



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 3, 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, September 3, 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; Jose J. Armas; Gerald C. Grant, Jr.; Donna J. Hrinak; Natasha Lowell; Gene Prescott; Claudia Puig (*joined after roll call*); Joerg Reinhold; Marc D. Sarnoff; and Alexandra Valdes (*joined after roll call*).

**2. Public Appearances**

*There were no public appearances.*

**3. Discussion Item**

**3.1 Update on Repopulating FIU Campuses and Regional Academic Locations**

Assistant Vice President, Division of Operations and Safety; Director, Department of Emergency Management, Amy B. Aiken reported on the number of COVID-19 positive cases and mortalities at the national, state, and local levels. She remarked that all faculty, staff, and students must complete the Panthers Protecting Panthers (P3) app prior to arriving on campus, adding that the app will either give the user permission to come on campus or recommend they stay home, monitor symptoms or seek medical attention. She commented that between August 31 and September 2, 2020, 2,754 faculty and staff completed the P3 app and that all faculty, staff, and students are also required to complete the COVID-19 Safety Training, adding that to-date, 7,601 (or 64%) employees have completed the required training. She indicated that Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A.

Gimenez has issued an Executive Order extending the Declaration of the State of Emergency and that state of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis issued an Executive Order that extends the deadline for students graduating in the 2019-20 school year to earn the minimum qualifying SAT or ACT score to earn a Bright Futures scholarship until December 1, 2020.

Provost and Executive Vice President Kenneth G. Furton mentioned that the University of Iowa reported 500 new COVID-19 cases and, as a result, the majority of the undergraduate courses were moved online. He remarked that James Madison University, less than a week after classes started, announced its shift to primarily online instruction through the end of September in response to an accumulation of more than 500 COVID-19 cases. Provost Furton added that Northwestern University has barred most freshman and sophomores from living and learning on campus. He pointed out that a number of FIU students enrolled in graduate and professional programs returned to campus as of August 17, 2020 and that all undergraduate and graduate classes began on August 24, 2020. Provost Furton remarked that at the start of the fall semester, 26% of sections began in-person, 53% remote, and 21% online and that, in terms of the delayed on-campus start on September 14, 2020, 30% of sections, largely undergraduate, will be held in person, 47% remote, and 23% online. He indicated that over 12,000 undergraduate and graduate students are expected on campus on September 14, 2020, adding that approximately 500 additional students are expected on campus for the Fall B term. He commented on the upcoming fifth faculty townhall to discuss fall 2020 teaching.

Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Elizabeth M. Bejar explained that due to housing cancellations, occupancy dropped to 51% capacity. She stated that the University has 399 housing agreements in place for spring 2021, with an approximate projected housing occupancy of above 64%. She indicated that between August 31 and September 2, 2020, over 3,000 students completed the P3 app. She remarked that due to physical distancing parameters that have been established at the University's libraries, study spaces, which are available to students by reservation, were created. Sr. VP Bejar presented traffic and utilization data for fall 2020 compared, point-in-time, to fall 2019 of the student unions and wellness and recreation centers for the Modesto A. Maidique Campus and the Biscayne Bay Campus. She commented that over 29,000 (or 55%) of all students have completed the COVID-19 Safety Training. Vice Provost for Population Health and Well-Being Yolangel Hernandez-Suarez, MD, commented that certain answers to the P3 app questionnaire will prompt contact with the COVID Response Team. She remarked on COVID-19 positivity, isolation, and quarantine rates among the University's housing population.

CEO, FIU HealthCare Network; Associate Dean, Office of International Affairs; Associate Dean, Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Eneida Roldan, MD, commented on the COVID-19 testing site at the Tamiami Fairgrounds where, to-date, 55,661 Miami-Dade residents have been tested. She indicated that the positivity rate for the past seven days is trending downward, with a range from 8.3% - 14% and described areas within Miami-Dade County that experienced the highest positivity rates, namely, Hialeah, Miami Lakes, Sweetwater, and Little Havana/Miami. Dr. Roldan explained that while testing at the Tamiami site decreased to an average of 500 tests per day, current capacity allows for up to 1,000 tests daily. She stated that data provided by the Florida Department of Health (DOH) demonstrated a county-wide 5.3% positivity rate, and mentioned other downward trends,

specifically, hospitalizations and emergency room visits.

Dr. Roldan commented that the University has not implemented universal testing and described the University's testing strategy as a targeted approach consisting of prevention through education, monitoring transmission through the use of the P3 app, and screening and testing individuals that identify symptoms via the P3 app and those that have come into contact with COVID-positive patients. She remarked that University clinics are currently testing five days per week and working with commercial labs, which provide test results within 24-48 hours. She pointed out that the Tamiami testing site is currently testing seven days per week and working with Curative Labs, which provides most test results within 48-72 hours. In terms of the proposed and in-progress testing capabilities, she commented that the University is on track to open its own on-campus CLIA-certified lab by October 1, 2020.

In response to Board Vice Chair Roger Tovar, Provost Furton commented that the percentage of in-person classes on September 14, 2020 will largely remain unchanged throughout the remainder of the fall semester. Board Vice Chair Tovar remarked on the importance of clarifying that the positivity rates at the Tamiami site are not reflective of the positivity rates within the FIU community. In response to Board Vice Chair Tovar, Dr. Roldan confirmed that, at the direction of Governor DeSantis, the DOH will be severing all ties with Quest Diagnostics and that this action does not affect FIU's ability to partner with Quest Diagnostics.

Trustee Marc D. Sarnoff requested objective criteria relating to broader University repopulation. In response to Trustee Sarnoff's inquiry regarding Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) physical distancing guidelines and a possible shift towards the three feet physical distancing guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Roldan commented that FIU is still abiding by the six feet physical distancing guideline. Also responding to Trustee Sarnoff, Provost Furton confirmed that CDC guidelines limit the number of students allowed per classroom. In response to Trustee Joerg Reinhold, Provost Furton pointed out that the University is currently planning for the Spring semester. Trustee Claudia Puig urged a cautious approach that remains fluid and manages the current physical population prior to expanding to include more on-campus presence.

In response to Trustee Natasha Lowell, Dr. Roldan remarked that while the University clinics are currently not accepting walk-ins, COVID-19 testing is performed at an outdoor location five days per week. In response to Trustee Donna J. Hrinak, Dr. Hernandez-Suarez explained that the COVID-19 Response Team is comprised of five public health-trained epidemiologists specifically focused on contact-tracing to mitigate risks on FIU campuses. In response to Trustee Gerald C. Grant, Jr., Provost Furton remarked on the generally positive feedback from faculty and staff in terms of the virtual learning environment and Sr. VP Bejar added that synchronous remote learning has helped to maintain social connectedness.

Trustee Jose J. Armas requested specific criteria and/or indicators that would allow for broader repopulation, in addition to details related to action steps being taken and guidelines being followed. In terms of remote instruction, Trustee Armas requested student satisfaction surveys, and

commented that faculty surveys may also be beneficial. Trustee Alexandra Valdes remarked that Student Government is poised to ignite the conversation with the student population. Board Vice Chair Tovar concurred with Trustee Armas regarding the need for student surveys and urged caution in making swift decisions regarding the Spring semester.

Board Chair Colson commented that an informational meeting will not be planned for the week of September 7, 2020 given that the Board and its Committees will be meeting on September 9, 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, September 3, 2020 at 6:32 p.m.

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Dean C. Colson  
*Chair*  
*FIU Board of Trustees*

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Mark B. Rosenberg  
*Corporate Secretary*  
*FIU Board of Trustees*