



**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Board Chair Dean C. Colson, Board Vice Chair Roger Tovar, and Trustee Cesar L. Alvarez  
meeting with members of the University administration**

**August 17, 2020**

**1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks**

Board Chair Dean C. Colson convened a meeting with Board Vice Chair Roger Tovar and Trustee Cesar L. Alvarez at 2:02 pm on Monday, August 17, 2020 via Zoom.

General Counsel Carlos B. Castillo took roll of the Trustees in attendance, namely, Dean C. Colson, Board Chair; Roger Tovar, Board Vice Chair; and Cesar L. Alvarez.

Also present were the following: University President, Mark B. Rosenberg; Provost and Executive Vice President, Kenneth G. Furton; Senior Vice President of Administration and Chief Financial Officer, Kenneth A. Jessell; Senior Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs, Elizabeth M. Bejar; Senior Vice President, External Relations, Strategic Communications, and Marketing, Sandra B. Gonzalez-Levy; Vice President, Governmental Relations, Michelle L. Palacio; Senior Advisor to the President, Robert Donley; and General Counsel, Carlos B. Castillo.

**2. Discussion Item**

**2.1 Discussion on Strategic Planning**

Board Chair Colson commented on his vision for the Board's newly-formed Strategic Planning Committee, specifically that it will be a Committee focused on FIU's goal of achieving recognition as a Top-50 public university in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, concentrating on the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) performance-based funding metrics, in addition to the goals and objectives delineated in the university's strategic plan. He added that the Committee should also serve as the venue for discussions with the administration on future items of a substantive nature. He also remarked on possible overlap of duties and responsibilities with other Committees of the Board. In anticipation of the meeting, he pointed out that the following were shared: the university's strategic plan, FIU Accountability Plan, and the State University System 2025 Strategic Plan. Board Chair Colson recognized the significance of the recurring \$32M investment by the legislature and indicated that its purpose is to provide funding support to the university in its pursuit of achieving recognition as a Top-50 public university. Board Vice Chair Tovar commended the University's accomplishments and strides over the years.

As a follow-up to Chair Colson's comments, University President Mark B. Rosenberg also remarked on the possible overlap relating to the agenda items falling under the purview of the Academic

Policy and Student Affairs Committee and that of the newly created Strategic Planning Committee. He described the duties and responsibilities of each Committee, as specified in the Board's Bylaws. Chair Colson explained that the Chair of the Academic Policy and Student Affairs Committee, who also serves as a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, will be part of the conversations moving forward in order to work through any possible overlap issues.

Provost and Executive Vice President Kenneth G. Furton described the university's vision and pointed out that \$17M, when combined with the \$15M appropriated in 2019, will be invested to advance and complement the strategic plan goals. He indicated that the university improved from number 52 to Top-50 in Washington Monthly rankings and that FIU also improved from number 58 to Top-50 in Best Online Programs in *U.S. News & World Report*. He highlighted FIU's Preeminent and Emerging Preeminent Programs and the corresponding relationship with *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. In terms of measuring success, Provost Furton described the university's progress towards achieving the 2025 strategic plan goals. Board Vice Chair Tovar requested that the data presented by Provost Furton be expanded in order to include all BOG metrics and, where applicable, the assigned weighting factor by *U.S. News & World Report*. Provost Furton provided an overview of the top metrics, with the corresponding weighting factors, used by *U.S. News & World Report* to rank universities. Board Vice Chair Tovar suggested that the administration consider assigning accountability over each specific goal or number of goals and that progress is shared for the Board's review at every regularly scheduled meeting.

Substantive discussion ensued on strategically allocating resources that are focused on investments relative to BOG performance-based funding metrics and *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. Provost Furton pointed out that preliminary 2021 estimates demonstrate improvements over the prior year in all but two of the top *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. In response to Board Vice Chair Tovar's inquiry, President Rosenberg and Provost Furton remarked on various factors contributing to the improved six-year graduation rate. Board Vice Chair Tovar requested that the data presented by Provost Furton be expanded to include further detail on what is necessary in order to maintain and improve performance.

President Rosenberg commented on possible forthcoming modifications to the strategic plan, specifically, the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education, the future of employment, and the impacts to the community in addition to the resulting findings from the Equity Action Initiative and the university's marketing efforts. Trustee Cesar L. Alvarez remarked on the benefits of statistical data, namely, informed direction regarding investments that can directly correlate to improvements in the rankings.

### **3. New Business**

No new business was raised.

### **4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**

With no other business, Chair Dean C. Colson adjourned the meeting with Board Vice Chair Roger Tovar and Trustee Cesar L. Alvarez and members of the University Administration on Monday, August 17, 2020 at 3:24 pm.