

MINUTES  
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

December 19, 2024

*Video or audio archives of the meetings of the Board of Governors and its committees  
are accessible at:*

<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/12-19-24-florida-board-of-governors-meeting/>

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Ken Jones convened the meeting at 2:30 p.m., with the following Governors present: Governors Jones, Oliva, Brinkman, Diaz, Frost, Good, Mateer, and Phalin. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting

Chair Jones requested a motion to approve the Strategic Planning Committee meeting minutes from October 24, 2024. Governor Phalin moved to approve, Governor Frost seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. Strategic Plan Update

Chair Jones stated that the committee would get an update on the strategic plan and that the plan was not yet final and encouraged questions and discussion. He reminded the committee of the transparency of the process over the past nine months, with feedback from and input from students, faculty, university presidents, and Board members.

Chair Jones recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to provide an update on the strategic plan.

Ms. Sikes began with a summary of the strategic plan timeline. She mentioned that the Strategic Planning Committee has met six times since May 2024. She reported that since the October 2024 Board meeting, she and Mr. Troy Miller, Chief Data Officer in the Board of Governors' office, have met with several key stakeholder groups. They collected feedback from faculty, data administrators, Vice Presidents for Research, and Provosts across the State University System to gather input on the plan's objectives, goals, and metrics.

Ms. Sikes presented the proposed mission and vision. She provided a side-by-side comparison of the current and proposed statements and mentioned that minor changes have been made since the May 2024 meeting.

Ms. Sikes reported that she received feedback from Board members regarding whether the plan should include values. She stated that values reflect the System's core

principles and beliefs that guide its operations. She commented that values such as excellence, knowledge, and innovation are embedded in the current plan and have become our standard. Ms. Sikes noted that the values around integrity, access and affordability, and collaboration are all areas the Board has discussed over the last few years. She commented that accountability and transparency will be embedded under integrity. Ms. Sikes then explained that collaboration is an area the Steering Committee found to be an opportunity for the System to leverage. She elaborated that the Board would see the value of collaboration embedded throughout the plan.

Chair Jones encouraged the Board to share their thoughts and explained that staff and committee members discussed these terms at length. Noting that it is difficult to narrow down values that encapsulate the entire System, Chair Jones commented that he is confident they have a strong representation of what the Board wants to project as a System.

Governor Phalin addressed the value of modeling excellence. She asked if the term modeling excellence signifies that the System is providing an example to the rest of the world regarding System-wide excellence. Ms. Sikes concurred with that interpretation and clarified that the value of modeling excellence is intended to represent everything within the System, such as academics, research, and operations. Governor Lydecker asked if the notion of civic responsibility was contemplated in the values. Ms. Sikes noted that civic responsibility is reflected in the updated mission statement.

Ms. Sikes then reviewed the strategic priorities, metrics, and goals where applicable.

She started with the first priority, One SUS. She explained that since the last Board meeting, the priority of university areas of expertise has been merged into the One SUS area. She stated that the end goal for this objective is to have the universities advance the areas of expertise to propel their institution and the System.

Ms. Sikes explained that each metric slide is divided by existing and new metrics. She prefaced that, in some cases, staff have access to baseline data for certain metrics because these items have been tracked for years and have consistent reporting and definitions. However, for some new metrics, there is not consistent System-level data available, and those may need to be better defined and collected before establishing goals.

Ms. Sikes continued with the proposed metrics for the One SUS strategic priority. The priority would include current national rankings and goals based on the university's strategic plan goals. She noted that by 2030, the System would have eight universities in the top 100, which would be two-thirds of the System in the top 100.

Governor Silagy asked if the goal was to be in the top 100 of all universities or the top 100 public universities. Ms. Sikes clarified that the ranking referenced addresses public institutions, and the source is U.S. News & World Report.

Governor Levine commented that he is concerned that this metric may not be setting the University of South Florida up for elevated achievement. He asked if there could be consideration in setting those goals to a higher level. Governor Silagy commented that sights should be set on membership of the AAU as the ultimate benchmark. Ms. Sikes replied that AAU membership is a potential metric based on the current plans.

Ms. Sikes next presented metrics on the degrees awarded goal. Ms. Sikes mentioned that the Board's Office of Data Analytics spent time reviewing variables and potential outcomes, giving a range of 78,000 to 80,000 bachelor's degrees awarded. She stated that Board staff reviewed enrollment growth, population growth, and other factors that influence this number to provide the Board with a more data-driven recommendation.

Chair Lamb asked for all members to spend time with Ms. Sikes to review and unpack the analytics in the presented plan, allowing the Board to make informed decisions. He shared that Florida is growing, and the Board wants to see improved graduation rates and retention rates, which should correlate with generating outcomes faster.

Governor Silagy asked how the System compares regarding student cost and analysis of that cost without the state subsidizing. He also asked if an analysis had been completed on how the System would rank in various metrics without the generous support of the Governor and Florida Legislature. Ms. Sikes commented that Board staff would look into this.

Ms. Sikes presented the next strategic priority, Elevating Student Success. She reported that Board staff has extensive existing metrics and demonstrated success for the System in the ten years. She noted that in some cases, the report uses what is recommended in the university accountability plans, but in others, it is recommended for an elevated, more aspirational goal. Ms. Sikes proposed 70% as an aspirational goal for a four-year graduation rate for the System and stated that this would make the System competitive in the top three states nationally for four-year graduation rates. Ms. Sikes also mentioned that the Pell four-year graduation rate goal is recommended to be equivalent to the overall four-year graduation rate goal of 70%.

Ms. Sikes shared that the Steering Committee and Board's Task Force on Academic and Workforce Alignment mentioned the importance of undergraduate internships and experiential learning. She noted that this metric was also recommended by the Florida Council of 100.

Ms. Sikes recommended metrics on loans and Pell student outcomes to measure access and affordability objectives. Chair Jones commented that this is the right direction as students look at the return on investment.

Ms. Sikes presented the next priority, Operational Excellence. She mentioned this is a new strategy for the System and reported that no changes to the objectives have been made since the October 2024 meeting. She commented that the data around these proposed metrics is not collected at the System level. Ms. Sikes recommended a workgroup to develop consistent definitions and reporting. Governor Levine stated that

this can be used as a benchmark to measure the university's financial performance and efficiency. He asked that if the Board approves this strategy, it would be prudent to work with other systems to create a standard set of metrics. He shared that a comparison of financial metrics and core operations is an area that has been missing. Chair Jones concurred, adding that it is essential to benchmark the financial health of System institutions to successful companies in the commercial world.

Ms. Sikes presented the next strategy, World-Class Talent. She thanked Governor Phalin for organizing feedback from the faculty senate on this area. She shared that Board staff are reviewing potential data sources that track faculty recognitions and rankings. Ms. Sikes mentioned that this priority also includes that the System produces graduates that are world-class talent. Chair Jones elaborated that future conversations should address the broad range of markets and companies within those markets that can work with the System to achieve this goal.

Ms. Sikes moved to the last priority, Innovative Research and Economic Development. She mentioned that many existing metrics will remain, and the new metrics proposed will come from existing reports and data sources. Ms. Sikes explained that the new metrics will reflect research with business and industry and measure the economic impact of the System's research. She stated that the goal of the new metrics is to communicate what universities do in research commercialization.

Ms. Sikes reported that she would work with the Chancellor and Mr. Troy Miller, Chief Data Officer, to refine metrics and goals. She also acknowledged that the universities have been great partners, and that Board staff will continue to engage the universities on these metrics and goals.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

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Ken Jones, Chair

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Mandi Young,  
Director of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives