



Board of Trustees

**Board of Trustees
Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee
February 22, 2022
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Beverly Seay, chair of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:55 a.m.

Committee members present were Trustees Tiffany Altizer, committee Vice-Chair Joseph Conte, Meg Hall, Joseph Harrington, and Caryl McAlpin. Board of Trustees' Chair Alex Martins, Vice-Chair Harold Mills, William Christy, and Michael Okaty also attended.

MEETING MINUTES

Trustee Tiffany Altizer motioned to approve, and Vice-Chair Conte seconded. The Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes of November 16, 2021.

REPORTS

Provost Update (DISC-1)

In his provost update, Provost Michael Johnson provided details on the following topics:

Rankings; Accolades; Spring Operations/COVID-19; and the President's 2021-22 Strategic Investment Program Awards

Rankings

UCF achieved a Top 10 national ranking for the first time among *U.S. News and World Report's* Best Online Bachelor's Programs, ranking seventh and tied with Ohio State and University of Arizona. UCF also ranked top 10 in other programs, including Psychology and Restaurant and Foodservice Management, and Best Online Bachelor's Programs for Veterans. Rising in rankings also were master's programs in Criminal Justice, Digital Forensics, Nursing, and Education. For the first time, UCF ranked among the Best Online master's in engineering Programs.

Johnson credited the latest online rankings to the many faculty members who worked hard to provide quality online courses, with support from The Center for Distributed Learning.

Accolades

Student Christopher Clifford, who graduated in December with a bachelor's in electrical engineering, has become UCF's first student to earn a Gates Cambridge Scholarship, one of the world's most competitive and prestigious scholarships. Approximately 6,000 students apply annually. Of the 80 scholarships granted globally, only about 25 are awarded to students in the United States. The scholarship will enable Clifford to attend Cambridge University in England.

Provost Johnson acknowledged his recent appointment of Dr. Ross Wolf as associate provost for UCF Downtown. Johnson also highlighted the dedication ceremony of UCF Downtown, which COVID-19 delayed, indicating that the campus is an opportunity and a commitment for UCF to tie strongly into downtown communities.

COVID-19

Johnson reported that UCF began the spring semester successfully, despite the surge of the Omicron variant. He noted COVID cases have been dropping rapidly in Florida and at UCF.

2021-22 Strategic Investment Program

Recipients of the Academic Excellence and Student Success fund awards from the UCF Strategic Investment Program will be announced soon. President Alexander N. Cartwright made the investment program possible by reallocating funds from administrative units and colleges. Projects for the third fund of the program, Jump Start, were announced in October. The investment program received 160 proposals for funding from faculty and staff. The proposals were evaluated for impact and return on investment by review committees, with final decisions made by the president and provost.

Johnson highlighted the six areas of investment: Infectious Disease and Tourism Health; Digital Twin; Space Education and Industrialization; Zero-Carbon Energy Economy; Artificial Intelligence; and Next-Generation Computing Hardware.

UCF expects a substantial impact from these investments.

In closing his report, the provost encouraged attendance at two upcoming in-person events: Founder's Day on April 6, 2022, and UCF Celebrates the Arts, April 5 through April 16, 2022.

ACTION

Conferral of Degrees (AESC-1)

Provost Johnson submitted for approval the conferral of degrees for spring 2022. UCF expects to award approximately 8,700 degrees during commencement ceremonies on May 6 and 7. This semester's ceremonies will span two days instead of three, with three sessions each day to allow for better attendance by family and friends. All ceremonies will be live-streamed for those unable to attend in person.

Trustee Harrington motioned to approve, and Vice-Chair Conte seconded. The committee unanimously approved the conferral of degrees.

Request for a New Degree Program – M.S. in Event Leadership (AESC-2)

Dr. Timothy Letzring, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, presented a proposal for committee approval of a new Master of Science degree in Event Leadership from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. This degree program will address the event industry marketplace, which is strong industry locally, nationally, and globally. The graduates of this program will be in high demand as they acquire the leadership skills sought by an industry that continues to evolve and grow across multiple sectors.

Chair Martins commented on his meeting with Dean Youcheng Wang and the Rosen College of Hospitality Management team. They discussed the Master of Science in Event Leadership degree program during the visit and addressed the growth of events in hospitality management. Chair Martins was pleased with the information he received and stated that this would be a strong program.

Trustee McAlpin stated that the program was perfect for workforce alignment.

Trustee Altizer motioned to approve, and Trustee McAlpin seconded. The committee unanimously approved the request for this new degree program.

DISCUSSION

Legislative Budget Request (DISC-2)

Provost Michael Johnson described the submission process for Legislative Budget Requests (LBRs). He stated that the requests are an opportunity to explain the benefit of certain public investments if supported by the Legislature and governor.

Johnson advised that the goal of this cycle is to develop LBRs that align with the university's strategic plan and describe potential public investments that could benefit student success or strengthen critical areas of economic value. He said LBRs are due to the Board of Governors in the summer following approval by the UCF Board of Trustees.

Accountability Plan Review (DISC-3)

Dr. Paige Borden, Chief Analytics Officer, facilitated this discussion highlighting various segments of the UCF Accountability Plan.

This third-round discussion is related to student success metrics, data, and goals that target student progression and graduation rates. Dr. Borden began by sharing information presented to the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) on the changing make-up of the nation's undergraduate student body. This presentation focused on trends in UCF's student populations.

Below are trends and goals from the presentation that relate to the Accountability Plan:

- **Retention Rate:**
- Currently at 92%, with an aspirational goal of 93% by 2025.
- **Graduation Rate:**
- Currently at 47%, with an aspirational goal of 65% by 2025.
- **Associate in Arts (A.A.) Graduation Rate:**
- Currently at 34%, with an aspirational goal of 50% by 2025.
- **Pell Recipient Graduation Rate:**
- These students graduate at a 1.7 percentage point lower rate than the overall graduation rate.
- **Black/African American Graduation Rate:**
- UCF's Black/African American students graduate at a 0.9 percentage point higher rate than white students.
- **Hispanic Graduation Rate:**
- UCF's Hispanic students graduate at a 0.9 percentage point lower rate than white students.

Chair Seay indicated the importance of setting these goals high so UCF can position itself to achieve them.

Student Success (Academic Achievements and Student Well Being) (DISC-4)

Dr. Adrienne Frame, Interim Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Services, and Dr. Theodora Berry, Vice Provost for Student Learning and Academic Success and Dean, College of Undergraduate Studies, provided an update of initiatives designed to enhance all areas of student success.

Dr. Frame presented on the Well Being Curriculum in Student Development and Enrollment Services, which aims to create well-rounded and culturally conscious students through five pillars: Purpose, Resilience, Engagement, Harm Reduction, and Financial Literacy. The division is also making progress on a career and experiential learning module. There is a link in the My Florida Future Dashboard, a college and career planning tool, to the UCF Admissions website.

Dr. Berry presented on efforts underway and planned to address retention, persistence and significant readiness, progression and graduation, and post-graduation success.

Newer efforts include:

- PeerKnights Program: Helps students refine their academic and personal goals.
- Transfer Center: Serves as a hub for transfer student engagement.
- Success Pathways: Storytelling to outline required courses and academic milestones aligned with UCF majors.
- Life Coaches: Members of the Learning Institute for Elders at UCF (LIFE) serve as mentors for UCF juniors and seniors.

Initiatives starting or being enhanced within the next few months:

- A.I. Chatbot for Advising: Will enable access to professional advising information, which students could access when convenient.
- Cross-Training: Promote cross-training and coordinating efforts for Success Coaches and Advisors working with students preparing to transfer to UCF

- Course Alignment: Aligning state career readiness courses with major career readiness courses.
- Readiness Program: Facilitates a unified graduate school readiness program.
- Course Availability: Expanding the critical course availability to weekends for students and high-impact practice programs

The university also plans to explore policy changes that restrict significant changes after a certain number of credit hours, instituting a permanent Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) policy and a 90-semester credit hour graduation requirement.

Drs. Frame and Berry explained the new opportunities and initiatives promise more rapid gains in student success efforts.

Trustee Altizer asked the group what resources were needed to accomplish the presented goals? The Office of the Provost has agreed to produce the resource requirements before the next Board of Trustees Strategic Planning meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

N/A

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Seay adjourned the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee meeting of February 22, 2022, at 12:32 p.m.

Reviewed by: 
 Beverly Seay
 Chair, Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

6/2/22
 Date

Submitted by: 
 Mike Kilbride
 Associate Corporate Secretary

6/2/22
 Date