings increases. He commented that the University is on track to achieve \$355M in research expenditures, adding that the strategic hires are projected to help the University accelerate its research growth, resulting in \$400M in research expenditures by 2025.

In response to Trustee Leonard Boord, Provost Furton indicated that the University is still refining the faculty lines that are needed in each of the areas, but that in the case of relatively smaller colleges, investing in 15 faculty positions can have a dramatic impact on overall expenditures and reputation. Also responding to Trustee Boord, Committee Vice Chair Tovar provided examples of universities that experienced significant movement in the rankings. He pointed out that the purpose

of the recurring \$32M investment by the legislature is to provide funding support to the University in its pursuit of achieving recognition as a Top-50 public university, adding that effectively investing the allocation is critical. He added that the goals are aspirational, but that the University's pursuit of Top-50 ranking is bolstered as more FIU schools and programs advance to Top-50 rankings. In terms of the University's ranking improvement projections, Trustee Board requested comprehensive data in order to gain insight on those institutions that have made significant rankings gains in the last 10 years, the institutions that FIU is bridging the gap in between, and other key factors for these institutions, specifically relating to the number of faculty members. Committee Chair Tovar requested that this information be presented at the Committee's next regularly scheduled meeting.

3.2 Update on the FIU Center for Translational Science

Provost Furton commented on the three main research areas at FIU's Center for Translational Science (FIU-CTS), formerly known as the Torrey Pines institute for Molecular Studies, namely, neuroscience translational research, pulmonary biology, and biomolecular research. He highlighted faculty hires within said research areas, adding that Dr. Stephen Black will join the University in January as the Scientific Director for FIU-CTS. He provided examples of FIU-CTS research projects, specifically, small molecule drug screening by Research Professor Adel Nefzi and tissue analysis and imaging by Professors Hongxia Zhou and Xugang Xia.

Provost Furton explained that while a small operating budget deficit was anticipated for the facility, based on the grant awards of the groups already hired (nine Principal Investigators [PI's]), the facility will have \$9M in annual awards and \$3M in annual overhead. He indicated that with 10 PI's in place by January, all facility operational costs will be covered and that given the higher than expected rate of return for faculty hires at FIU-CTS, the University may operate with 14-15 PI's, rather than the 18 PI's that were originally planned for.

Provost Furton indicated that FIU signed a Shared Services Agreement with Cleveland Clinic and commented on collaboration with the Cleveland Clinic, namely, cancer research, World Trade Center Health Program, and the development of a PhD student training program. He pointed out that \$4.2M of capital improvements are planned and will be paid from Office of Research and Economic Development overhead. He mentioned that due to the repair of the cooling towers and the planned reduction of number of chemistry labs, the roof fans will not need replacement, adding that this represents \$600K in savings. Provost Furton remarked on pantherization efforts and on the renovations to the second and third floors, noting that landscaping improvements are in progress. He presented images of possible exterior and interior signage at FIU-CTS.

Trustees Board and Marc D. Sarnoff commended the progress at FIU-CTS.

3.3 Rankings Update

Provost Furton indicated that FIU is one of the top 100 public universities in the country, according to the latest *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, adding that the University improved 10 spots and is now ranked No. 95 among public universities. He presented an overview of other recent Top-50 rankings and described progress relative to the 20 strategic plan goals. At the request of Committee Chair Tovar, Provost Furton provided an update on the FIU College of Law's Bar passage rate, noting that the College's graduates earned an 89.3% passing rate on the most recent Bar exam and

that FIU has once again ranked as the top-performing Florida law school. Provost Furton indicated that FIU's international business program is ranked No. 2 in the nation for the second consecutive year and that this is the highest-ranked program of any university in Florida. He remarked that FIU Business has been ranked No. 1 globally for real estate research productivity by the *Journal of Real Estate Literature*.

4. New Business

No new business was raised.

5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

With no other business, Committee Chair Roger Tovar adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees Strategic Planning Committee on Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 11:21 AM.