Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees  
January 21, 2014

SUBJECT:  FGCU 2014 Legislative Priorities

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Approve legislative priorities for the 2014 Legislative Session.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

These items have been reviewed and proposed by President Bradshaw and his Cabinet, and now need approval by the FGCU Board of Trustees prior to the 2014 Legislative Session.

Supporting Documentation Included:  FGCU 2014 Legislative Priorities

Prepared by:  Director of Government Relations Jennifer Goen

Legal Review by:  N/A

Submitted by:  President Wilson Bradshaw
FGCU 2014 Legislative Priorities

Student Success Funding:

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) will request General Revenue funds to continue to enhance student success and, in so doing, meet regional and statewide workforce demands. Additional resources are necessary to provide essential faculty, professional staff, student advisors and expanded programming to increase retention and graduation rates, and continue to prepare students for employment immediately upon graduation. FGCU’s portfolio of academic/professional degree programs is intentionally focused on meeting regional and statewide economic development needs and market demands. FGCU will accomplish these goals by: (1) hiring faculty in targeted STEM-related disciplines, and academic and career advisors; (2) providing students with more “real world” experiences through expanded internship and co-op opportunities; and (3) collaborating with other institutions/organizations to develop certificate programs emphasizing marketable skills that give students a competitive edge in the workforce.

- Recurring General Revenue Request $5,700,000

Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) Funding:

In order to achieve FGCU’s goals to enhance student learning outcomes, provide a first class learning environment and be a leader in the field of sustainable/renewable energy, PECO funding is required. These funds are necessary for critical infrastructure (including service roads), the completion of the Innovation Hub (IHUB) building, the expansion of the chiller plant, and construction of Academic Building 9. Service roads are critical for emergency vehicle and other access to buildings within the academic core.

FGCU requests the second installment of PECO funding for the IHUB building which will house the FGCU Renewable Energy Institute and support the adjacent Renewable Energy Park. The IHUB was developed through a public-private partnership with Mr. John D. Backe that included a gift of land for the construction of the building and a $1 million endowment to establish the Backe Chair in Renewable Energy at Florida Gulf Coast University. The Renewable Energy Park will be a fully integrated scale-size demonstration site highlighting best practices and the most up to date technology associated with energy production, storage and usage. This facility will blend educational opportunities with research programs as a means to partner with various renewable energy industries, utility companies, and local and state governments to develop technologies and provide a trained workforce for the next generation of clean energy production in Florida and the U.S. This unique research asset will be available for cooperative use by all institutions within the State University System (SUS). Combining research and
education with public outreach, and a state-of-the-art energy park, will make the FGCU Renewable Energy Institute a magnet and hub for developments in renewable energy throughout the region as well as attracting companies, venture capital, research laboratories and industries from the U.S. and other parts of the world, especially the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

FGCU’s chiller plant is rapidly nearing capacity for campus operations. The expansion of the chiller plant will allow FGCU to most efficiently provide the necessary cooling capacity to meet current building needs, and is required to support future new facilities on campus.

To continue to provide access to competitive, affordable, high-quality education opportunities in Southwest Florida, FGCU will require additional classrooms, laboratories and office space. Academic Building 9 is essential to meet the needs of our growing student population and attract talented faculty and staff.

**FGCU’s PECO request for 2014-2015 includes the following:**

- Roads/Infrastructure $7,000,000
- Innovation Hub Research Building Phase 2 $7,633,807
- Central Energy Plant Expansion Phase 3 $9,000,000
- Classrooms/Offices/Labs, Academic 9 Phase 1 $3,852,065

**Capital Improvement Trust Fund:**

FGCU will request through the Capital Improvement Trust Fund (CITF) $9,272,012. The funding for this student-supported initiative will be used to construct a Recreation/Fitness Center.

**Courtelis Matching Funds and Major Matching Gifts:**

During the 2011 Legislative Session, the passage of Senate Bill 2150 suspended state matches for the Alec P. Courtelis Facilities Enhancement Challenge Grant Program, and the Major Gifts Trust Fund. The statute allows the program to resume after the $200 million backlog for projects for the State University System is funded. FGCU encourages resumption of state funding for these valuable matching programs that leverage private sector investment in support of critical state needs.