# MINUTES

## Trustees Present:

Kevin Hyde (Chair), Sharon Wamble-King (Vice Chair), John Aloszka, Tom Bryan, Douglas Burnett, Jill Davis, Annie Eagan, David Fenner, Wilfredo Gonzalez, Stephen Joost, Paul McElroy, Nik Patel

## Trustees Absent (Excused):

Adam Hollingsworth

After the conclusion of the 2020 Board elections, Chair Hyde continued with the Workshop, welcoming new Trustees Jill Davis and Nik Patel. He then distributed Trustee Committee assignments for 2020. As this was Vice President Shari Shuman’s last Board meeting before her retirement, Chair Hyde and Trustee McElroy thanked Vice President Shari Shuman for her more than 16 years of leadership and service to the University.

Chair Hyde turned to the consent agenda and asked if there were any questions or comments on items in the consent agenda. There being no questions or comments from the Board on the agenda, Chair Hyde asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Trustee Egan made a MOTION to approve the consent agenda, and Trustee Bryan SECONDED. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Chair Hyde reminded the Board that in the October 17, 2019 Board meeting, it was discussed that Dr. Terrence (Terry) Curran, Associate Vice President of Enrollment, would provide the Board with an update on student enrollment at today’s meeting. (He also noted that Dr. Curran will provide an update on financial aid and One-Stop Student Services at a future meeting.)

Dr. Curran began his update with an emphasis that it is important for UNF to both review who its competitors are and with whom the University can build collaborative relationships. He acknowledged that the draft strategic plan that UNF will present to the Florida Board of Governors includes UNF’s core values (of integrity, respect, accountability and innovation) and its goals, and noted the importance of continuing to articulate those values and goals to current and potential students.

As UNF works toward its goal of enrolling a student body of 20,000 students by 2025, Dr. Curran noted that it is important that UNF explore all opportunities for attracting talented students and ensuring that UNF is providing programs and services which meet the needs of a wider student audience. Dr. Curran has been visiting school superintendents and plans on increasing UNF’s visits to counties throughout Florida. He notes that in addition to opportunities to attract “traditional” students, there are multiple opportunities for dual-enrolled students and adult learners.

Dr. Curran highlighted that Florida is among the top 10 states in the country with the largest higher education enrollment decline by number of students. Florida is one of the states with the largest number of high school graduates, but it has experienced an enrollment decrease of (-5.3%). Trustee Egan asked if this statistic pertains to only state universities within Florida or private universities, as well. Dr. Curran clarified that shifts in the marketplace have changed enrollment by institutional sector and that private higher education institutions are also suffering. He noted that Georgia has a 1.5% increase in enrollment and that recruiting more Georgia students represents an opportunity for UNF.

Dr. Curran relayed that he believes the goal of 20,000 students is achievable by 2025. President Szymanski agreed, stating that UNF has an infrastructure to support 20,000 students, but that the market is going to become even more competitive. He stressed that UNF can be a critical mass at 20,000 students – students can continue to get meaningful employment after graduation and UNF can attract employers – but we must continue to be mindful of quality. He stressed that teaching through online course offerings is becoming essential in the marketplace.

Trustee Patel inquired about international students. Dr. Curran confirmed that UNF has a small percentage of international students but high aspirations for continued growth. He noted that UNF should learn from the mistakes made by multiple institutions in recruiting too many students from the same regions, and added that the University needs to continue to diversify its portfolio.

Trustee Aloszka asked about the retention rates of non-traditional students and the metrics. Dr. Curran confirmed that adult learners’ rate of graduation is as high as that of transfer students. Vice President Jay Coleman mentioned that, in terms of the metrics, the retention of new students is measured.

Dr. Curran shared with the Board that he had reviewed a marketing survey by *Student Insights* that had been sent to rising Florida high school seniors. It measured students’ awareness and perceptions of UNF. The survey was distributed within 11 Florida regions. It found that perception and awareness of UNF is greatest in the University’s home region and the eastern Florida region, and is lowest in Miami-Dade County. He added that, while UNF’s favorability score is highest in Jacksonville and its surrounding region, a previous lack of marketing and branding has limited our institutional enrollment success.

Trustee Bryan asked about the differences regarding UNF’s pipeline of students and those of institutions such as New York University and the University of Florida. Dr. Curran emphasized that UNF does not yet have the extensive alumni networks that those institutions do, but the University need to look at relationship-building tools and be strategic. UNF needs to continue to build the quality of the student body. Dr. Curran stated that UNF is working to build different partnerships and organizing community events such as financial aid and FAFSA nights. In addition, he stressed that, as an institution raises it quality, it raises its institutional reputation - which leads to increased market demand.

Dr. Curran relayed that the best way to recruit students is through campus visits. Visiting students have the opportunity to see firsthand what UNF has to offer. He stated, “the UNF campus sells itself,” and “when students visit UNF, 55% of them enroll.” Dr. Curran added that the UNF Welcome Center has been effective at helping to recruit potential students.

Trustee Bryan asked about the best ways to encourage more prospective students to take UNF campus tours. Dr. Curran relayed that his office is reviewing the timing and personalization of tours, scheduling visits with individuals who run campus programs, exploring providing transportation to campus for tours, and spending more time developing relationships between UNF and middle school students. (He added that having middle school students start to understand the University’s identity and values can be a very effective recruitment tool; students, who are a part of UNF programs, join the University’s database and stay connected with UNF. Dr. Curran added that the University needs to continue to articulate the message that Florida universities are affordable and to let students know that *a college* *education* is affordable.)

Dr. Curran highlighted that expanding the pool of Georgia students is important to UNF. He relayed that UNF is not recruiting Georgia students as effectively as it can. He stated that this has implications not only for enrollment, but also for UNF’s Athletics program. Dr. Curran suggested that UNF may want to consider providing a better tuition rate than it currently does for Georgia students and perhaps consider an “in-state” rate. Chair Hyde asked whether or not there are additional measures (-the removal of any additional impediments) UNF would need to take, if UNF were to adjust tuition rates for Georgia students. Dr. Curran confirmed no additional measures would be required. He informed the Board that the net revenue gain from 100 additional admitted students from Georgia would be approximately $2M.

Trustee McElroy expressed that the idea was interesting, but asked what FSU and UWF are doing in terms of recruiting students from other states. Dr. Curran confirmed that UWF is effectively recruiting Alabama students. He also stated that UNF is losing Florida students, particularly from the local region, to Georgia each recruiting cycle. Dr. Curran stressed that bringing talented students from Georgia to the Jacksonville region would result in bringing individuals who would stay in the area and contribute to our developing community

Associate Vice President Curran highlighted that UNF’s relationships with FSCJ are important. He stated that UNF has renewed and signed the Connect Agreement with FSCJ and that the University intends to continue to build its relationships with all state colleges in the region. Dr. Curran further stated that, while the census data does appear to project lower enrollment growth over the next decade, the migration rate into Florida is still healthy and should offset some of the downward trend. He stressed that UNF also needs to continue to focus on the adult contemporary learner population and the University’s dual-enrollment opportunities.

Trustee Aloszka asked whether the 1.3 market of adult contemporary learners would be met with online or in-person programs. Dr. Curran explained that UNF needs to explore all modalities to be competitive and meet the needs of this population. He added that it is important that the University examines how it can change as an institution to improve our ability to attract adult learners. He stressed that the timing of courses is very important to this population of students.

Dr. Curran expounded on his ideas for dual-enrollment programs. He shared that his team is strategizing on ways for UNF establish agreements with St. Johns, Clay and Duval counties. He added that parents and faculty in those high schools want their students to take UNF classes. Dr. Curran sees multiple opportunities for dual-enrollment programs and believes there would be a high demand for UNF math and English courses in these programs.

Trustee Aloszka asked whether or not it might dilute the brand/value of a UNF education, if UNF establishes a dual-enrollment program. President Szymanski stressed that it is important to have UNF faculty become teachers in dual-enrollment programs, as these programs are one way in which local students become interested in and attracted to UNF.

Trustee Bryan inquired about UNF’s strategy to attract military students. Dr. Curran confirmed that we have some programs, but that we need to focus on programs that are transferrable and have an expanded online component to them. Dr. Curran stated that Deb Miller, UNF’s Assistant Vice President for Digital Learning and Innovation, has provided great leadership in moving UNF forward in this area.

Dr. Curran highlighted that UNF’s number of applications is growing, but the yield rate is decreasing. He emphasized that UNF must make more offers to reach its targets. Trustee Egan asked if UNF is an early-decision institution. Dr. Curran relayed that UNF does not have that status. Trustee Bryan asked what UNF would need to do in order to become an early-decision institution. Associate Vice President Curran responded that the University needs to broaden its presence in the marketplace and establish itself as the quality alternative to the “mega universities” in Florida. He relayed that UNF is now using the common application. Dr. Curran stated that, from a recruitment standpoint, it is more difficult to determine the reason a student is interested in a particular university when s/he uses the common application. He added that UNF’s goal is to become more strategic in its targeting of potential students and its student recruitment practices. Dr. Curran emphasized that from his experience, he has found that developing a robust and reliable admission funnel for any target population requires at least 3 to 4 years of consistent attention.

Associate Vice President Curran concluded his update on enrollment by reviewing, with the Trustees, a map of all applicants from 2019. He walked the Trustees through the data, which included the density of applications versus admitted students. Dr. Curran stated that the data on the map indicate that UNF is a “backup” institution for the northeast Florida corridor and that UNF’s academic calendar is very different from many students’ academic calendars in out-of-state recruitment zones. He relayed that UNF enrolls 90% of its students from Florida and that the University should be focusing on raising its out-of-state population to approximately 20%. He remarked that he had found it surprising to learn how many students from Duval County, in Florida, attend Valdosta State University.

Dr. Curran shared his thoughts on UNF’s policy of bringing in a large portion of its freshman class in the summer and the potential impact he thinks the policy may be having on UNF’s application and yield rates. He stated that he understands the benefits of admitting students the University believes will be successful at UNF and who may need to take some additional classes in the summer, but he also thinks that the policy may inadvertently adversely impact UNF’s enrollment. Dr. Curran suggested that many of UNF’s prospective students with 3.4 – 3.7 GPAs may be deterred by some of the University’s current practices, as they don’t want to attend summer school. He stated that the University may want to continue to examine this policy both in terms of its benefits to students and of the potential students the University may be losing, as they enroll elsewhere.

Chair Hyde thanked Dr. Curran for his update on enrollment and invited President Szymanski to provide his update to the Board.

President Szymanski addressed the Board and welcomed new Trustees Jill Davis and Nik Patel. He also thanked Vice President Shari Shuman for her commitment and dedication to the University for over 16 years. The President then began his report by stating that, with regard to competition for universities, it is not just “ok,” but it is important to be competitive and that creating the proper infrastructure that will support those efforts is paramount. He spoke of the University’s work to build a network from its alumni and UNF’s migration from being a regional institution to an institution of leadership and national prominence. The President stressed that an emphasis on institutional values (integrity, respect, accountability, innovation, customer service, personal skills, and excellence) are foundational elements in the university’s migration to becoming a national university. He referenced the following as milestones on that path: the University’s first national ranking (within the top 140 public institutions) by US News & World Report; recurring state appropriations of $10M; to-date improvements on seven of the eight metrics; the Florida Board of Governors $12M approval for MedNEX; university accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB); accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC; with no recommendations for changes); positive accreditation visits for Engineering, Computing, Education, Social Work, Nursing Anesthesiology, Nursing, and Physical Therapy; the newly developed 2020-2025 UNF Strategic Plan; 120-hour degrees, and our talented, diverse student body.

President Szymanski stressed that the environment within the University is dynamic. There is a lot of change. He added that UNF is in the process of critically thinking about complex problems and building a service culture (which, he stated, is not only the right thing to do, but also should result in the satisfaction, attraction, retention and graduation of students, who want to return to UNF for further study and professional skill-building). The President stated that UNF’s strategy is one of differentiation, with the goal of market leadership. He noted that there is also a focus on accountability, as the University works to serve multiple constituents.

President Szymanski provided the Trustees with an overview of his engagements and meetings with multiple, varied presidential constituencies and the outcomes from those meetings. He discussed the progress UNF has made toward its quantitative performance goals. He highlighted that, in 2019, net tuition and fees (M3) were $12,970 and that preliminary net tuition and fees for FY2020 are $10,310. He also noted that the University is moving in the right direction with regard to retention, and that 36% of UNF’s undergraduates are Pell grant-eligible.

President Szymanski referenced the UNF 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and relayed that UNF will present it to the Florida Board of Governors for approval at the January 29-30, 2020 Florida Board of Governors Meeting. He highlighted the $12M ($6M one-time and $6M recurring) funding for MedNEX by the Florida Board of Governors. He stressed that the University should also be proud – that based on submitted proposals by UNF, the Florida Board of Governors has created its model of universities of distinction. He emphasized this as being a good indicator that the University is heading in the right direction.

Dr. Szymanski spoke of creating cultural change, and that the University is in the process of integrating a new leadership team. He highlighted that UNF has recently onboarded its Provost, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, an Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services, Director of the Community Alliance for Student Success (CASS) and *Fearless Woman,* and the Dean of the UNF Library. He added that the University is now working to develop unique internships opportunities which will attract students to UNF. The President also stated that program improvements are being implemented in UNF’s One-stop Student Services office and that precision advising counseling is a priority for the University.

President Szymanski spoke of some of the measures the University is taking to ensure that it is supporting students: working to better foster student-faculty engagement through small classes and developing programs like CASS. He relayed that CASS partners student groups with professional mentors in the local community. These mentors share insights from their professional trajectories and regularly engage with the students. Dr. Szymanski relayed that 65 African American and Hispanic students are currently participating in CASS. He also stressed that UNF is putting an emphasis on graduate enrollment. The University is working to ensure it has attractive graduate program offerings and it is streamlining processes for students who wish to continue their studies after graduation. The President closed his report by reemphasizing that the University is undergoing a lot of change as it migrates to a university of national prominence. He stated that while the University is sharply focused on its targets and goals, it also has a lot to be proud of.

Chair Hyde thanked President Szymanski for his report and asked Vice President Jay Coleman to provide his strategic analytics update. Vice President Coleman began by illustrating how UNF’s FTIC cohort has grown 67% since 2015. He highlighted that this growth has happened while UNF has also increased quality, as measured by the high school GPAs of the incoming FTIC cohorts. Dr. Coleman shared that the average high school GPAs of FTICs who started in the Fall, or started in Summer and continued into Fall, grew from 3.72 in 2014 to nearly 3.92 in 2019. He stressed that high school GPA is the best predictor of student performance and added that, when the University had previously pursued students using SAT scores as the primary quality measure, it had hit a “trough” in the size of incoming FTIC cohorts (in 2015).

Vice President Coleman then spoke of increases in the retention rates of UNF’s full-time FTICs. He shared that the University’s retention rate is expected to be at least 79.4% for the Fall 2018 cohort (up from 74.6% for the Fall 2014 cohort), but that it may very well ultimately push upward to 80%. Dr. Coleman also emphasized that UNF’s retention rate has now improved sufficiently to earn performance-funding excellent points, as opposed to simply improvement points.

Vice President Coleman then stressed the importance of growth in terms of its impact on expected tuition revenue. He noted that there has been a collective increase of $36M in the tuition revenue that is expected to be realized from the Fall 2016 through Fall 2019 cohorts combined, versus the amount that would have been realized had cohort sizes simply stayed at Fall 2015 level. (Dr. Coleman also noted that UNF has already realized approximately $13M of this tuition increase. For context, he added that $13M would roughly cover the first four years of one 3% pay raise for the campus.) He stated that this collective revenue increase rises to $54M when combining the expected tuition and fee revenue from the most recent four cohorts. (Vice President Coleman further indicated that on average each incoming FTIC generates approximately $13,000 in tuition revenue during their time at UNF, which rises to about $19,400 when including fees.) Vice President Coleman also stressed that tuition and fees represent the only revenue sources that are very predictable.

Dr. Coleman then spoke of the relationship between growth in size and growth in quality. He presented an illustration of the relationship between the growth in cohort size and growth in cohort quality as measured by high school GPA for other institutions within the SUS from 2014 through 2017. He used the illustration to identify the “efficient frontier” for these sister institutions. He then illustrated how UNF is positioned well beyond this efficient frontier, and even much further beyond the frontier, when including the 2018 cohort, as well.

Vice President Coleman then replicated the same efficient frontier illustration, while using first-year retention (with a 2.00+ GPA) as the quality measure. He again illustrated how UNF is well beyond the frontier of the other SUS schools, having experienced an approximately 20.4% increase in cohort size with an associated 4 percentage point growth in the retention rate between 2014 and 2017. Dr. Coleman stressed that additional growth in size and quality in 2018 has taken UNF’s collective growth, since 2014, to an approximately 30% increase in cohort size and a 5 percentage point growth in retention rate. His conclusion was that UNF is setting the standard in the SUS for growth with quality.

Chair Hyde thanked Vice President Coleman. There being no additional business in the Trustee Workshop, the Workshop concluded at 11:40 a.m.