



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2020
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

Board Chair Dean C. Colson convened the informational meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 8, 2020, via Zoom.

Board Chair Colson welcomed Trustees and University administrators participating via the virtual environment and explained that the University community and general public were accessing the meeting via the FIU webcast.

Board Chair Colson explained that attendance has not and will not be required at the Board's informational meetings relating to repopulating FIU campuses and regional locations and that a roll call is conducted in order to ensure that all participating Trustees are provided with an opportunity to ask questions.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo conducted roll call of the Florida International University Board of Trustees. Present were Dean C. Colson, *Board Chair*; Roger Tovar, *Board Vice Chair*; Cesar L. Alvarez; Leonard Boord (*joined after roll call*); Gerald C. Grant, Jr. (*joined after roll call*); Donna J. Hrinak; Natasha Lowell; Claudia Puig (*joined after roll call*); Joerg Reinhold; Marc D. Sarnoff; and Alexandra Valdes.

2. Public Appearances

There were no public appearances.

3. Discussion Item

3.1 Update on Repopulating FIU Campuses and Regional Academic Locations

University President Mark B. Rosenberg presented the draft FIU 2020-2021 Repopulation Plan. He commented on the priority to resume as much on-campus instruction as quickly as possible within a context of student, faculty and staff safety and well-being. He pointed out that the plan builds upon previous plans and discussions with the Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors. He indicated that University will continue to receive guidance on matters of strategy and resource allocation from the Board of Trustees, directly through the Board Chair. President Rosenberg remarked that the plan also reflects FIU's attention to guidelines and approaches from the Office of the Governor, the Board of Governors, local government, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). He mentioned that the safety, security, and minimized risk of exposure to the

university community will remain a top priority within the context of finding a way to repopulate and to resume as much on-campus instruction as quickly as possible.

President Rosenberg explained that student success continues to be a top priority and that FIU has taken intentional steps to ensure uninterrupted operations, and continued focus on the core academic and research mission. He explained that the University has initiated a gradual return of additional office and support staff effective October 5, 2020, adding that campuses are open and student services are available either face to face or remotely. President Rosenberg commented on the expectation that faculty will continue to meet student needs through the resumption of in-person office and advising hours, consistent with previous semesters. He mentioned the on-campus presence of students who are engaged in the research needed towards their degrees and consistent with their work responsibilities. He added that currently, at least 1,000 faculty, students, and laboratory personnel are working in laboratories, noting that over 200 are faculty.

In terms of the Spring Semester, President Rosenberg commented on the priority to ensure a high-quality campus-centric academic experience for each and every student and that FIU will aim for a return to prior normal semester offerings, specifically as in January 2020 when over 60% of courses were face to face. He added that some courses may continue to be taught remotely, in accordance with conditions and standards as they are evolving, and that the University will be mindful of health requirements in place to determine the exact number of students per class. President Rosenberg indicated that Spring semester registration will begin on November 3, 2020 and that classes will start on January 11, 2021. He mentioned that a full repopulation of on-campus housing is expected. He remarked that the University will ensure optimal room utilization for as many on-campus classes as possible, utilizing local, state, and federal guidelines to ensure a safe return to campus. He added that FIU will make decisions that will maximize on-campus presence while maintaining a safe campus environment. He stated that the University will continue to rely on Canvas for course content and assignments and that if abrupt changes are required in course delivery modalities, Canvas will facilitate a seamless transition.

President Rosenberg pointed out that personal responsibility will be a key premise of the University's efforts to maintain a healthy campus environment and that testing, tracing, and disinfection protocols will help support and maintain the campus' well-being. He explained that FIU will continue to mandate the use of face coverings on campus at all times, appropriate physical distancing, and hygiene. He indicated that the University will review optimal size for group activities and emphasize the priority of such activities being linked to student graduation and/or success. President Rosenberg commented that all members of the University community will be encouraged to timely receive their flu shots. He remarked that mental health initiatives will be redoubled as the Spring semester wears on, with special attention to ameliorating isolation and family domestic issue dynamics. He mentioned that constant communications will be sent to the University community with updates and reminders.

President Rosenberg commented on FIU's ability to provide rapid testing for members of the University community as part of efforts to maintain healthy and safe campus environments. He explained that testing is available at the FIU student clinic and/or the ambulatory clinic to anyone

experiencing symptoms or based on known contact with a positive case. He added that testing is also available at the county site immediately adjacent to FIU. President Rosenberg remarked that testing is available at the University's CLIA approved clinic and that said testing will be oriented initially to members of the FIU community who require repeated or rapid verification of their COVID-19 status. He pointed out that the current plan is for testing of 5% of the students in residences and 5% of the populations and researchers and students working in laboratories and that this will prevent large transmission outbreaks on campus. He noted that student athletes will be tested more frequently.

President Rosenberg commented that, over the course of the last several months, approximately 1,200 faculty members have received additional training in teaching using remote and online techniques.

Board Vice Chair Roger Tovar urged for the safe resumption of on-campus instruction. Trustee Cesar L. Alvarez commented on the need to rely on the University President to respond to the uncertainty and challenges at hand. Chair Colson remarked on frequent communication with President Rosenberg and commended the work of the University's leadership. Trustee Leonard Boord mentioned that, as the community continues to move forward, the University should take incremental strides in its approach to repopulate. Trustee Gerald C. Grant, Jr. concurred with the prior comments, also noting the University's student-centric approach to decision making.

Trustee Donna J. Hrinak commended FIU's medical professionals and urged a measured approach in terms of repopulation. In response to Trustee Hrinak's inquiry, President Rosenberg explained that 5% of the students in residences will be tested weekly for the foreseeable future. Trustee Natasha Lowell commended the University's mental health initiatives. Trustee Claudia Puig commended the University's leadership and medical professionals and also praised FIU's cautious repopulation approach. Trustee Joerg Reinhold also commended FIU's medical professionals. Trustee Marc D. Sarnoff commented on the recent report in the *Wall Street Journal* that suggests that there will be 130M deaths as a result of COVID-related shutdown and reiterated his support towards a robust repopulation. Trustee Alexandra Valdes remarked on a shift in student preference towards remote learning.

Board Chair Colson commented that an informational meeting will not be planned for the weeks of October 12 and 19, 2020 given that the Board and its Committees will be meeting on October 28, 2020.

4. New Business

No new business was raised.

5. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

With no other business, Board Chair Dean C. Colson adjourned the informational meeting of the Florida International University Board of Trustees on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 6:01 PM.

Dean C. Colson
Chair
FIU Board of Trustees

Mark B. Rosenberg
Corporate Secretary
FIU Board of Trustees

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