

External Relations Committee Minutes
June 12, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 12:43 p.m. with all committee members present.

The External Relations Committee began with an update on the 2008 legislative session. The committee was informed that the university received modest funding for the College of Medicine, as well as planning money for a building associated with the Burnham Institute in Lake Nona. In addition, several buildings were funded by PECO funds. We did not receive matching funds for Major Gifts, leaving \$42 million in projects left unmatched. Similarly, the Courtelis program received little funding and left \$27 million in contributions left unmatched. Venture Capital funds requested for the Innovation Center were also not funded.

We have been approved to raise the Professional Programs Tuition annual cap from 10 percent to 15 percent. UF will also be the lead university for the new energy consortium that will collaborate with all 11 SUS universities for researching innovative energy systems.

The committee revisited the discussion on the bill to amend the state Constitution to change education governance in the state and the status of the lawsuit involving the Board of Governors and the Legislature.

The committee was briefed on the potential priorities for 2009, including medical school and Major Gifts and Courtelis funding. The committee requested that tuition devolution efforts continue and remain a priority for next year's legislative efforts.

On the federal level, UF representatives have been meeting with Members of Congress on the university's earmark requests. It remains uncertain whether earmarks will be approved this year.

The committee was informed that a program to develop grassroots lobbying support from UF alumni and friends will be presented at the September meeting. Committee members discussed the importance of this effort to future government relations successes and provided input and suggestions.

Following the legislative discussion, the committee received an update on the branding campaign, the Cost Reduction and Efficiency Committee Task Force findings, the UF Awareness Study and Higher Education Advertising Study.

The committee was informed that the Cost Reduction and Efficiency Committee Initiatives, which have led to the replacement of many printed publications to electronic newsletters and renegotiated printing contracts, will generate annual savings of more than \$1 million dollars. They saw a presentation on Think before you ink!, a program to faculty, staff and students to refrain from printing documents and wasting paper.

In response to a request from the previous committee meeting, it reviewed information on the potential of selling advertising in university publications and electronic communications. A survey of other universities revealed that advertising in higher ed publications is somewhat unusual and generally not supported. However, it is more common in alumni magazines. The

committee instructed the staff to continue to consider whether ad sales in some publications could be beneficial.

A Public Awareness Survey was conducted for the university. Findings show that within the last three years UF has continued to gain awareness. Additional work needs to be focused on communicating research activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 p.m.