

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

January 30, 2025

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

<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/1-30-25-florida-board-of-governors-meeting/>

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Chair Ken Jones convened the meeting at 1:36 p.m., with the following Governors present: Jones, 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 December 19, 2024. Governor Diaz moved to approve, Governor Brinkman seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

3. Accreditation Update

Chair Jones recognized university presidents to provide updates on accreditation changes across the system.

Dr. Alexander Cartwright, President of the University of Central Florida, stated that the university has completed step two of the accreditation process with the Higher Learning Commission and has started step three. The university is preparing documents for the Higher Learning Commission as well as for the university's current accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The Higher Learning Commission is scheduled to conduct an on-campus site visit in June 2025.

Dr. Moez Limayem, President of the University of North Florida, stated that the United States Department of Education acknowledged the university's petition to switch accreditors, requested additional information, and was sent the requested information on October 29, 2024. Dr. Limayem added that the university is on track to submit the paperwork for its fifth-year review to its current accreditor.

Dr. Devin Stephenson, President of Florida Polytechnic University, reported that the university is on an expedited pathway toward accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. The Higher Learning Commission is currently conducting a preliminary review of the university that is expected to conclude in the next few months. The university expects an on-site review for initial accreditation as early as December 2025.

#### 4. Nursing Education in the State University System

Chair Jones recognized Ms. Emily Sikes, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to present an update regarding State University System nursing programs.

Ms. Sikes summarized the trends for pre-licensure nursing programs in the State University System of Florida. The System added 448 new student slots last year, a record high for nursing capacity. Ms. Sikes recognized the University of North Florida and the University of South Florida for adding more than 100 student slots each. She remarked that continued investment in nursing from Governor DeSantis and the Florida Legislature has helped the System's nursing education flourish.

Ms. Sikes reported that the System produced more than 1,900 graduates eligible to take the nursing licensure exam, a record high for the System and that those graduates passed the exam at a rate of 92%. Ms. Sikes recognized Florida International University and the University of North Florida for achieving the largest increases in pre-licensure nursing graduates across the System last year.

Ms. Sikes presented expenditures for the previous fiscal year's LINE and PIPELINE nursing programs. The System's top three LINE fund expenditure categories were student scholarships, simulation equipment, and faculty salaries. Ms. Sikes noted that these investments accounted for more than 200 additional students and 300 scholarships across the System. She added that the PIPELINE program has contributed to the recruitment and retention of faculty and support staff. Ms. Sikes emphasized the importance of these investments in nursing to address the state's critical workforce needs.

#### 5. Strategic Plan 2030

Chair Jones recognized Ms. Sikes to present an overview of the proposed System Strategic Plan for 2030.

Ms. Sikes introduced the new strategic plan with a video outlining the System's mission, vision, and values. She explained that university presidents, trustees, provosts, vice presidents for research, student affairs vice presidents, chief financial officers, faculty, students, and data teams all collaborated with the Board to create the new plan.

Ms. Sikes explained that the System's mission has been updated to better reflect the commitment to high-quality education, innovative research, and public service while advancing civic principles, fostering world-class talent, and propelling the state's economy forward. The System's vision statement was updated to reflect the goal of becoming the nation's premier public university system and delivering extraordinary impact around the world. Ms. Sikes presented the core values of the System. She explained that these values have been present in the work the System has done and continues to do; the values include integrity, modeling excellence, pursuing knowledge, access and affordability, collaboration, and transformative innovation.

Ms. Sikes provided an overview of five key priority areas from the new strategic plan: One SUS, Elevating Student Success, Operational Excellence, World-Class Talent, and Innovative Research and Economic Development.

Ms. Sikes presented the first priority in the new plan, One SUS. She emphasized the importance of coordination in securing partnerships with industry leaders, using technology to solve problems, maximizing operational excellence, and addressing challenges in Florida and globally. She explained that this priority area would focus on enhancing the reputation of the System and what sets the System apart in the market. Ms. Sikes added that each state university will elevate areas of expertise, and these areas will bolster the reputation of the System and Florida. Ms. Sikes commented that because of this area and this plan, national rankings will continue to improve by 2030.

Ms. Sikes presented the plan's second priority, Elevating Student Success. She noted that student success metrics are currently among the System's greatest strengths. She added that the System's reputation in student success will serve as a model for excellence in defining the national standard of success. She remarked that the System will continue to provide and promote access and social mobility for first-time-in-college and transfer students and ensure success for these students. She added that the System will recognize and elevate the key leverage points that propel students into high-quality careers and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Ms. Sikes outlined the proposed metrics and goals for student success. She mentioned that these metrics have served as the cornerstone of the System. With these new goals, the System will soar to new heights in four-year graduation rate and post-graduation outcomes. Ms. Sikes mentioned that the goal of a 70% four-year graduation rate for Pell students aligns with the plan's four-year graduation rate goal for first-time-in-college students. Ms. Sikes added that the Board devoted much time to the Programs of Strategic Emphasis update in 2023 to develop a list that aligns with the critical workforce needs of the state. The Board office will begin to receive data on the new list in the fall, and staff will bring that to the Board with more informed recommendations for goals in this area.

The plan's third priority, Operational Excellence, will aim to keep the System prepared to handle any financial cycle. This priority focuses on financial health, integrity, and optimization. Ms. Sikes stated that this area was evident in university strategic plans; therefore, it was critical to include it in the System's plan. She added that a workgroup will convene to solidify metrics, reporting procedures, and relevant definitions.

The plan's fourth priority, World-Class Talent, is a new priority that represents both faculty and graduates. This priority includes a heightened commitment to recruit and retain world-class faculty that will deliver nationally recognized academic programs that are responsive to the needs of business and industry, conduct research that solves problems critical for Florida, and drive innovation that pushes the state's economy to new heights. Additionally, the System aims to produce more world-class graduates who can secure employment at iconic companies. The Board will work to identify the top brands and companies across different sectors and launch initiatives promoting or

enhancing the relationships between these iconic companies and state universities. Ms. Sikes noted that this area is a game-changer for students, faculty, and the System's reputation. Regarding metrics and goals for this area, she stated that the Board office is working with the universities to leverage faculty data to provide rankings and awards by discipline.

Ms. Sikes introduced the plan's fifth priority, Innovative Research and Economic Development. She expressed enthusiasm about the System continuing its momentum in research into 2030 and positioning itself as the third-ranked System nationally, as the System is currently ranked fifth. Research commercialization will be expanded under this priority. The System will also prioritize partnering with businesses and industries to help them solve problems. Ms. Sikes noted that many of the metrics related to research and economic development are already tracked as a part of the System's research dashboard.

Ms. Sikes outlined new metrics for consideration that capture the System's progress in the proposed plan's key priority areas. She stated that she intended to work with the universities to continue developing definitions, approaches, and consistent reporting to track these new areas.

Ms. Sikes mentioned that there are metrics that could be useful as universities compare themselves to their peers. These are metrics that universities are most likely already using for comparison.

Ms. Sikes noted that the System will begin tracking its progress relative to other states on selected metrics. She clarified that if the System meets its goals in key comparative metrics, the Board will revisit those metrics and set more ambitious targets.

Ms. Sikes presented that Board staff is in the process of developing an implementation plan to provide additional details about some of the initiatives included in this plan.

Governor Brinkman asked how the new strategic plan would define "iconic companies" as part of the proposed metrics for assessing world-class talent. Chair Jones explained that a list of iconic companies was still under development. Board Chair Lamb added that the Board could consult third-party resources to establish a list of iconic companies.

Governor Bell Barnett proposed bolstering micro-credentialing programs to address workforce needs in the state more directly.

Board Chair Lamb emphasized the importance of elevating the System in Florida beyond other state university systems. He asked Ms. Sikes to elaborate on the stakeholders consulted during the strategic planning process. Ms. Sikes reiterated that the steering committee, university presidents, trustees, provosts, data staff, government relations staff, student affairs staff, members from the business community in Florida, vice presidents of research, faculty, and various other campus groups contributed to the proposed plan.

Chair Jones noted that the new strategic plan builds on the System's current strengths, such as graduation rates and student debt, while fostering greater collaboration to achieve excellence in new areas. He added that operational excellence and world-class faculty recruitment and retention are new priorities that will strengthen the System's contributions to the state of Florida.

Chair Jones requested a motion to adopt the System Strategic Plan for 2025-2030. Governor Diaz moved, Governor Phalin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

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Ken Jones, Chair

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Vincent Scuteri,  
Policy Associate