



# Board of Trustees

**Minutes  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
University of Central Florida  
September 23, 2021**

Chair Alex Martins called the Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

He reminded the Board that the meeting was covered by the Florida Sunshine Law and that the public and press were invited to attend.

Karen Monteleone, Assistant Vice President for Board Relations, called the roll and determined a quorum was present.

The following board members attended the meeting in person: Chair Alex Martins, Vice Chair Harold Mills and Trustees Tiffany Altizer, Bill Christy, Joseph Conte, Meg Hall, Joseph Harrington, Caryl McAlpin, John Miklos, Michael Okaty and Beverly Seay.

Trustees Jeff Condello and Danny Gaekwad attended the meeting virtually.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was one request for public comment. Terry Walsh commented on transfer students and undergraduates.

## **MINUTES**

Martins called for approval of the meeting minutes of the August 19, 2021 meeting. Mills moved to approve the minutes with McAlpin providing the second. The motion passed.

## **REMARKS**

Martins recognized former Trustee John Sprouls for his outstanding service and commitment to the Board. He commended President Cartwright for the strategic focus on the university's \$40 million gift from MacKenzie Scott and Dan Jewett.

Martins outlined the topics from the last Board of Governors' (BOG) meeting that he would like the Board to focus on for the upcoming year:

- Inclusive Excellence and Civil Discourse in the State University System (SUS), which will be further discussed in today's agenda.
- The need for collaboration between the state universities and industry. He said that in a future meeting, the Board will conduct an industry panel discussion about the needs of the local economy.
- Commitment to address deferred maintenance issues within the SUS, noting that the university will continue to work closely with the BOG to identify sources of revenue and to educate state legislators on this topic.
- Student highlight presentation, which will be incorporated into the Board's agenda

beginning with the next meeting.

- Focus on performance metrics, a topic that requires regular discussion at Board meetings.

He concluded his remarks by stressing the importance of the university's alignment with the BOG and reiterating the transformative event of the university's admission into the Big 12 Conference, a move that will benefit the university's entire student population and contribute to the university's goal of becoming a top metropolitan research university.

He recognized President Alexander Cartwright for his President's Update.

## President's Update

Cartwright's update highlighted:

- Recognition of faculty and staff who helped to navigate a return to more normal fall operations
- Participation in traditions of opening a new semester and increased opportunities for face-to-face interaction with students, faculty and staff
- UCF continues to monitor COVID-19 numbers on campus
- U.S. News & World Report rankings of note:
  - 67 for public institutions – up 10 from last year
  - 148 for all colleges and universities – up 12 from last year
  - 15 for most innovative – 4th year in the top 20, first in Florida
  - 51 for top performers on social mobility
  - UCF is one of only three universities nationally to climb in the overall rankings for each of the past five years
- Big 12 Conference invitation, noting that he will keep the Board informed of the conference transition process
- Hispanic Heritage Month:
  - Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Week Forum
  - UCF is one of three Hispanic-Serving Institutions in Florida's State University System and one of only 16 Hispanic-Serving Research Institutions across the country
  - UCF's first HSI federal grant - The National Science Foundation (NSF) grant of more than \$1.8 million through its Improving Undergraduate STEM Education program to support the success of Latino and other underrepresented students pursuing a major within STEM fields.
- Monthly Student Dinner Series, an opportunity to connect and hear from students regarding their campus experiences.
- Leadership Updates:
  - Welcomed Andrea Guzmán, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Jonathan Varnell, Vice President for Facilities and Business Operations
  - Searches to be completed include Senior Vice President for Advancement and External Affairs; Senior Vice President for Student Success; and Vice President and General Counsel



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- Recognized Paul Sohl, President of the Florida High Tech Corridor Council, on their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, noting their strategic partnership with UCF, USF and UF.
  - Sohl acknowledged his team was present at the meeting and provided a Florida High Tech Corridor Council update.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Martins called on Youndy Cook, Interim Vice President and General Counsel, to read any disclosures of conflict of interest from the trustees. There were no disclosures.

## **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Seay, Chair of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, reported highlights from the committee meeting held on September 22, 2021.

AES-1                      2021 SUS Textbook and Instructional Material Affordability Annual Report

Seay moved to approve AES-1 with McAlpin providing the second. The motion passed.

## **AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Christy, Chair of the Audit and Compliance Committee, reported highlights from the committee meeting held on August 24, 2021.

AUD-1                      University of Central Florida 2021 Florida Equity Report

Christy moved to approve AUD-1 with Seay providing the second. The motion passed.

Mills acknowledged UCF's diverse student population, commenting on the work that needs to be done to reflect that same diversity in UCF's faculty, staff, administration and the Board, which he believes is necessary for the Board to deliver a better product to students. Martins concurred and referenced the discussion during the Audit and Compliance Committee, noting that the Equity Report only covers certain categories, and the university needs to find and ensure ways to track that it does reflect the university's student body and there is a diverse approach to operations. Christy said the Committee had a discussion on graduation rates and tasked staff with determining why there were reductions in certain areas.

AUD-2                      Five-Year External Program Review of UCF's Compliance Program

Christy moved to approve AUD-2 with Conte providing the second.

Harrington asked to move the report back to Committee since faculty were not interviewed:

- Rhonda Bishop, Vice President for Compliance and Risk, clarified the external



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review process.

- Mills asked how often the review needs to be conducted. Bishop confirmed that the review needs to be conducted every 5 years, per BOG Regulation 4.003.
- Martins said he was comfortable with the process.
- Harrington agreed to move forward with the understanding that the faculty would be included going forward, and Christy agreed with this approach.

The motion passed.

## **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mills, Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, reported highlights from the committee meeting held on September 22, 2021.

### **BUD-1                      2021-22 Carryforward Spending Plan**

Mills moved to approve BUD-1 which allows management to amend the plan to include \$11.8 million for critical IT infrastructure prior to submission to the Board of Governors. Christy provided the second. The motion passed.

### **BUD-2                      2021-22 Fixed Capital Outlay Budget**

Mills moved to approve BUD-2 with Harrington providing the second. The motion passed.

## **FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REPORT**

McAlpin, Chair of the Facilities and Infrastructure Committee, reported highlights from the committee meeting held on September 22, 2021.

McAlpin reported that FAC-1 and FAC-2 were unanimously approved by the committee and placed on the Board's consent agenda.

## **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Okaty, Chair of the Governance Committee, reported highlights from the committee meeting held on September 22, 2021.

Okaty reported that GOV-1 through GOV-9 were unanimously approved by the committee and placed on the Board's consent agenda.

## **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Conte, Chair of the Strategic Partnerships and Advancement Committee, reported highlights from the committee meeting held on September 22, 2021.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

McAlpin moved to approve the consent agenda with Harrington providing the second. The motion passed.

## DISCUSSION

### DISC -1 Inclusive Excellence and Civil Discourse at UCF

Martins said that in addition to the BOG's initiative on Civil Discourse that was previously mentioned, a role of the Board is to understand the university's policies on freedom of speech, and the measures in place at the university to encourage freedom of expression. He recognized Cartwright to introduce this topic.

Cartwright's introduction highlighted:

- The university's diversity of background and experience; thought and religion; beliefs and ideals brought together make the university community better.
- The importance of the university's campuses to be places where any topic can be discussed, the learning that occurs from these discussions and the ability to disagree respectfully.
- A campus culture focused on inclusive excellence, with compassion at its core, will build an environment that will enable the university's goal to become the world's leading metropolitan research university.
- The BOG's directive of tasking the BOG Strategic Planning Committee with the Civil Discourse initiative.

Cartwright welcomed presenters Michael Johnson, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Youndy Cook, Interim Vice President and General Counsel; Adrienne Frame, Interim Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Services; and Andrea Guzmán, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, to address the Board and be available for questions.

Their presentation highlighted:

- Legal Overview
  - U.S. and Florida Constitutional guarantees; key provisions of the Campus Free Expression Act; House Bill 233; and the university's current policies and practices regarding freedom of expression.
- Academic Freedom
  - Focused on the relationship of academic freedom and freedom of speech.
- Student Awareness and Education
  - How the university educates students about free speech and encourages free speech.

The trustees had the following comments:

- Mills asked if the university was following the Supreme Court precedent on First Amendment limitations, and Cook confirmed that the university was. Mills asked for data around incidents where the university shielded free speech or free expression from students. Cook clarified that to her knowledge no such data exists since the

university supports free speech across campus, including before the adoption of the Campus Free Expression Act. Mills clarified with Cook that bullying (harmful behavior) is included in the university's Student Conduct Regulations, which was confirmed.

- Harrington recognized the university's role in teaching the legal and social limitations of speech, including external limits on student behavior, noting that a university is a unique environment as opposed to the rest of society.
- Cartwright reinforced the university's commitment for all to feel welcome and supported.
- Martins asked Seay, as Chair of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, to keep regular dialogue with the Provost and Dr. Frame on this topic and bring updates or concerns to the Board through the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, as necessary.
- Harrington said the Faculty Senate recently appointed a committee to sponsor a series of university debates, with the intent to debate difficult issues, but also demonstrate and model that there can be disagreement while still remaining good friends.

## WORKING LUNCH

### DISC -2 University Decision-Making and Shared Governance

Martins recognized Provost Johnson to address the Board.

The presentation highlighted:

- Benefits of Shared Governance
- Roles in Shared Governance
- Examples of how Shared Governance works at UCF:
  - Course Content and Curriculum
  - Academic Policies
  - New Degree Programs
  - Colleges and Department Budgets
  - Hiring Faculty
  - Evaluating Faculty
  - Strategic Planning

The trustees had the following comments:

- Martins inquired about means other than advisory boards for gaining industry input in developing content and curriculum. Johnson said the most effective paths are advisory boards and informal conversations.
- Mills asked what percentage of the university's faculty serve as paid consultants. Johnson said he is not sure this is captured well since there is a strong disciplinary difference between colleges, noting industry input can be obtained through engineering and science research contracts and grants while business faculty tend to gain that input through consulting.
- Martins asked where the student falls in the context of course content and

curriculum, and how the university creates internship opportunities that prepare students for the workforce. Johnson said this is discipline dependent – professional disciplines do it well, but there is an opportunity to strengthen industry ties in non-professional disciplines.

- Cartwright followed up on Chair Martins' question, acknowledging that students are at the center of the course content and curriculum model. He further acknowledged that students become alumni working in industry, and they can have a big impact on the university's programs. To become a model that includes a circle of input between faculty, industry, leadership, and with students at the center, the university must think differently about how it can leverage input from each group.
- Harrington said this is also an opportunity for advancement, noting interested corporations can sponsor a course, fund a teaching lab or endow a professorship.
- Seay said marketing is needed to educate industries on the university's 'Handshake' system for hiring students.
- Christy noted a joint program of hospitality management and the arts is a highly sought-after joint degree that hospitality industries would support since it could help with their 50 percent first-year attrition rate. He stressed that the university needs to move on these opportunities — aggressively.
- Cartwright said that he and the Provost have been discussing industry clusters and how to bring in that expertise as a consortium in different areas.
- Mills cautioned that accountability and responsibility for the development of strategic partnerships must be assigned. Cartwright said the role of Senior Vice President for External Affairs and Advancement was expanded to include this responsibility. Mills suggested that each university department head should consider monitoring strategic partnerships as part of their objectives.
- Conte said the university should maintain and leverage current relationships and strategic partnerships and these can be studied as the university considers new partnerships.
- Okaty asked for a focus on a streamlined and easy process for community partners to find opportunities for mentorship, to find graduates to hire or to offer internships.
- Altizer said the College of Business has unique programs like The EXCHANGE for industry participation, but these programs need to be better marketed.
- Mills said the university should not forget that it can actively drive performance and improve its performance-based funding metrics, in turn increasing revenue. Johnson clarified that the state is not putting any new money in performance funding, and the university must perform well to not lose performance-based funding dollars.
- Hall commented that Student Government is advocating to publicize Student Perception of Instruction reports, recognizing that the rating scale is not always extremely accurate. She went on to say that making course design information available would be helpful so that all different types of learners can make the best choice when enrolling. She suggested offering a more reliable alternative to "Rate My Professor" that is focused on course design as opposed to personal opinion would be beneficial to students when enrolling in classes.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**



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Martins made several announcements regarding upcoming meetings.

## NEW BUSINESS


There was no new business to come before the Board.

## ADJOURNMENT

Martins adjourned the board meeting at 12:47 p.m.

Reviewed by:   
Alex Martins, Chair, UCF Board of Trustees

Date: 11.18.21

Respectfully submitted:   
Mike Kilbride, Associate Corporate Secretary

Date: 11/22/21