



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Approved 11/07/24

# Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2024  
1:00 – 2:15 P

Florida Polytechnic University  
Barnett Applied Research Center (BARC)  
and Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Sidney Theis called the Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting to order at 11:33 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Kristen Wharton called the roll: Committee Chair Sidney Theis, Trustee Christos Tsetsekas, Trustee Brad Towle, Trustee Dorian Abbot, and Trustee Lyn Stanfield were present (Quorum)

Committee members not present: N/A

Other Trustees Present: Board Chair Beth Kigel, Board Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio, Trustee Ilya Shapiro, Trustee Cliff Otto, Trustee Patrick Hagen

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, Interim Provost Brad Thiessen, Dr. Allen Bottorff, David Fugett, Kathy Bowman, David Blanton, Mike Dieckmann, Kevin Calkins, Kristen Wharton, and Melaine Schmiz

III. Public Comment

There were no requests received for public comment.

IV. Approval of the May 29, 2024, Minutes

**Trustee Brad Towle motioned to approve the Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes of May 29, 2024. Trustee Christos Tsetsekas seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

V. Academic and Student Affairs Committee Charter

Committee Chair Theis explained the Committee Charter is reviewed every two years to ensure that it accurately reflects the committee's responsibilities. He opened the floor for comments, however there were no questions or comments.

**Trustee Christos Tsetsekas motioned to recommend approval of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee Charter to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Brad Towle seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

VI. 2024-2026 Academic and Student Affairs Committee Work Plan

Committee Chair Theis stated that the Committee's Work Plan for 2024-2026 has been updated to ensure it accurately reflects the work done in quarterly committee meetings. He opened the floor for comments, however there were no questions or comments.

**Trustee Christos Tsetsekas motioned to recommend approval of the 2024-2026 Academic and Student Affairs Committee Work Plan. Trustee Brad Towle seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

VII. Academic and Student Affairs Reports

A. Interim Provost's Report

Interim Provost Brad Thiessen began his report by sharing current enrollment numbers. As of September 6, 2024, the student body enrollment is 1,773 which represents a 10% year-over-year growth. On-campus housing is at 85% capacity across the three residence halls. He also shared an overview of orientation weekend for new students.

Trustee Cliff Otto stated his concern at the soon-coming need for additional residential housing. Dr. Allen Bottorff, vice president and CFO, reviewed several housing options that have been considered over the past few years and stated that staff is currently discussing the best option for the University.

Provost Thiessen then covered several topics including students, faculty, curriculum, and compliance. He presented statistics on Florida Poly's student retention, Performance Based Funding (PBF) metrics, the Phoenix Rising summer program for incoming students, and math placement exams. Trustee Patrick Hagen inquired if there is a standard math exam when a student first applies to Florida Poly. Trustee Hagen also asked if the Institution is considering fallback programs for students who do not succeed in advanced math. Dr. Stephenson responded that the University must research and consider programs that will help such students succeed at Florida Poly.

Trustee Dorian Abbot inquired if staff could identify the predictors of what makes a student successful or not in advanced math. He is willing to develop a machine learning/AI model to assist with this determination. Provost Thiessen responded he will contact Trustee Abbot directly to discuss.

Board Chair Beth Kigel inquired if the University is developing a comprehensive retention plan. Provost Thiessen replied in the affirmative, stating staff and faculty are also developing a plan to address the graduation rate by helping students graduate in four years.

Provost Thiessen noted that 95 full-time faculty participated in faculty welcome week in August. He reviewed strategies for improving faculty retention. Trustee Abbot asked if the

University obtains written exit surveys as he believes this data will help the Institution devise a strategy.

Regarding curriculum, Provost Thiessen reviewed existing programs within the undergraduate and graduate programs that will be enhanced. The University needs to add new programs and develop pathways for student success with their curriculum. He recommended better communication on the University's programs and ensure there are "fun" projects included in freshman year. Since he arrived at Florida Poly, he has received and is investigating 30 new programs ideas brought by faculty. He is also researching online delivery options.

Lastly, Provost Thiessen provided an update on the status of the University's request to utilize the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for accreditation and announced that ABET will conduct a site visit in October.

**B. Annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report**

Provost Thiessen reviewed the reason and purpose behind this report. The University is at 100% compliance this year.

**Trustee Lyn Stanfield motioned to recommend approval of the 2024 Annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability Report to the Board of Trustees, following the BOG template. Trustee Christos Tsetsekas seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

**C. Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)**

David Fugett, vice president and general counsel, explained the process for reviewing the full Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) every three years with Florida Poly's chapter of the United Faculty of Florida. He reviewed several of the key articles that were revised. He stated that the process was conducted professionally and culminated with a unanimous ratification of the new CBA by the faculty.

**Trustee Brad Towle motioned to recommend to the Board of Trustees ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Florida Polytechnic University and the United Faculty of Florida (UFF) for 2024-2027. Trustee Christos Tsetsekas seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

**VIII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristen J. Wharton  
Corporate Secretary