



Minutes
University of Florida
Board of Trustees Conference Call
February 14, 2003

President Charles Young and Board Chair Marshall Criser conducted a telephone conference call with members of the University of Florida Board of Trustees on February 14, 2003.

Mr. Criser opened the call by welcoming fellow participating Trustees Alfonso, Courtelis, Daniels, Fernandez, Larson, McGriff, Merkel, Morgan, O'Connell, Thweatt, Warrington, and Fried. Mr. Criser commended President Young for his recent comments to the Florida House of Representatives and Senate concerning the Governor's 2003-04 budget recommendations.

President Young then provided an update to the Trustees concerning the various issues resulting from the proposed budget. Dr. Young referenced materials that had been provided to the Board as part of the strategy to communicate with key legislative officials on these budget issues. President Young noted that he provided additional testimony during the February House Subcommittee on Appropriations meeting as well as at other meetings. He reported a strong turn out at the Gator Caucus and commended those who planned the event.

Mr. Criser asked about whether any coalitions might be developing on the budget issues as previously had developed on the major gifts and Courtelis grants issues. Dr. Young indicated that there is not total agreement on each point of the presidents' budget priorities document and power point presentation, but overall there is agreement among the university presidents.

President Young noted that Governor Bush's proposed budget would fund the classroom size reduction mandate of Amendment 9 at the highest cost scenario. Dr. Young stated that the presidents do not believe such a

funding level will be necessary to implement Amendment 9. He indicated that the presidents have proposed the State fund Amendment 9 at a mid-point rather than at the highest cost projected. Trustee Dianna Morgan supported this approach, emphasizing that a key message point of the University in addressing Amendment 9 funding is that classroom reduction in the public schools can be accomplished without unduly harming higher education. On the suggestion of Trustee Manny Fernandez, Dr. Young said that he would look at a wider dissemination of this message to ensure as many citizens of the state understood the potential impact of the budget on public higher education.

President Young reported in more detail about the University budget presentations and how the presentations were received by the various audiences. President Young emphasized that the universities have to overcome the perception that universities have significant non-state resources available to replace withheld state appropriations; this perception justifies to some preferential budget treatment for K-12 and the community colleges. Dr. Young pointed out that the universities do have additional non-state resources, but the vast majority of these resources are restricted and cannot be used to replace state funds.

Trustee Al Warrington asked whether the response was positive regarding a proposal to bond matching funds. President Young said that he interpreted the reactions as being more positive than what he had expected, with Senator Wasserman Schultz especially supportive of the idea.

President Young next discussed the Bright Future Scholarship Program in detail. He reviewed the three main points of the proposed changes: making the program more performance based, disconnecting tuition and fees, and capping amounts required to fund the program in the future. Dr. Young also briefed the Trustees on a possible fourth prong of the proposal which would maintain status quo for the top group of students (at UF, the top 5%), permitting tuition and fees to go up substantially without reducing amounts to currently-enrolled students. After further discussion of the Bright Futures Program, Trustee Morgan commended Dr. Young, Dr. Colburn, Dr. Bucciarelli as well as others for their hard work in a short period of time which enabled the University to move forward quickly.

President Young turned the Trustee's attention to upcoming events in Tallahassee, including visits with legislators and staff. Trustee Nicole Fried updated the Board on the work of University of Florida Student Government

and stated that unlike other student governments, University of Florida Student Government understands the need for changes in the Bright Futures Program as a way to preserve it for future students.

In concluding the call, Mr. Criser suggested that another conference call be scheduled in approximately two weeks, with which President Young concurred. President Young thanked all Trustees for being available for the update, and the Trustees expressed their appreciation to President Young for being briefed in such a timely and understandable fashion.