



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2019**

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 Claudia Puig at 12:59 p.m. on Thursday, December 5, 2019 at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham Center Ballrooms.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted a roll call of the External Relations Committee members and verified a quorum. Present were Claudia Puig, *Chair*; Marc D. Sarnoff, *Vice Chair*; Jose J. Armas; Leonard Board; Gerald C. Grant, Jr.; Michael G. Joseph; and Rogelio Tovar.

Trustees Cesar L. Alvarez, Dean C. Colson, Natasha Lowell, Justo L. Pozo, Joerg Reinhold, and Sabrina L. Rosell, and University President Mark B. Rosenberg also were in attendance.

2. Approval of Minutes

Committee Chair Puig asked that the Committee approve the Minutes of the meeting held on April 18, 2019. A motion was made and unanimously passed to approve the Minutes of the External Relations Committee Meeting on Thursday, April 18, 2019.

3. Information/Discussion Items

3.1 FIU in DC Update

Committee Chair Puig asked Trustees to save the date on Wednesday, February 5, 2020 for the next FIU Day.

Vice President of Governmental Relations Michelle L. Palacio explained that the FIU in DC update will be deferred to the Committee's next regularly scheduled meeting. She introduced Professor and Director of the University's Institute of Environment Todd Crowl. Professor Crowl described the collaboration with FIU in DC as a critical component in the Institute's success.

VP Palacio welcomed FIU Alumni Association Board of Directors President Michael A. Hernandez and FIU Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors member T. Gene Prescott.

3.2 2020 Legislative Priorities

VP Palacio provided an overview of the University's 2020 legislative priorities. She explained that the Legislature recognized the wide discrepancy in FIU's per student and per degree funding and allocated \$15M in operational base funding during the 2019 legislative session. She discussed plans to work with the Florida Board of Governors in order to seek funding to raise the base allocation, and thus, reduce the funding gap between the University and the average State University System allocation. She indicated that FIU's requests include Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funding for the University's Engineering building and \$10M for the FIU Program of Distinction in Environmental Resilience as was reviewed by the Board of Trustees Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee at its earlier meeting.

3.3 Marketing and Public Relations Update

Senior Vice President of External Relations Sandra B. Gonzalez-Levy indicated that the FIU Marketing Task Force is working closely with the marketing firm 160over90 on the integrated marketing plan for the University. She introduced Mr. Ryan Brown, VP Client Services, and Mr. Brandon Shockley, Director of Research, of 160over90 and requested that they present the results of the brand research study and related next steps.

Mr. Brown delineated a process overview, indicating that the brand perception study has been completed and that over 100 stakeholders participated in in-depth on-campus immersion interviews. He noted that the firm is the final stages of developing the proprietary Brand Tracker that will measure brand performance throughout the year against various audiences, adding that the Tracker is a real-time dashboard that will help guide marketing strategy and measure results.

Mr. Shockley provided highlights from the brand research study, noting that over 1,800 stakeholders, ranging from students, vendors, partners, faculty and staff, alumni, and academic peers were surveyed. In terms of key research findings, he explained that a university's products are its people and that FIU's stakeholders look to the kinds of people associated with an institution to judge its quality. He added that FIU is recognized for its diversity, accessibility, and, most importantly, a positive trajectory and stated that the key challenge is not a lack of assets, but rather a lack of recognition of assets. He pointed out that University community-facing programs such as the Food Network & Cooking Channel South Beach Wine & Food Festival and NeighborhoodHelp have higher awareness than some of the academic programs. He stated that FIU has an opportunity to build a reputation around key programs: entrepreneurship, international business, and hospitality and that these programs align with regional themes of Miami, and trends in culture and business nationally, which creates a powerful messaging opportunity. In terms of notable research findings, he explained that prominent faculty and successful alumni are leading factors used to judge the academic reputation of a university and relating to key takeaways from academic peers and influencers, among peers, he further stated that awareness of many FIU programs remains low.

In terms of the initial focus of the marketing plan, Mr. Brown indicated that the first priority relates to peer reputation and that additional priorities include enhancing reputation and demonstrating positive impact across greater Miami and the State of Florida; bolstering pride across the extended FIU community; and educating, empowering, and equipping internal marketers and communicators. Relating to the brand rollout, he explained that brand guidelines will be developed in January and

that brand workshops will be conducted in the first quarter of 2020 to share the brand concept and guidelines to key stakeholders across FIU. He described brand essence and brand pillars, noting that the latter includes tone words that are adjustable based on the audience and introduced a video that demonstrates the power of the FIU story.

In response to Trustee Leonard Boord's inquiry regarding benchmarks for community program awareness, Mr. Mr. Shockley explained that these will fluctuate based on peer comparison and added that for the next survey range, targets for five percent increases are being set for certain areas.

4. New Business

No new business was raised.

5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

With no other business, Committee Chair Claudia Puig adjourned the meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees External Relations Committee on Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 1:27 p.m.

There were no Trustee requests.

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