Governance Policy for the USF System

The University of South Florida (USF) Board of Trustees is committed to building, strengthening and sustaining a premier university system that adds value regionally, state-wide, nationally, and globally through enhancing access to higher education; advancing research which benefits society; contributing to regional unification; leveraging distinctive regional advantages; promoting partnership opportunities; assuring academic program quality; providing consistently high quality support programs and services; strengthening institutional control, legal compliance and ethics, and risk management; and maximizing the economies of scale. The USF System embraces a unified vision of cooperative excellence with institutions, regional campuses and direct service organizations (DSOs) developing distinct and complementary missions that are consistent with the overall USF mission. The USF System deeply values existing collegial groups, including Faculty Senates, Student Governments, and other governance groups that constructively contribute to the USF System strategic plan. The USF System is committed to working collaboratively with such groups to identify, develop and refine best practices on matters of shared interest. All USF institutions, regional campuses, DSOs and their employees benefit from a focused collegial enterprise and share accountability to the USF Board of Trustees, the Florida Board of Governors, the public and the students we serve.

1. The USF System is comprised of two separately accredited institutions: USF and USF St. Petersburg. USF consists of the main research campus in Tampa, which includes its College of Marine Science in St. Petersburg, USF Health and two regional campuses: USF Sarasota-Manatee; and USF Polytechnic (Lakeland) on the pathway to separate accreditation. The USF Board of Trustees is the public body corporate created by Article IX, Section 7 of the Constitution of the State of Florida and empowered (Section 1001.74 F.S.) to administer the USF System. The USF Board of Trustees is responsible for cost-effective policy decisions appropriate to the System mission and the implementation and maintenance of high quality education programs within the laws, regulations and rules of the State. The USF Board of Trustees’ charge is broad, including approval of System and institutional rules and regulations, establishing specific degree programs, fiscal oversight, monitoring of DSOs and strategic planning. The USF Board of Trustees appoints and evaluates the performance of the System President, who is authorized to implement policies, recommend regulations to the USF Board of Trustees, and is responsible for the operation of the USF System.

2. The USF System operates within the USF Board of Trustees governance structure. The Regional Chancellor of USF St. Petersburg, USF Sarasota-Manatee and USF Polytechnic (Lakeland) are appointed by and report directly to the System President who also serves as the President of the University of South Florida. Campus Boards are appointed by the USF Board of Trustees for USF St. Petersburg, USF Sarasota-Manatee and USF Polytechnic (Lakeland). University of South Florida Board of
Trustees operating procedures and Sections 1004.33, 1004.34, and 1004.345 F.S. articulate the powers and duties of the Campus Boards.

3. The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the USF System and of the University of South Florida. The Provost and Executive Vice President, all Senior Vice Presidents, the Vice President for Communications, the Associate Vice President for System Initiatives, and the Regional Chancellors report directly to the System President. The System President delegates System-wide authority to the Provost and Executive Vice President, Senior Vice Presidents and Vice Presidents as appropriate. System Advisory Councils consisting of representatives from all USF institutions and regional campuses advise the System President and other System Officers. These include the Academics and Campus Environment Advisory Council, the Finance and Audit Advisory Council, and the Health Sciences and Research Advisory Council. The USF System Faculty Advisory Council is chaired by a faculty governance leader and facilitates communication on System-wide faculty and academic issues. Each Advisory Council’s role and responsibilities, scope of activities, membership and operating procedures are established and approved by the System President. Each Advisory Council will post members, meeting dates, agendas, and summary notes on its website.

4. As part of the USF System, direct support organizations (DSOs) are separately incorporated by statute (Section 1004.28 F.S.), and operate exclusively for the benefit of USF consistent with the USF System strategic plan approved by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is the ultimate governing entity authorized to establish and decertify DSOs and annually reviews and approves DSO budgets, audits and financial reports.

5. The USF System was formed to bring its member institutions together, so that collectively and collaboratively they could serve the region and beyond in optimal ways, resulting in a stronger presence and a distinctiveness that provides an unstoppable competitive differentiation. In addition to having a strong and unified voice for higher education, the USF System seeks to find and capitalize on synergies and economies of scale among its institutions that are of benefit to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and communities.

6. The USF System will develop, approve, promote and hold all institutions, regional campuses and DSOs accountable to a single, unified and transparent legislative agenda consistent with the strategic priorities approved by the USF Board of Trustees. All interaction with state, regional, national and international governing bodies will be conducted by the USF Board of Trustees, the System President, and their designees.

7. In order to ensure effective operations at all USF institutions and campuses, the following designated functions are managed centrally by an authorized and accountable office:

(a) Academic planning liaison to the Board of Governors;
(b) Diversity and Equal Opportunity;
(c) Government Relations;
(d) General Counsel;
(e) Audit and Compliance;
(f) Administrative Services including purchasing, human resources, financial and accounting systems, enterprise business systems for student, financial and employee data, payroll, and related monitoring and compliance services;
(g) Treasury and accounting, including debt management, investments, external financial reporting, banking, accounts payable, and travel processing;
(h) Research and Innovation including compliance over all research activities;
(i) Collective Bargaining;
(j) NCAA Intercollegiate Athletics;
(k) USF Libraries with the exception of USF St. Petersburg;
(l) Financial Aid;
(m) USF World for all international programs across USF institutions and campuses;
(n) Decision Support, the official data repository, in collaboration with the Offices of University Budgets, Comptroller, and Enterprise Business Systems, for data verification and reporting to state and federal agencies;
(o) University Advancement (Alumni Relations, Development and the USF Foundation);
(p) Information Technology;
(q) Communications and Marketing including ownership and use of USF names, marks and logos;
(r) Regional Accreditation coordination through a designated System Officer; and
(s) Public Safety and Emergency Response.

8. In order to improve student retention and graduation rates, the USF System will manage access, transfer, and success through a unified student information system and clearly articulated admission, retention and graduation requirements, with formal System-level articulation agreements, where appropriate, to ensure coordination of enrollment planning and management.

9. The Dean of the Graduate School and Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation will coordinate graduate policies and programs for all USF institutions and campuses. As established by the Florida Board of Governors, USF (which includes the main campus in Tampa, its College of Marine Science and USF Health), is the only doctoral degree granting institution within the USF System. USF institutions and campuses may deliver "hosted" programs collaboratively within the System as well as with other research institutions when deemed appropriate.

10. USF System institutions and campuses will articulate differentiated, yet complementary, missions through the development of strategic plans, compact plans, and work plans. These plans will be consistent with the USF System strategic plan and will be approved by the Board of Trustees. Enrollment profiles may reflect these differentiated missions. Each institution and regional campus will have its own Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) number and report separately to the National Center for Education Statistics. The System-wide reporting is coordinated through the Office of Decision Support. Each institution and regional
campus will participate as a separate reporting entity in the Voluntary System of Accountability. Each institution and regional campus is classified separately by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

11. As legislatively mandated, each regional campus will maintain SACS accreditation. The Office of the System Provost and Executive Vice President will facilitate fully informed choices by faculty in the event of a change of accreditation status for any USF institution or campus. Faculty may be granted courtesy appointments in a program/department/college on a campus different from the faculty member’s primary place of employment. Upon separate accreditation of all campuses, the USF System will establish consistent terminology for persons in like positions who are accorded like authority, and fulfill like responsibilities.

USF Board of Trustees, Adopted: May 31, 2007
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