FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Special Committee for Review of Academic Degree Programs

Wednesday, April 15, 2015 2 – 3:40 p.m.
Cohen Center, Room #213
Florida Gulf Coast University

Minutes

Committee Members:
Present: Trustee Dudley Goodlette – Chair; Trustee Shawn Felton; Trustee Russell Priddy; Trustee Robbie Roepstorff; and Trustee Rob Wells

Absent: Trustee Christian Spilker

Others:
Trustees: Trustee Tom Grady and Trustee Ken Smith
Staff: President Wilson Bradshaw; Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ron Toll; Vice President for Administrative Services and Finance Steve Magiera; Vice President for Student Affairs Mike Rollo; Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of FGCU Foundation Chris Simoneau; Vice President and Chief of Staff Susan Evans; Vice President and General Counsel Vee Leonard; Director of Board Operations, and Special Projects Amber Pacheco; Director of Media Relations Lillian Pagan; and Executive Assistant to the Vice President and Chief of Staff Valerie Whitaker.

Item 1: Call to Order and Opening Remarks
Chair Dudley Goodlette called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. He reviewed the history and development of the FGCU Board of Trustees’ (BOT) Special Committee for Review of Academic Degree Programs and stated it was established as a result of the Board of Governors’ request for a “stress test” to be conducted approximately one year ago. The “stress test” was intended to evaluate each of the programs offered within the State University System (SUS) at the institution level. He said BOT Chair Robbie Roepstorff asked the Committee to continue with its review of current programs following the BOG’s decision not to move forward with a system-wide initiative.

Chair Goodlette explained that Phase 1 of the review lead to the discontinuance of 36 of 39 programs; Phase 2 will require the Committee to identify low-performing programs, evaluate each one in-depth, and provide a recommendation to the full Board with respect to possible discontinuance of some programs.
Item 2: Presentation on FGCU Fall Enrollments by Major and Year (2009 to 2014), and FGCU Degrees Awarded by Major and Year (2009-10 to 2013-2014)

Chair Goodlette introduced Provost Toll who discussed documents guiding the review process, including Board of Governors Regulation 8.015 Academic Program Review, and FGCU Policy 2.010 Program Evaluation and Institutional Effectiveness. He reviewed the FGCU Program Review Process document which outlines the “deep dive” evaluation that is completed every seven years and explained that it takes approximately three years to conclude. He said the review process requires (1) a year of data acquisition; (2) followed by a year of data analysis, report writing, and the consideration of internal and external feedback, from discipline-based reviewers; and (3) the third year is the follow-up year, with monitoring of the recommendations implemented by the Program Review Team (PRT), a standing committee of the FGCU Faculty Senate.

Dr. Toll stated that the Council of Academic Vice Presidents (CAVP) of the State University System looks at enrollment levels and unnecessary duplication for all new degree programs under consideration for proposal. All new degree programs are submitted through a workgroup that reports to the BOG Academic and Student Affairs Committee. The workgroup is comprised of faculty from across the State University System (SUS), assisting in the evaluation of the necessity of each program. He said the group evaluates both new programs and existing programs. Dr. Toll said the SUS adopted a 30/20/10 practice and to meet the threshold, baccalaureate degrees require 30 graduates over the course of five years; 20 graduates at the master’s level; and 10 graduates at the doctorate level.

Dr. Toll stated that the Board of Governors (BOG) recently requested a list of all degree programs falling under 30/20/15 levels respectively, although he was unsure if the 15 doctorates over a five year term metric was an ad-hoc condition.

Dr. Toll reviewed the details outlined on the FGCU Fall Enrollments by Major and Year document, indicating that the numbers represent all students from freshman to senior year. He stated the FGCU Degrees Awarded by Major and Year document impacts the 30/20/10 metrics.

Item 3: Committee Discussion

Dr. Toll explained to the Committee that with regard to the “pre” majors indicated on the Fall Enrollment by Major and Year document, those majors do not accept first year students. As a result, the “pre” major numbers would constitute freshman and sophomore registrants, and the remainder would be upper division, junior and senior level students. He also clarified that the data outlined on the document is what is reported to the BOG and includes only primary majors, not secondary majors. He stated that if secondary majors were added, the numbers would increase slightly. Trustee Roepstorff asked if students with double majors take longer to graduate. Dr. Toll said many of the double major
students graduate on time and do not take 5-6 years to complete their degree
requirements. Chair Goodlette asked if Dr. Toll’s staff could provide information
about students in that category and Dr. Toll agreed.

Trustee Grady asked for additional information regarding enrollment trends to
see growth increases and reductions over time. Also, he asked about enrollment
numbers compared to degrees awarded in the same areas and what that data
trend looks like. Dr. Toll discussed net exporters and net importers. He said a
freshman who selects Biology as a major, for example, may decide that program
is not for them, which leads to higher attrition rates. Biology in this case would
lead to the student being considered an “exporter” of Biology and an “importer” in
another area. He said reports can help put into perspective the “flow” of students
from specified programs to others. Dr. Toll offered to provide that information to
the Committee in the future.

Trustee Priddy asked for clarification regarding the impact of a discontinued
program at the course level. He asked whether or not discontinuing a program
like Anthropology would eliminate the Anthropology offerings entirely. He said he
understood it to mean that it would only eliminate the possibility of a student
receiving a degree in that area and not prevent them from taking an
Anthropology course in support of their General Education requirements. Dr. Toll
said Trustee Priddy was correct.

President Bradshaw clarified that a double major is not a student receiving two
degrees and stated that is the reason the BOG requests only the numbers
pertaining to primary majors. The Committee asked what percentage of freshmen
changes their major and Dr. Toll said approximately 50%. President Bradshaw
responded to Trustee Roepstorff’s question by stating a student with a double
major would receive a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Chemistry and a major in
Biology; the student would not receive two separate degrees. Dr. Toll said some
programs have similar requirements and students can fulfill the requirements of a
second major by selecting electives that pertain to the second major.

Chair Goodlette asked the Committee members how they would like to proceed
with regard to the next steps. He asked Dr. Toll what information could be
provided that would offer the Committee an opportunity to dive more deeply into
the programs. Dr. Toll offered to report on the program start dates (helps to
identify degrees in the building phase); employment data; salary data; and
national data regarding occupations for students with particular degrees.

Dr. Felton offered comments regarding the impact of the other BOT ad hoc
Committees on this Committee and vice versa, suggesting that the Committee
make sure the groups are supportive of each other’s efforts.

Trustee Wells asked optimally how long it takes to get students enrolled in a
newly-established program and how long a developing program takes to get to
the 30/20/10 threshold. Dr. Toll stated that it depends on the program and what
resources are already in place; for example, Biochemistry may only take 3-4 years because Biology, Chemistry and Physics are already in place; in contrast, Journalism may take 5-6 years as the program develops and additional faculty with background-specific experience are hired.

The Committee discussed the importance of eliminating low-performing programs and the anticipated length of time required for thoroughly reviewing programs to be considered for discontinuance. Committee members stated it was important to consider the impact of program elimination on General Education requirements. The Committee discussed looking into lower-performing programs under the 30/20/10 threshold and reviewing employment data that speaks to whether or not graduating students are working locally or nationally to determine if there is a reason to keep the programs.

Trustee Smith asked the Committee to consider the impact of eliminating one program on another that is very similar, as faculty teaches multiple courses within their respective disciplines.

Trustee Priddy said receiving state funding should be our priority to ensure the building of campus roads and buildings, and as such, we must be responsive to Tallahassee directives to review and discontinue some of our academic degree programs. He said the programs that should be considered for elimination should be those not tied to regional and state employment needs. He explained at this point he would offer Anthropology, Philosophy and Sociology as programs to review.

Trustee Roepstorff emphasized the need to provide logical justification of the Committee’s desire to recommend elimination of certain programs if supported by data and research.

Trustee Wells suggested the Committee look more deeply into the following bachelor’s level programs: Biotechnology, Economics, Music Performance, and Theatre, and at the master’s level: Computer Information Systems (CIS) and Criminal Justice. He suggested they be added to the programs suggested by Trustee Priddy. Trustee Grady offered Journalism and reflected on the Vision and Mission discussion from the Ad Hoc Committee on FGCU Strategic Plan 2015-2020 Committee with regard to program excellence. He said the Committee may want to consider the impact on excellence should programs such as Music Performance and Music Education, for example, be combined.

Trustee Felton said it’s important to look at degree programs that lead to continuing education and advanced degrees, and suggested the group not focus solely on employment. Trustee Smith requested that information be provided on potential cost savings or expenses, losses and gains as a result of the elimination of any program. Trustee Felton agreed and stated cost per degree is a metric included in the BOG Performance-Based Funding model. He said the College of Health Professions and Social Work courses have a high cost per
student, but the other low-cost courses help to balance the overall price per degree. He indicated there may be an impact on our rankings in the cost per degree category should we eliminate more cost-effective programs.

Chair Goodlette said the Committee may be able to meet between the April and May full Board meetings to ensure timely feedback will be provided to the Board, and he asked the Committee to make final suggestions regarding programs that require further examination.

The Committee identified 10 total programs to be reviewed in depth at its next meeting, including:

Bachelor’s: Anthropology, Biotechnology, Economics, Journalism, Music Performance, Theatre, Philosophy and Sociology.

Master’s: Computer Information Systems and Criminal Justice.

President Bradshaw asked that the Trustees provide clarification as to what specific information is required for the in-depth review. Trustees confirmed their desire for data relating to the following: salary; employment and continuing education; double majors; general education requirements; declared major versus enrollment over time; programs supported by philanthropic gifts; first year students enrolled for the program (pre majors); cost of degrees by major; potential impact on BOG Performance-Based Funding metrics; and program excellence.

Item 4: Public Comment

Public comment included Glenn Whitehouse, FGCU; Gerritt VanderMeer, FGCU; Eric Otto, FGCU; Timothy Sutton, FGCU; Megan Shindler, FGCU; William Locascio, FGCU; Nairruti Jani, FGCU; and Robert Gregerson, FGCU.

Item 5: Old Business
There was no old business for discussion.

Item 6: New Business
There was no new business for discussion.

Item 7: Closing Remarks, and Adjournment
Trustee Goodlette thanked the members of the Committee and the additional Trustees who attended. The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.
Minutes submitted by Director of Board Operations, and Special Projects Amber Pacheco

Agenda Items: