



**Item: III.**

**Wednesday, September 25, 2024**

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDED POSITION CRITERIA**

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**PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION**

Approve the recommended position criteria for submission to the Board of Trustees for approval

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Board of Governors Regulation 1.002 requires the committee to develop recommended position criteria that are consistent with the institution's mission, strategic plan and aspirational goals, which shall be approved by the Board of Trustees. As part of the preparation for drafting the proposed position criteria, a series of 16 listening sessions were conducted both virtually and on-campus where stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and donors had opportunities to provide input on the qualities they would like to see in the next president. The criteria is tailored to attract candidates with the skills necessary to meet the unique opportunities at Florida Atlantic University.

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**Supporting Documentation:** Recommended Position Criteria

**Presented by:** Ms. Ann Yates, Buffkin/Baker

**Contact:** [ann@buffkinbaker.com](mailto:ann@buffkinbaker.com)

## **PRESIDENTIAL PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT**

*It is expected that the new president will address the following priorities, listed in no particular order of importance.*

### **PROVIDE VISION AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**

The next president of Florida Atlantic has the enviable opportunity to build on Florida Atlantic's current momentum by enacting a bold vision for the future. As the current university's strategic plan, [Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence, 2015-2025](#), draws to a close, the president has an opportunity to shape Florida Atlantic's vision beyond 2025. Building on the university's current strategic plan, and consistent with the strategic goals of the State University System, the president should be a visionary and a strategist, capable of capitalizing on the university's strengths and competitive advantages and outlining a clear and unifying vision for the future. The new plan must continue to further Florida Atlantic's status as an emerging Research 1 University and accelerate its elevation to a Top 100 Public Universities ranking in U.S. News & World Report.

Advancing Florida Atlantic's status as a premier research university will necessitate strategic planning, investment in research infrastructure, and a commitment to academic excellence, all of which must be supported by capital and budget planning.

### **EMBRACE AND ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY**

Situated primarily in Palm Beach County with six campuses along more than 100 miles of southeast Florida coastline, Florida Atlantic benefits from a vibrant local environment with endless opportunities for deeper community connections. Florida Atlantic is not merely an academic institution but an integral part of the community. Notably, 70% of Florida Atlantic's donations come from the local community, underscoring the unique financial dynamics and commitment to Florida Atlantic. Furthermore, the [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute](#), which is one of the largest and most successful programs of its kind in the United States, is an asset that engages members who are deeply connected to the university and offer a reciprocal exchange of knowledge, ideas, and resources. The president must become immediately immersed in the community, strengthening ties and mutually beneficial relationships while cultivating new ones. The new president should also focus on bolstering connections with industry, which offers robust partnership opportunities, a platform for research collaboration, and networking/employment opportunities for students. Connecting the vision and strategy of the university to the existing and future workforce needs of industries and businesses in the state of Florida is critical. Florida Atlantic's rich diversity of students, staff, and faculty is a distinctive strength that should be leveraged as a key asset in outreach and community engagement efforts to attract new companies to the region and ensure that Florida Atlantic continues to supply a highly educated workforce. To be successful, the president must excel in building and maintaining relationships critical to advancing the university's goals and enhancing its profile.

## **RAISE VISIBILITY AND INCREASE THE FLORIDA ATLANTIC BRAND**

The president will be the university's chief storyteller and ambassador, a role that demands the energy and passion to articulate Florida Atlantic's compelling story and to be a fierce advocate on its behalf. It is critically important that the next president be visible both internally and externally and flourish as the face and voice of the institution. As Florida Atlantic's value continues to increase, the opportunity for Florida Atlantic to envision a transformational branding message is one on which the university must capitalize. The president must articulate Florida Atlantic's impressive growth and distinctive identity to develop strategies that powerfully communicate the university's brand and value proposition. Florida Atlantic benefits from its prime location, record enrollments and fundraising, distinguished faculty, highly ranked programs, student success, and recent visibility gained from the Final Four appearance, all of which present a keen opportunity for Florida Atlantic to further enhance its message, reputation, and recognition on the national stage.

## **BOLSTER FUNDRAISING EFFORTS TO GENERATE REVENUE**

Florida Atlantic's distinctive landscape and environment provide a unique backdrop that should be leveraged in outreach and engagement efforts. There is a significant opportunity to maximize private philanthropy, capitalize on existing relationships and explore new avenues for support. In recent years, Florida Atlantic has benefited from loyal supporters in the community and a devoted alumni base resulting in record fundraising, raising \$70.1 million in FY 23. To date, Florida Atlantic's first comprehensive capital campaign in more than twenty years, [Transcend Tomorrow](#), has raised \$525 million toward its \$600 million goal.

Despite the incredible levels of support, an ongoing challenge for the university will be to generate revenue at a level that fuels the university's ambitious goals and critical needs. Particularly, as the institution ascends to R1 status, significant investment in research infrastructure and support for various academic fields will be required. Another pressing concern is the high cost of living in Boca Raton. Faculty, staff, and students face significant challenges in securing affordable housing. This issue impacts not only the recruitment of new faculty but also the retention and satisfaction of current employees and students.

Beyond fundraising, the next president will need to devise creative approaches to identify and secure diverse revenue streams and capitalize on the state of Florida's performance funding metrics, which will advance the institution's ability to invest in people, research, programs, priorities, and students.

This is also important as it relates to Florida Atlantic's standing within the State University System of Florida, which will require a president who has the relational and communication skills to navigate the complexities of leading an institution within a state-wide system. Even more critically, the next president must have the ability to persuasively and convincingly articulate Florida Atlantic's successes and needs, distinguishing and differentiating Florida

Atlantic among other Florida institutions, while also meeting the priorities of the State University System and the goals of Florida's Governor and State Legislature.

### **SUPPORT GROWTH**

With Florida Atlantic's pace of growth and increase in enrollment, the president must be focused on the complexities required to support the entire university enterprise as well as possess an understanding of the demands of an emerging R1 institution. The president will need to address issues around funding, staffing, and facilities to ensure personnel levels and resources are aligned with the increasing needs of a research university and our unique student population. As would be expected, with the increasing number of students and higher expectations for research and service, the faculty and staff are feeling more pressure. As a result, the president must genuinely comprehend and value faculty and staff contributions, advocating for their needs, ensuring their voices are heard, and providing the necessary resources and recognition to further their success. The new president must develop strategies to attract and retain top talent while navigating these challenges.

### **FOSTER A COLLABORATIVE, INNOVATIVE CULTURE**

The president will instill a unifying sense of community built on transparency, open communication, mutual respect, and trust, and one where innovation is valued and celebrated. Building on Florida Atlantic's strong tradition of providing exceptional support to students, the new president should continue to further an environment where faculty and staff go above and beyond to help students achieve. Demonstrating visible leadership, the president will encourage engagement and collaboration to ensure a cohesive university experience for all students, faculty, and staff across colleges and campuses.

The new president should work to further invigorate the university's culture and ensure that faculty and staff feel valued and empowered. The president will encourage faculty and staff to innovate and create and strive to streamline processes and improve systems that inhibit their ability to capitalize on opportunities. The president will embrace technological advances, identify synergies, and drive initiatives that reward innovation across academic and research areas, which enhances capabilities.

### **ELEVATE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

Florida Atlantic is a powerhouse for transformational student impact and generational change. The University benefits from a highly motivated student population poised to experience higher education's life-changing potential. Florida Atlantic excels in providing a transformative experience to a diverse community, including a growing number of first-generation and low-income students, as well as the successful integration of students from FAU High School. Smaller class sizes allow for meaningful one-on-one interactions between students and faculty, facilitating stronger academic relationships and personalized learning experiences. Faculty and staff are highly motivated to support students, provide academic feedback and valuable

assistance with career development and future employment opportunities. In addition to receiving an excellent education, students would benefit from further enhancements to student life and support services, including those related to the first-year experience, advising, housing, transportation solutions, and community building. The next president should identify opportunities to expand Florida Atlantic's reach through housing, retail, and entertainment enterprises that make the university a destination campus. The president will prioritize initiatives aimed at boosting student engagement and fostering a sense of community and pride in the institution.

## **QUALIFICATIONS, QUALITIES, AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The presidency presents a unique opportunity to lead a dynamic institution poised for continued growth and achievement. Advancing Florida Atlantic's mission, goals, and impact will require a bold, innovative, and inspirational leader who will be an unwavering champion of and advocate for students and the people and programs that have contributed to the institution's trajectory and momentum. The ideal candidate will be a fiscally minded, results-driven leader who has the proven ability to drive strategic direction and collaborate and communicate effectively with various constituencies. The ability to engage with the internal and external community, foster a cohesive and collaborative environment, as well as recruit, retain, empower, and inspire the leadership team, is crucial. Moreover, the candidate must possess the presence, communication skills, and eagerness to actively engage in fundraising and to promote the university externally. The successful candidate must exhibit the highest level of integrity, earn and maintain public trust, and show a commitment to transparency, ethical leadership, shared governance, and free expression.

## **PREFERRED EXPERTISE, SKILLS, AND ATTRIBUTES**

Terminal degree or significant professional achievement, recognition and prestige are required; combined administrative and academic experience at a research university and experience with D1 athletics are preferred. Individuals with the requisite leadership experience in education, industry, government, the military, or other sectors and whose experience will further the mission of Florida Atlantic University will be given full consideration.

In addition, the next president will ideally possess many of the following skills, qualities, and abilities.

### **Leadership and Strategic Vision**

- embody a strong commitment to Florida Atlantic's mission, values, and transformational role in society
- identify and leverage the university's strengths and opportunities; craft and communicate a compelling vision and new strategic plan
- demonstrate the ability to manage growth, build on momentum, and realize aspirations and goals

- bring expertise in elevating a research agenda combined with an appreciation for all disciplines, their needs and creative contributions
- partner effectively with faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders, creating synergies across the university
- appreciate the challenges and opportunities of a multi-campus institution, and understand the unique needs of different campuses and departments
- exhibit an approachable, visible, accessible, and personable leadership style, with the ability to lead a complex environment
- foster a highly collaborative and communicative environment
- understand the importance of intellectual leadership and scholarly achievement

**Management:**

- proactively address and resolve any conflicts within the university with an adeptness for handling complex issues
- manage crises effectively, with clear communication, demonstrating resilience and strategic thinking in challenging situations
- devise creative approaches to problem-solving and incorporate data in decision-making with a strong focus on outcomes and results.

- seek innovative ways to provide resources in support of faculty teaching, research, and service.
- foster a culture of compliance and accountability

**Political Acumen:**

- navigate the political landscape, representing Florida Atlantic effectively among all stakeholders, and advocating for its interests
- develop relationships and garner respect from local, state, and federal government, the Board of Trustees, the State University System of Florida, and the Board of Governors
- secure funding for Florida Atlantic's strategic initiatives

**Financial Acumen:**

- possess strong fiscal management skills with the ability to make strategic budget allocation decisions
- ensure that budgets, investment opportunities, infrastructure, and support services are aligned with institutional priorities
- address concerns related to research, infrastructure needs, cost of living, and salary disparities
- champion research initiatives, and identify ways to provide faculty and students with robust resources to advance their academic and professional goals
- support diverse revenue opportunities such as securing grants and other funding sources

### *External Engagement*

- maximize private philanthropy opportunities, with a demonstrated skill in building and maintaining meaningful relationships with donors and community members
- engage with local communities and create strong connections with industry, particularly in fostering partnerships that contribute to the university's growth
- strengthen connections with students and parents, and be a prominent, positive face of the university.
- broadly publicize and champion achievements and successes

### *Recruitment and Retention:*

- create an environment that attracts and retains top talent, addressing issues related to cost of living and faculty and staff retention
- value and empower faculty and staff and the senior leadership team, recognizing their contributions and allowing them the autonomy to excel

### *Student Focus:*

- appreciate the diverse student population and commitment to a transformational student experience
- exude unwavering support for students and student success
- think strategically about attracting and retaining top students across all campuses

*Personal characteristics:*

Florida Atlantic's next president will be transparent, adaptable, and resilient, establish trust, and lead with integrity, honesty, gratitude, humility, empathy, courage, and respect.

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