

Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Kelvin Lawson, Chair

Chair Lawson called the meeting to order. Linda Barge-Miles called the roll and a quorum was established. The following trustees were present: Cavazos, Harper, Lawrence, Lawson, Moore, McClinton, Perry, Reed, Washington and Woody. Trustee Dortch did not join the call.

COVID-19 Operations Plan

Chair Lawson indicated that the purpose of the meeting was to receive a report regarding the University's Operations Task Force regarding COVID-19. The Board would have an opportunity to discuss the report with the administration and make suggestions, prior to the creation of the plan. The presenters included President Robinson, Rica Calhoun – chair of the task force, Tanya Tatum – Director of Student Health Services and CFO Alan Robertson.

President Robinson introduced the team. He then shared that the Board of Governors will host a meeting on May 28, 2020 and is expected to present its template for State University System (SUS) reopening plans. Each university must submit its plan to the BOG by June 12, 2020 and will be presented to the BOG at its June 24, 2020 in-person meeting in Orlando.

President Robinson stated that Mrs. Calhoun would be providing a brief overview of the work of the Operations Taskforce and discussing next steps. Mrs. Calhoun explained that President Robinson appointed an Operational Continuity Taskforce on April 23, 2020 and charged the Taskforce with considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the University and develop recommendations for reopening in Fall 2020. The Taskforce was comprised of representatives from all University divisions and the Faculty Senate. Members met regularly, increasing to daily meetings, to focus on operational and instructional reopening for the fall.

Mrs. Calhoun shared that the Taskforce was deliberate and thoughtful about its task, building on the work completed by the University Emergency Management Incidence Response Team and seeking feedback from subject matter experts in target areas. After a thorough review of the solicited feedback, documentation, and external and internal resources, the Taskforce developed comprehensive draft recommendations, which were submitted to the Senior Leadership Team for their input on May 18, 2020.

She stated that University must consider numerous factors to support the arrival of large groups of students, faculty, and staff. The most important criterion requires a strong detection and response framework. Screening as many people as possible who access the campus is the first step. She said that it is the responsibility of the individual, with support from health services, to

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maintain awareness and remain engaged in protecting themselves and those around them. Faculty, staff, and students will participate in self-screening for COVID-19. They will be asked to conduct temperature checks prior to leaving home each day, and record it on an app. The Task Force recommended that faculty, staff, and students with comorbidities or other health concerns can request accommodations through Equal Opportunity Programs (employees)/CeDAR(students).

A testing program will be available to all employees and students to identify cases of active infection. The program will be focused on faculty, staff, and students with identified high risk of exposure and will be prioritized for the following groups:

- Symptomatic individuals and exposed contacts
- Employees in areas with high risk for exposure (clinic, first responders, facilities, campus housing, vendors, etc.)
- Residential students, student athletes, medically vulnerable students, students in health professions and education

It was noted that symptomatic individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 will be subject to isolation in their current residence, either on or off campus. Individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 are requested to quarantine and monitor their symptoms. Several University apartments in Palmetto North have been set aside to house students who are either quarantined or isolated.

Next, Mrs. Calhoun explained how the University will work closely with the Florida Department of Health regarding contact tracing and surveillance, to identify workplace and school contacts of anyone testing positive for COVID-19. The pandemic will be closely monitored by identifying trends based on rates of infection locally, state-wide, and nationally.

Operational guidelines include decreasing contact spaces, conducting thorough sanitization of all buildings and workplace areas and ensuring sufficient supplies of disinfectant for enhanced campus wide cleaning, disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizer. The University will have sufficient quantities of personal protective equipment (PPE) and face cloth coverings. These items will be purchased and distributed from a central location to ensure sufficient quantities and consistency in coverage.

Mrs. Calhoun reported that the University will adopt protocols for cleaning and disinfecting facilities, vehicles and high-risk areas. She indicated that controlling access to facilities is also an effective strategy to mitigate contact and adhere to social and physical distancing guidelines. Strategies include prohibition of non-business visitors, reducing the number of entrances in buildings, and screening employees in high-risk, high-density areas through temperature and symptom checks.

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She shared that with current space utilization assessments, it is possible to adjust facilities and spaces to accommodate social distancing, provide clear guidance for faculty, staff, and students on FAMU campuses. The University will continue the use of videoconferencing and avoiding overcrowding in common spaces and transports. Distancing plans include such strategies as installing sneeze guards, limiting shared workspaces, using floor decals and signage to direct traffic and maintain 6' distance.

Education and messaging materials will be developed prior to employees returning to work. Supervisors will complete risk assessments prior to an employee's scheduled return and employees will be required to wear face coverings in the workplace and in common spaces.

Mrs. Calhoun further reported that the Taskforce recommended that all vendors and contractors provide a reopening action plan regarding their implementation of best practices and University expectations outlined in the operational plan.

Face coverings will be required in face-to-face classes and common areas. The Division of Academic Affairs will develop guidelines for faculty to enforce this requirement to ensure consistency. Student performance activities requiring their physical presence on campus and alterations to their activity will require an internal team to complete a personalized assessment and action plan to mitigate transmission. These action plans would prohibit the sharing of personal equipment and instruments, explore the adoption of unique protective equipment and outline the enhanced cleaning protocols and schedules. These plans will be reviewed and approved by Student Health Services.

The assessment will also be focused on instructional scenarios, which serves as the cornerstone of the re-opening plan. The University is exploring an instructional scenario that offers both remote and face-to-face modalities, while limiting the physical return of students.. This scenario has the following student groups returning: graduate students doing experimental lab work; students enrolled in courses that don't convert to remote learning, termed "pedagogically fixed" courses such as experiential courses and STEM. These courses would need approval by the Office of the Provost. Freshman would also return because face to face instruction for incoming first year students is strongly preferred and supports college success.

The Taskforce heard from target areas in each division to understand how an adjusted re-opening would impact their operations and fiscal outlook. VP Barrington and the Division of Strategic Planning will create dashboards and an action tracker to guide the University's progress regarding this effort.

Mrs. Calhoun explained that the plan will be revisited every 14 days and students, faculty and staff will be provided information through several modalities including town hall meetings. She also indicated that the University will be reviewing its policies to make any necessary revisions.

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Members of the Board suggested that the University consider ending the semester prior to Thanksgiving, to mitigate exposure. They also suggested that the University look at other scenarios that would include bringing all students back to campus in the fall. They expressed concern regarding the number of students that will return to the University in the fall and suggested that the University check with the students regarding their plans. They stated that this information is important for planning purposes. The University needs these projections, as this current situation could affect the University for the next 10 years.

The meeting closed with Chair Lawson asking the University to continue working on the plan and provide the Board with its best recommendation at the June BOT meeting.

There being no further business for the Board, the meeting adjourned.