

MINUTES
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
VIA ZOOM
November 20, 2024

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<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/11-20-24-board-of-governors-meeting/>

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Oliva convened the meeting at 11:00 a.m. with the following Governors present: Edge, Levine, Lydecker, and Silagy. A quorum was established.

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting

Chair Oliva requested a motion to approve the March 26, 2024, meeting committee minutes. Governor Levine moved to approve, Governor Lydecker seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. 2024 Foreign Countries of Concern Report

Chair Oliva noted that following the 2023 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 840 was signed into law modifying section 288.860, Florida Statutes, requiring that the Board of Governors submit a report by December 1 to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House on partnerships, contracts, and agreements between state universities and principals in foreign countries of concern. Chair Oliva added that of the 140 reported engagements, 16 remain active as of this meeting, and 10 will be active beyond 2024. He thanked Dr. David Norton, Vice President for Research at the University of Florida, and Ms. Chelsey Clements, Chief Compliance Officer at the University of Florida, for working with him extensively through the process of reporting on these agreements. Chair Oliva recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to present an overview of the report.

Ms. Sikes stated that this is the first year universities have been required to submit this report on activity with foreign countries of concern. She noted that the report must include all agreements or contracts with principals in countries of concern and expiration dates. The activity captured by the report includes agreements, partnerships, or contracts in place prior to the 2023 legislation. She explained that any new agreements or partnerships with foreign principals in countries of concern must go through the new approval process outlined in Florida Statutes and Board of Governors Regulation 9.012.

Ms. Sikes stated that four universities reported a total of 140 engagements, of which 134 were with foreign principals based in China. Of the 140 engagements, 77 have been terminated, and 47 have expired. Ms. Sikes added that of the 16 active agreements or

contracts, 12 will expire by 2025, and the remaining four will expire between 2026 and 2035.

Chair Oliva recognized Dr. Norton to elaborate on the process implemented by the University of Florida to address agreements with foreign principals in countries of concern. Dr. Norton explained that potential contracts with principals in countries of concern are flagged and reviewed extensively. He added that the University of Florida has not yet pursued any new contracts that require such review.

Board Vice Chair Levine asked Dr. Norton about the extent to which the University of Florida's flagged agreements grant foreign principals access to university-licensed technology. Dr. Norton replied that the university's remaining agreements do not entail collaborating with foreign principals to develop new technologies and that the university has no concerns about technological information being shared. Chair Oliva reiterated that the remaining active university contracts were scrutinized, and no security concerns arose.

Governor Silagy asked if the wiring equipment purchased by Florida State University from a principal in China may be obtained through another supplier. Ms. Sikes noted that purchase orders with principals in countries of concern do not require Board approval, as the statute requires Board approval for agreements and partnerships. Mr. Robert Large, Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer for Florida State University, commented that the university is seeking new suppliers.

Chair Oliva requested a motion to approve the 2024 Foreign Countries of Concern Report. Governor Lydecker moved to approve, Governor Silagy seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board Chair Brian Lamb requested that Ms. Sikes provide an update in May or June of 2025 regarding the remaining contracts set to expire.

4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Having no further business, Chair Oliva adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

Jose Oliva, Chair

Vincent Scuteri,
Policy Associate