

## **UF trustees examine ways of measuring UF's push to pre-eminence**

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The University of Florida is poised to begin its next 10-year run, "looking at where we want to go," Provost Joe Glover told the board of trustees Thursday before going into a presentation on the yardsticks by which the board and administration want to measure progress.

The board's job is to decide which of those yardsticks — or "metrics," to use the term in vogue right now — are important and which are distractions, which are stable and which are all over the map.

They have many metrics to choose from, including the standards of the Association of American Universities, the Florida Legislature's 12 pre-eminence goals, the 29 "metrics" identified by former UF President Bernie Machen and the rankings of publications such as U.S. News & World Report and Forbes Magazine.

An unstable measure that fluctuates dramatically from one year to the next "makes for good newspaper copy," Glover said, but does it really indicate whether the university is any closer to its goals?

Glover said the university has been using the Academic Analytics consulting firm to help establish the best leading indicators for determining UF's progress and for assessing its return on investment from those pre-eminence initiatives.

Which metrics UF uses will be important as the university embarks on a faculty-driven, goal-setting task force headed by Win Phillips, executive chief of staff to current UF President Kent Fuchs. The 17-member committee of faculty, staff and students is expected to deliver a new set of measurable goals to the board in the fall.

The committee will build on the pre-eminence plan already set in place by the Florida Legislature two years ago. UF has hired 86 faculty under that plan to date, using a combination of state and private funds totaling more than \$20 million.

The board approved tenure upon hire for 15 new faculty on Thursday.

Those metrics will come into play as the university seeks a consultant to help develop a strategic development plan that looks to weave UF closer into the fabric of the Gainesville community that surrounds it.

UF COO Charlie Lane said the goal is to compare Gainesville to great college towns like Boulder, Colorado, and Ann Arbor, Michigan, to see what they can emulate.

The plan also could suggest how UF can help the city grow, find ways to enhance the key connectors between the campus and the city, and look at the challenges facing the city in providing retail, housing and employment for UF students and graduates.

The ability to meet those goals will determine how much a raise the board gives Fuchs a year from now. The board approved a seven-point performance assessment criteria for Fuchs to meet by June 30, 2016.

Those goals include increasing the UF Foundation endowment to that of a top 10 AAU public research university as part of its anticipated \$3 billion capital campaign, hiring at least 15 more pre-eminent faculty and increasing research awards to the level of peer AAU institutions.

"We are entering a new realm of development," board chairman Steve Scott said.