



BOT Quarterly Meeting

University of North Florida

Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM

Adam W. Herbert University Center

Agenda

I. Call to Order

Chair Hyde will call the meeting to order.

II. Public Comment

Chair Hyde will offer those in attendance the opportunity for public comments.

III. Student Presentation

9:00 AM

Jose Alejandro Faria will share his UNF journey as an international student.

IV. Chair's Remarks

9:10 AM

V. President's Remarks and Update on Presidential Goals

9:15 AM

President Limayem will update the Board on the progress of 2023-24 Presidential Goals.

Proposed Action: No Action Required

VI. Discussion of Presidential Goals for Fiscal Year 2025

10:00 AM

President Limayem will present his proposed annual goals for FY 2025 for review and discussion.

Proposed Action: Approval; Motion and Second Required

VII. UNF Institutional Accreditation – Submit application to U.S. Department of Education (ED) to change accreditors to HLC

10:40 AM

In order to change institutional accreditors, each FL SUS institution must complete a four-step process. First, the university must select a new accreditor and submit an application to the ED providing “reasonable cause” for the change. Second, after receiving permission from the ED to change institutional accreditors, the university applies for membership with the selected accreditor. Third, the university receives membership from the new institutional accreditor and notifies the ED. Finally, each institution must maintain active accreditation with the original institutional accreditor until it receives written notice from the ED acknowledging and accepting the change in accreditors. At that point, the university will end the relationship with the original accreditor.

On September 22, 2022, the UNF BOT gave approval to the University to begin the four-step process of pursuing a change of institutional accreditors from SACSCOC to HLC. The University now seeks Board approval to submit UNF’s application to the ED.



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Dr. Karen Patterson, Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, will present this item.

Proposed Action: Approval; Motion and Second Required

VIII. Campus Master Plan Introduction 10:55 AM

State statutes mandate that universities develop a 10-year Master Plan, which must be reviewed and updated every five years.

UNF is initiating a year-long process to develop its state-required Campus Master Plan. This plan will outline the physical improvements needed across the campus over the next decade. It will detail the enhancements and expansions necessary to implement the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan and position the university for future success.

Planning and architecture consultant DLR Group will present a brief overview of the planning process and gather initial feedback from the Board.

Proposed Action: No Action Required

IX. Approval of Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 11:10 AM

Vice President Scott Bennett will present the FY 2025 Budget to the Board of Trustees.

Proposed Action: Approval; Motion and Second Required

X. Committee Reports 12:00 PM

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

The committee met on June 10, 2024. Chair Egan will provide a report to the Board.

Audit and Compliance Committee

The committee met on June 6 2024. Chair McElroy will provide a report to the Board.

Finance and Facilities Committee

The committee met on June 10, 2024. Chair Gol will provide a report to the Board.

Governance Committee

The committee met on June 6, 2024. Chair Hyde will provide a report to the Board.

XI. Consent Agenda 12:15 PM

From the Academic and Student Affairs Committee

- [Draft February 22, 2024 Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- Amended Regulation: [2.0385R Admissions – International Students](#)
- [Faculty Tenure Recommendations](#) (Page 6)



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- Tenure Upon Hire - Weimin Gao, Chair, Department of Public Health, Brooks College of Health ¹
- Tenure Upon Hire - Dr. Sebastian Fourné, Professor of Entrepreneurship, Department of Management, Coggin College of Business ¹
- [UNF General Education Requirements](#) (Page 8)
- [Academic and Student Affairs Committee Charter](#)

From the Audit and Compliance Committee

- [Draft February 15, 2024 Audit and Compliance Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- FY2025-2026 Audit Work Plan ¹
- [Audit and Compliance Charter](#)

From the Finance and Facilities Committee

- [Draft February 22, 2024 Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Draft April 11, 2024 Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- Amended Policy: [7.0010P Naming of University Elements](#)
- Amended Regulation: [6.0250R Illicit Stormwater Discharge](#)
- Amended Regulation: [13.0050R Prompt Pay](#)
- Amended Regulation: [11.0010R Schedule of Tuition and Fees](#)
- Amended Regulation: [11.0020R Special Fees, Fines and Penalties](#)
- [Coggin College of Business Phase II Construction Change Order](#) (Pages 6-7)
- [Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan \(CIP\) for FY 2025- FY2030](#) (Page 11)
- [Finance and Facilities Charter](#)

From the Governance Committee

- [Draft February 15, 2024 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Newly Appointed and Reappointed Board Members for UNF Direct Support Organizations \(DSOs\)](#) (Pages 1-2)
- [Governance Committee Charter](#)
- [Board of Trustees Bylaws](#)
- [Resolution on Presidential Authority](#)

Proposed Action: Approval; Motion and Second Required

¹ Documents available upon request.

XII.	Strengthening Community Support for UNF	12:20 PM
XIII.	BOT Roundtable Discussion	12:40 PM
XIV.	Adjournment	1:00 PM

OFFICE *of* THE PRESIDENT

June 13, 2024

United States Department of Education
CaseTeams@Ed.Gov

RE: Request to change accreditors

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to request permission for the University of North Florida (UNF) to pursue a change of institutional accreditor as allowed by the Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR § 600.11) effective July 1, 2020.

The remainder of this document provides the information required to receive approval of our request to change or add accrediting agencies as outlined in the Department of Education's letter dated July 19, 2022 (DCL ID: GEN-22-11).

a) The name of the institution's current primary accrediting agency and the name of the institution's proposed new agency

The University of North Florida's current accrediting agency is the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

The University of North Florida's proposed new agency is the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a choice based on our independent analysis of accrediting agencies.

b) Whether the institution is seeking to change primary accrediting agencies or seeking multiple accreditation

The University of North Florida is seeking primary accreditation with HLC.

c) If the institution is seeking multiple accreditations, whether the institution plans to relinquish accreditation by its current primary accrediting agency and, if so, the timeframe for relinquishment

The University of North Florida is not seeking multiple accreditations.

d) The date that the institution's current accreditation is set to expire

The University of North Florida's next SACSCOC reaffirmation year is 2029.

e) The reason(s) the institution is seeking the change

The University of North Florida's latest strategic plan, *Soaring Higher Together*, was implemented in 2023 and continues through 2028. Our actions as an institution are guided by this plan, including the strategic goals to increase enrollment to 25,000 students and to become a Top 100 Public University as ranked in U.S. News & World Report by 2028. To fulfill these ambitious goals and stay true to our mission, the University of North Florida must be innovative and nimble and use our resources efficiently. At the same time, UNF must continue to effectively serve our students, faculty, staff, and community.

Based upon our independent review of the various accrediting agencies, we believe that the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is best positioned to help us reach our goals.

Specifically, HLC has the following characteristics that will serve UNF well:

- Focus on innovation and moving higher education forward
- Exceptional stakeholder engagement
- Robust infrastructure recognized for operational excellence

By partnering with HLC, we believe UNF will be able to accomplish the ambitious goals in our strategic plan.

f) How the institution believes the new agency would strengthen institutional quality

We discovered during our examination of institutional accreditors that HLC will strengthen UNF's quality through their focus on innovation, exceptional stakeholder engagement, and robust infrastructure and operational excellence. These aspects of HLC will allow UNF to achieve the goals outlined in our newly instituted strategic plan. Further, HLC's strengths will allow UNF to be more responsive to the needs of the surrounding community through partnerships with employers and organizations that serve Northeast Florida.

Focus on Innovation

The Higher Learning Commission offers a long-standing culture of innovation and support for high-quality experimentation as evidenced by their current and previous strategic plans. With an accreditor that places strategic value on innovation in applying accreditation standards, setting trends in higher education, and enhancing its own operational processes, UNF will be better positioned to serve our own community.

As an example, HLC's innovative Open Pathways accreditation model makes accreditation processes more efficient, minimizing unnecessary bureaucratic bloat in low-risk contexts while ensuring appropriate oversight and accountability. This model will allow UNF to channel more resources to high-impact activities and innovations that enhance educational value, accessibility, and student outcomes. Since innovation is essential to achieving the

goals outlined in UNF's new strategic plan, it is critical that UNF partner with an accrediting agency that supports innovation.

Access to the new Credential Lab initiative created by HLC in response to the continuing evolution of higher education credentials will also strengthen UNF's quality. The University of North Florida recently began offering digital badges and is exploring micro-credentials as well. The Higher Learning Commission is the only accrediting agency with an initiative focused on this rapidly changing trend. Credential Lab is focused on "designing a quality assurance system for credential content providers and supporting institutions and providers to ensure quality learning experiences and outcomes." This type of innovative guidance will help ensure that UNF credentials are also of the highest quality and responsive to growing workforce needs. The Credential Lab is just one innovative example of how HLC can help UNF be better equipped to successfully navigate new and emerging postsecondary trends while meeting the needs of our students and our community.

Exceptional Stakeholder Engagement

In researching accrediting agencies, we also learned that HLC consistently engages in collegial and collaborative engagement with its member institutions, state and system governing bodies, and other postsecondary stakeholders. The University of North Florida is looking for an accrediting agency that is committed to building strong partnerships with member institutions and one that has demonstrated an ability to create effective working relationships with state governing bodies. The Commission's exceptional stakeholder engagement will improve overall quality at UNF in the following ways:

- The Higher Learning Commission's investment in relationships and stakeholder engagement helps to facilitate efficient cooperation and coordination across many stakeholders, including state, system, and local governing boards. Meeting the workforce needs of Northeast Florida is a high priority for UNF, and we must be nimble while remaining in compliance with multiple governing bodies. Staff at HLC take the time to become familiar with relevant state and system policies and routinely communicate with state and system office staff regarding important federal and state policy changes as well as emerging trends and issues. Working with an accreditor that recognizes and accommodates various governance structures and multiple compliance requirements will make it more efficient for UNF to establish academic programs that can fill employment gaps.
- The Higher Learning Commission utilizes a policy review process that engages all member institutions. Our investigation indicated that a review process engaging all member institutions is less likely to lead to accreditation policies and processes that conflict with state, system, and local policies. The Higher Learning Commission recognizes that its members have different missions, plans, and resources, and therefore fully engages all institutions when setting or changing policies. This practice will help ensure that UNF remains in compliance with various governing and oversight bodies while striving to achieve our strategic plan goals.

Robust Infrastructure and Operational Excellence

During our comprehensive review of accrediting agencies, we learned that HLC has developed a robust and efficient infrastructure to support all accreditation-related processes.

Utilizing this infrastructure will lead to new efficiencies for UNF. The following examples demonstrate opportunities for UNF to redistribute resources to our core mission and strategic goals in order to strengthen our institution:

- The Higher Learning Commission utilizes a proactive electronic substantive change screening system to help institutions detect changes that require additional reporting based on potential risk to educational quality. Early identification of potential risks is essential to maintaining quality. The screening system also creates documentation that HLC and member institutions can rely upon should a federal audit question the change.
- The Commission distributes responsibilities between the vice presidents of accreditation relations and the peer review teams in a way that also creates efficiencies for member institutions. In order to remain focused on day-to-day accreditation issues and be more readily available to support member institutions, HLC vice presidents do not travel with the peer review teams for on-site visits. This is a more effective infrastructure, which will provide UNF staff with efficient access to the assigned vice president when needed, so that we have more time to strengthen internal processes and programs that better serve our students.
- The Higher Learning Commission also has a well-established governance structure to provide timely decisions to member institutions. This governance structure will further strengthen quality at UNF, enable the us to achieve the ambitious goals outlined in our strategic plan, and allow the University to be more responsive to employer needs. The Commission's Board of Trustees meets three times per year to make decisions regarding applications from new institutions and sanctions for current member institutions. The Board has delegated authority for all other decisions to its Institutional Actions Council (IAC), which meets approximately every six weeks. For UNF in Jacksonville, the largest city by landmass in the United States, the ability to receive timely decisions regarding new off-campus instructional sites will enable us to be nimbler and more responsive to the needs of students, local business employees, and community partners.

Our conversations with various HLC leaders also gave us confidence that the organization can accommodate an expansion in membership while maintaining the current level of service and efficiency for which HLC is known. We were pleased to learn about the organization's superior infrastructure, which helps to facilitate efficient accreditation submissions and quality assurance reviews, thereby supporting speed to market -- a critical component to successful innovation and to becoming a university for the future.

g) How the new agency's standards are more closely aligned with the institution's mission

We acknowledge that all accreditors recognized by USED must address common requirements established by the department in the evaluation of their respective member institutions. In fact, our independent review of accreditation standards across multiple accreditation agencies did not identify any material differences between HLC's accreditation standards and those of our current accreditor when examined holistically. However, our research revealed important differences in how the various accrediting agencies apply the

standards and evaluate institutional evidence. For instance, some agencies consider the standards to be strict and prescriptive and apply the standards equally across all types of institutions. Others apply standards in light of each institution's unique mission, goals, and resources. The latter approach allows institutions more flexibility in meeting standards in ways that are well-suited and appropriate for each individual institution. The application of standards is essential to UNF's success as described in detail below.

With the introduction of our latest strategic plan, *Soaring Higher Together*, UNF's mission was revised as follows:

At the University of North Florida, we ignite a passion for learning and discovery through transformational education in a supportive environment that leads students to rewarding careers and lifelong success. Our beautiful campus is a hub for talent development, relevant research and community engagement, where we enrich lives and fuel economic and overall prosperity of Northeast Florida and beyond.

The strategic plan also introduced a new vision that states, "The University of North Florida will be the destination of choice for talent and for public and private investment." As previously mentioned, the strategic plan also established two institutional aspirations: to become a Top 100 Public University as ranked in U.S. News & World Report - and to strategically grow to an enrollment of 25,000 students, both by 2028. To accomplish these goals, UNF needs an accreditor that understands our unique mission, goals, and environment and who also allows us to be innovative and nimble in pursuing our goals. The Higher Learning Commission clearly emerged as an accrediting agency that allows member institutions sufficient flexibility to function in a way that is best suited for them, which we believe makes HLC best suited for UNF.

High standards, quality, and rigor are also essential to the continued success of UNF. While a change to accreditation through HLC may necessitate modifying how we monitor and demonstrate compliance with standards and demonstrate our commitment to continuous quality improvement, there can be no lessening of standards or rigor in changing accreditors. We are confident that there will be no such loss by changing accrediting agencies. In fact, we believe that the flexibility allowed by HLC will help us accelerate the rate at which we can enhance institutional quality, execute our mission, and achieve our goals because of the level of emphasis provided in areas of strategic importance to UNF.

As an example, UNF recognizes viewpoint diversity and civil discourse as critical to performance of our mission. We believe our students must be prepared to function as global citizens and professionals while also serving their local communities. Protections for these various perspectives and opinions in the pursuit of knowledge and discovery are also essential to the broader higher education enterprise. In that regard, all recognized accreditors have standards that address the role of academic freedom within the institution's academic enterprise. We have determined that HLC appropriately supports academic freedom through encouraging its member and applicant institutions to actively "encourage curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success" (Criteria 1.C.1.). The Higher Learning Commission also expects institutions to demonstrate

that they foster “a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives” (Criteria 1.C.3.). In addition, HLC’s emphasis on civic engagement aligns with the State University System Board of Governors recent efforts to improve civil discourse within its higher education institutions ([Florida Board of Governors Civil Discourse Final Report](#)). These standards collectively address viewpoint diversity and civil discourse in a way that closely aligns with UNF’s culture and values.

Additionally, our review of HLC standards showed a strong support for community engagement, which is an essential component of the UNF strategic plan. Our dedication to the surrounding communities is exemplified through the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement certification received in 2010 and recertified in 2020. The University of North Florida was also awarded the United States President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll from 2011 through 2016 for supporting exemplary community service programs and raising the visibility of effective practices in campus-community partnerships. The Higher Learning Commission’s Criteria 1.B. states that “the institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.” Criteria 1.B.1 expands Criteria 1.B. by stating “the institution’s actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any subordinate entity.” Additionally, Criteria 1.B.3 asserts that an institution “engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.” The Commission’s support of community engagement is directly aligned with UNF’s focus on meeting the needs of Northeast Florida.

Finally, we believe that HLC’s standards regarding program offerings are also best suited to support UNF’s mission. The Higher Learning Commission’s Criteria 3.B.3 requires institutions provide “students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.” This criterion is central to UNF’s mission of providing “transformational education in a supportive environment,” thus leading “students to rewarding careers and lifelong success.” In addition, Criteria 3.B.4 states that “faculty and students contribute to the scholarship, creative work and discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution’s mission.” Our university is also committed to being “a hub for talent development, relevant research and community engagement, where we enrich lives and fuel economic and overall prosperity of Northeast Florida and beyond.” This portion of our mission statement demonstrates our commitment to scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge in light of our own unique mission as outlined in HLC’s criteria.

As stated earlier, institutional accreditors have very similar standards because they must address common requirements established by the USED. The application of the criteria is what separates them from one another. The Higher Learning Commission’s application of the criteria on mission, teaching, and learning are best suited for UNF. We believe that the approach HLC takes in applying their criteria will allow UNF to better fulfill our strategic plan, achieve our goals, and continuously improve.

This concludes UNF's responses to the required information outlined in the USED letter dated July 19, 2022 (DCL ID: GEN-22-11).

We also wish to acknowledge Florida Statute 1008.47, which requires all public institutions to change accrediting agencies. As you know, the law does not mandate that Florida institutions seek accreditation with a specific accreditor. We attest that our own research has led us to independently conclude that HLC is an ideal fit considering our institutional mission, strategic goals, students, and the communities we serve. Despite this legislative requirement, the University of North Florida would still enthusiastically seek to change accreditors pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR § 600.11) that went into effect July 1, 2020, for the reasons outlined above.

We are also aware that to comply with U.S. Department of Education (ED) requirements for participation in Title IV programming, UNF must maintain its current accreditation with SACSCOC while pursuing accreditation with HLC. The University of North Florida will submit a Fifth-Year Interim Report to SACSCOC by March 1, 2025. The University's decennial reaffirmation of accreditation takes place in 2029 and we are hopeful that ED will approve the request to change from SACSCOC to HLC before work commences on the SACSCOC Compliance Certification Report in summer 2025. A timely decision will help UNF to move quickly toward changing accreditors, achieving our strategic goals, and efficiently utilizing public resources. I assure ED that UNF will maintain accreditation with SACSCOC until permission to relinquish SACSCOC accreditation is granted.

In keeping with the requirements of 34 CFR § 600.11(a)(1)(i), included is a file containing the materials required in GEN 22-11. The supporting materials with a hyperlinked table of contents is provided in Appendix A.

If the Department needs additional materials or information, please do not hesitate to ask. Please send those requests to Chadwick.Lockley@unf.edu, UNF's accreditation liaison.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Moez Limayem".

Moez Limayem, Ph.D.
President

cc: Karen B. Patterson, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs
cc: Mr. Chadwick Lockley, SACSCOC Liaison and Director of Institutional Effectiveness

University of North Florida 2024-25 Goals

Goal 1: Student Success

- Increase retention of first-time in college students.
- Increase institutional focus on transfer student success.
- Ensure that students are graduating with robust career opportunities and that UNF is supplying the local region and beyond with talent to meet the workforce needs.
- Increase high impact practices for undergraduates (research, paid internships, and experiential learning).

Goal 1: Student Success Measures

Metrics	2023-24	2024-25 Goals	Strategic Plan Goal
Academic Progress Rate (Retention with 2.0 or Higher GPA; PBF 5)	77.7% (2022-23)	82% (2023-24)	90% (2026-27)
FCS AA Transfer Three-Year Graduation Rate (PBF 9a)	62.6% (2020-23)	64% (2021-24)	70% (2024-27)
Bachelor's Graduates Employed or Enrolled (PBF 1)	72% (2021-22)	73% (2022-23)	77% (2025-26)
Undergraduate Students Engaged in Internships for College Credit	4,144 (2023-24)	4,350 (2024-25)	3,850 (2026-27)

Goal 2: Research and Innovation

- Increase contract and grant submissions for research by 25%.
- Increase internal investments in research by 50%.
- Expand flexible workload guidelines to maximize faculty research, scholarship and creative activity contributions campus-wide.

Goal 3: Community Engagement

- Establish a baseline for community partnerships.
- Increase the depth and breadth of UNF's partnerships.
 - Recruitment of UNF Interns and graduates
 - Philanthropy support greater than 100K
 - Research & Contracts
 - Volunteers on UNF Advisory Boards

- Continue to improve UNF's presence in the community.
- Increase the number of badging and credentialing programs with area businesses to help address workforce needs.
- Continue the preparation for the renewal of Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement and submit in March 2025.

Goal 4: Faculty and Staff Success

- Continue regular and consistent communication with faculty and staff in the form of assemblies, mixers, small group meetings and written updates.
- Review and implement recommendations from the taskforce on "Enhancing the Culture of Belonging for Employees."
- Streamline four administrative processes: traveling, hiring, onboarding and purchasing.

Goal 5: Funding

- Increase philanthropy to \$33M+.
- Continue securing government funding.
- Increase Auxiliary Revenues by 3%.