



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

**Board of Trustees
Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee
September 24, 2026
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Rick Cardenas, Chair of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m.

In addition to Chair Cardenas, Committee members present were Vice Chair Mark Filburn and Trustees Alan Florez, Jeffrey Kauffman, and Shivani Vakharia. Board of Trustees Chair Alex Martins, Vice Chair Bill Christy and Trustees Jeff Condello, Tony Massey, Thomas McNamara, and Jeff Vahle also joined the meeting.

MEETING MINUTES

Trustee Florez motioned to approve and Trustee Kauffman seconded. The Committee unanimously approved the June 10, 2026, meeting minutes.

REPORT

Provost Update (DISC-1)

Provost John Buckwalter presented an update on Academic Affairs, including an update on program-level achievements: the Rosen College of Hospitality Management is the top-ranked hospitality program in the nation, the College of Community Innovation and Education's Master of Emergency and Crisis Management program is the No. 1 in the nation for three consecutive years, and the College of Engineering and Computer Science's Transportation Science program ranks No. 2 in the nation.

The Provost also shared faculty and operational updates, and recognized UCF being named one of three national finalists for the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities' 2026 Excellence in Student Success Award.

Student Body President Report (DISC-2)

Trustee Vakharia presented on Student Government's priorities for the 2026-2027 academic year. The priorities focus on academic support initiatives and student life and wellness, including scholarships, post-undergrad exam reimbursements, promoting academic success coaching, a partnership with UCF Athletics to reward student body attendance at events, and digitizing UCF IDs for students.

Faculty Senate Chair Report (DISC-3)

Trustee Kauffman presented the Faculty Senate's priorities for the 2026-2027 academic year. He presented an overview of the Faculty Senate, including the mission, structure, and priorities for the academic year. Priorities for the Faculty Senate include: strengthening shared governance via partnership and advocacy, strengthening communication across campus, modernizing institutional systems and infrastructure, providing strong

mechanisms for student success and faculty support, and responding to changes in the federal and state higher education environment.

ACTION

At Chair Cardenas' request, Youndy Cook, Vice President and General Counsel, confirmed there were no disclosures of conflict of interest from the trustees.

Tenure with Hire (AESC-1)

Provost Buckwalter sought tenure approval for three highly qualified faculty members with proven track records and clear plans and trajectories for continued success at UCF. Hiring senior faculty enables the university to advance academic excellence rapidly.

Trustee Filburn motioned and Trustee Kauffman seconded. Tenure with hire for the three faculty members was unanimously recommended for approval.

Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report (AESC-2)

Dr. Timothy Letzring, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, presented the 2026 UCF Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report, required annually by Florida Statute 1004.085. He noted that UCF has been compliant for six straight years, with 97.8% adoption in Fall 2025 and 98.1% in Spring 2026. He also highlighted student savings initiatives, such as the Zero Textbook Cost courses and the Barnes & Noble First Day Program, which led to millions in student savings.

Trustee Filburn motioned and Trustee Florez seconded. The 2026 Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report was unanimously recommended for approval.

Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee Charter (AESC-3)

Carmen Jarquin, Director for Board Relations, presented the updates to the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee charter. The updates accounted for organizational structure updates. The charter is reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

Trustee Florez motioned and Trustee Kauffman seconded. The updates to the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee charter were unanimously recommended for approval.

INFORMATION

Three information items were included in the Committee's meeting materials: 1) Work Plan Review (INFO-1) and 2) Strategic Metrics Update (INFO-2), and 2026-2027 UCF Anticipated Academic Degree Programs Updated List (INFO-3). Trustees were instructed to direct any questions on these items to the Board Office.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cardenas adjourned the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee meeting of September 24, 2026, at 2:30 p.m.

Reviewed by: _____
Rick Cardenas
Chair, Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

Date

Submitted by: _____
Michael A. Kilbride
Associate Corporate Secretary

Date

DRAFT