**Florida Gulf Coast University**
Faculty Select Panel on University Growth and Academic Quality
A Report to the FGCU Faculty Senate
Submitted with a request for Senate approval, February 22, 2013
Approved by Faculty Senate, March 15, 2013

I. INTRODUCTION

FGCU has grown rapidly over the last decade, increasing the number of students whom faculty teach and guide, the number of programs the University offers, and the size of the physical plant in which this occurs. Financial support for this growth has not kept pace. FGCU as an institution now faces real threats to its future.

State funding for the University's enterprise has changed dramatically in recent years, dropping to 40% of FGCU's total budget, and funding paradigms may well be changing in more fundamental ways in the near future.[1] This shortfall in funding actually grows as student enrollment numbers increase, as represented in this figure that is a standard part of the quarterly Board of Trustees Information System (BOTIS) Report.
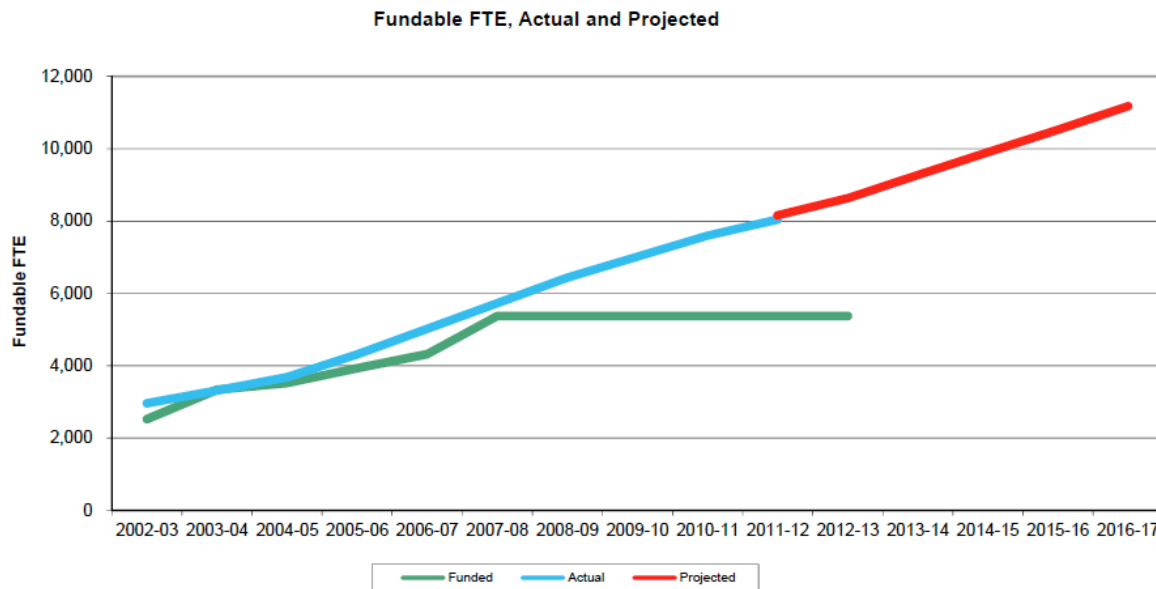
Figure 1: Board of Trustees Fundable FTE Information Systems Report

This large and growing disparity stands as both a resource problem and a quality gap for FGCU.[2] The University cannot address this shortfall simply by unilaterally increasing tuition, as the BOG's most recent action setting tuition rates in June 2012 dismayingly revealed. Consequently, this situation will compromise the faculty's ability to deliver quality education for FGCU students both in terms of section size and classroom space, and perhaps more critically in faculty and staff numbers and teaching loads (as well as faculty morale and retention).

In addition, there is an emerging focus at the state (and national) level on the use of performance metrics in determining the use of tax dollars for higher education, potentially calling into question the viability of the liberal arts model and approach to higher education and pitting

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degree programs against one another in the name of determining the relative values of various degrees. The push for a performance-funding model is part of a broader emphasis on accountability from the state (both in the form of oversight from the Florida State University System [SUS] Board of Governors – the BOG – and the state Legislature and Governor). It is anticipated that in the near future, all universities in Florida will be held to mostly centralized measures of performance to determine funding decisions as part of a nationwide push for reform on scale that has no historical precedent in American higher education.[3]

These shifting paradigms of assessment, accountability and funding, combined with the serial defunding of state universities over the past decade, almost certainly guarantee an uncertain funding future for public higher education in Florida, even if resource allocation stabilizes and/or funding is tied to specific performance metrics and models.[4] Though the precise framework for performance funding is still in flux, draft templates being developed by the BOG strongly suggest an approach that emphasizes STEM degree production, low overall cost of program delivery, and graduates' starting salaries, among other things.[5] These and other changes to higher education funding, including the possibility of differential tuition for degree programs (charging less for degrees deemed high-wage/high-demand by the legislature, for instance[6]), might well imperil the viability of other degree programs and FGCU's ability to deliver the well-rounded, comprehensive liberal arts education students expect and deserve from what is commonly understood as a college education.

The signs, then, are clear. We are at a critical point in the development of FGCU. Many external conditions are changing, thus calling FGCU's current strategy and its assumptions into question.

The current situation and the University's approach to growth are not sustainable. The faculty now have an opportunity to participate in the response to these threats and more clearly define FGCU's academic identity and commitments, especially within the context of state and local priorities. The faculty's ability to fulfill the stated mission of FGCU and the goals we share with the wider University community as educators dedicated to academic excellence, scholarship and service to our academic fields and to our community depends on our examination of these phenomena objectively. On the basis of that examination, faculty can meaningfully and responsibly participate in constructive planning processes that will determine, among other things, the number and qualifications of the students the University admits, the programs the University offers, the size of the physical plant, and campus land use.

In this context, the Faculty Senate Select Panel on Growth and Quality (hereafter referred to as "the Panel") was established in October 2012 as part of the Senate Executive Team's Leadership Initiatives for 2012-13. The Panel met 14 times in the academic year (see Faculty Senate website for complete archive of meeting summaries). This report to the FGCU Faculty Senate includes the panel's charge from the Faculty Senate President, panel membership, the report's audience and dissemination, and a discussion of methods, contexts, issues, options, and concluding recommendations. A complete archive of summaries from the panel's work is available at the Faculty Senate website.

II. CHARGE TO PANEL FROM SENATE PRESIDENT

The Panel was convened to undertake and engage faculty in a focused exploration of the dominant issues related to enrollment growth and academic quality within the budgetary, political, and economic realities of the foreseeable horizon in Florida public higher education.[7] Distinct from a decision-making or policy-recommending body, the Panel focused on researching and framing faculty perspectives on growth and quality within the relevant economic, political, and institutional contexts associated with public higher education in Florida. The specific charge to the panel was twofold:

1. To conceptualize and facilitate the collection of relevant faculty perspectives on University growth and academic quality. Reduced to its purist form, this charge if stated in the form of a question is: what should FGCU be growing into as an institution, and how?
2. To synthesize those perspectives into a focused report reflecting the dominant majority and minority perspectives and contexts. By focusing on growth and quality, the Faculty Select Panel has the latitude to foreground questions not only about the comparative merits and impacts of varying rates of student enrollment growth and growth targets related to academic quality from a faculty perspective, but also underlying questions about what standards of quality or excellence we aspire to, what academic quality looks like at an institutional level, and what resources, conditions, and capacities are necessary for lasting educational excellence.

In other words, "growth" is (and was in the Panel's work) seen as a concept that encompasses both the quantitative – headcounts and enrollment targets – as well as the qualitative – ideas about improvement of educational quality and academic excellence.

III. AUDIENCE AND DISSEMINATION
Though this report will be shared widely across campus, its primary audience is other FGCU faculty, particularly those faculty representatives serving in Faculty Senate and on its Teams and Committees with responsibilities related to academic quality and resource allocation, and/or those faculty serving on the University Planning and Budget Council and its constituent Committees – in short, those faculty who are most closely and directly involved in the planning, budget, and curriculum, instruction, and assessment processes for the University.

IV. PANEL MEMBERSHIP
The select nature of the Panel's membership emphasized a mix of institutional memory, content knowledge in both budget/planning and process facilitation, and the members' professional recognition among their peers. Members:

Margaret Banyan, Associate Professor of Public Policy, College of Arts and Sciences
Cecil Carter, Associate Professor of Education, College of Education
Stephen Drew, Professor of Management, Lutgert College of Business
Amanda Evans, Assistant Professor of Social Work, College of Health Professions and Social Work
Win Everham, Professor of Marine and Ecological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences

Sim Komisar, Associate Professor of Environmental Engineering, Whitaker College of
    Engineering

The Panel was facilitated by Faculty Senate President Douglas Harrison.

V. DATA COLLECTION AND STUDY APPROACH
A. Internal Considerations
As a relatively new institution, Florida Gulf Coast University has the challenge of establishing an identity that reflects its mission and vision and meets the needs of its five-county service region. Ideally, strategies related to organizational growth and academic quality of education should reflect the unique identity of the institution.

After receiving its charge, the Panel determined to ground its work in a review of key internal documents, reports, and data that would help to identify trends in how the University historically managed growth and to explore how quality is defined at Florida Gulf Coast University.

The Panel examined the following internal documents:

- FGCU Board of Trustees (BOT) Information System Quarterly Briefing, August 2012
- FGCU 2010-11 Board of Governors (BOG) Annual Accountability Report
- The Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPED) Custom Feedback Report, 2011 (see Appendix 4)
- FGCU President's Report to BOT on Budget Cuts and Layoffs 9-18-12
- FGCU New Student First Time in College (FTIC) and Transfer Enrollment Targets for 2013 (see Appendix 5)
- "Nine Flawed Assumptions of Higher Education Reform" - FGCU Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee, January 2012
- FGCU 2012-13 Legislative Agenda
- FGCU Presidential Performance Measures 2012-13
- FGCU Presidential Evaluation 2011-12
- FGCU Mission Statement
- FGCU Strategic Plan 2010-15

These documents assisted the Panel in developing an understanding of how FGCU as an institution variously defines quality and how the University plans and manages growth from a strategic perspective. The Panel determined that this process of "self-evaluation" helps better identify areas that may, from a faculty perspective, lack congruence related to mission, organizational values, identity, and the FGCU strategic plan.

B. External Considerations
At the same time, FGCU does not exist in a vacuum. We are part of a larger system of public higher education that has its own expectations and measures of accountability, as well as part of a political and economic ecosystem that operates with a set of values and assumptions often distinctly at odds with the historical norms of academe, as noted above in the discussion of performance funding and other experimental approaches to accountability. In order to better understand the external challenges facing FGCU, the Panel reviewed documents, reports, data,

and communications emerging from multiple entities at the state level, including: the Florida State Legislature, Florida Governor's Office, Florida State University System Board of Governors, the Florida Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Higher Education (BRTF), and the Board of Governor's Commission on Higher Education Access and Degree Attainment (BOGCHEADA). The documents and reports reviewed from external sources included:

- The Florida Board of Governors (BOG) 2012-2025 Strategic Plan
- The BOG 2010-2011 Annual Accountability Report
- The BOG Tuition Differential Report
- Florida Blue Ribbon Task Force on State Higher Education Reform Final Report
- The BOG Performance Funding Model Draft, January 2013
- BOG Commission on Higher Education Access and Attainment

From the Panel's review of these documents and the issues they engage, three consistent and interpenetrating themes emerged:

- Growth (both in terms of growing enrollments and the maturation of institutional identity and effectiveness)
- Academic quality (what does this mean, how do we as a faculty know when we are achieving and maintaining it, and what resource thresholds are needed to guarantee it?)
- Chronic funding shortfalls

At the state and national level, these factors are most often discussed within the context of education reform. Current educational reform efforts – largely driven by political forces, private sector advocacy groups, and other interests exterior to academe – have upended long-standing assumptions about the value of robust and reliable public support for the traditional liberal arts model of higher education. The history and character of these efforts are complex and beyond the scope of this report to discuss at length. However, the thrust of reformist energy aimed at public higher education tends to focus on a cluster of ideas.[8] These typically include an emphasis on the following, among other ideas:

- *Education should respond to the economic and workforce needs of the state.*
  The perspective that higher education should be driven by the workforce needs of the state implies the development of a hierarchy of relevant programs. This hierarchy places Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), health professions, or other high-wage/high-demand degrees above other programs that emphasize liberal arts, humanities, or social sciences. This perspective also implies that certain programs can provide better economic outcomes for students (and therefore the state economy) and aims to incentivize participation in those fields. Because there are limited resources to support students in the state, other programs that are not perceived as useful or relevant have a questionable future. Finally, this perspective deemphasizes the historically important role higher education has traditionally served to help prepare an educated citizenry support and shape a vibrant democracy and fails to recognize that narrowly construed degree programs do not produce the kind of broadly trained and creative workers needed in a global economy.[9]

- *Customer driven models of higher education delivery.*

The second core idea in these documents views higher education through a business-model lens. This perspective perceives "customer service" or customer satisfaction as the standard for good educational outcomes. The competitive model is also, in part, the basis for the push for less expensive degree programs, such as Governor Rick Scott's $10,000 degree (see funding pressures below).

- *Increase degree production while maintaining quality education.*
  The third driver at the state level is the recognized need to increase access for students to enroll in and graduate from universities and colleges. According to current BOG Chairman, Dean Colson, in a January 2013 address to the Florida Board of Governors, enrollment in the SUS has grown by over 35,000 students. However, he also acknowledges that there are limits to what he essentially describes as a challenge in three-parts: increase enrollment while simultaneously maintaining quality education *and* doing more with less.[10]

The inherent destabilizing character of these drivers has been addressed in previous documents, including in a study by the Florida Gulf Coast University Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee and its 2012 report, "Nine Flawed Assumptions of Higher Education Reform." Among other important findings, the 2012 report identified the following concerns:

- Top-down planning for narrowly construed degree programs does not produce the kind of broadly trained and creative workers needed to sustain the U.S. economy and spur innovation (college degrees that focus on solely on job training for today will generate graduates ill equipped to create the technologies and innovations of tomorrow).
- Liberal arts programs are essential for both an educated citizenry and workers who can "recognize, analyze and solve complex and unfamiliar problems."[11] As part of an economic model in which students will change careers and compete in a global economy, these skills and aptitudes are essential for long-term career success and the sustainability of a vibrant, dynamic free-market democracy.
- Success in STEM programs is not simply a matter of funding incentives for students who have already reached college, but also an issue of both student preparation in K-12 programs and student interest and aptitude.
- Consumer models of higher education place too much emphasis on guaranteeing students certain outcomes based on their ability to pay, rather than success in their educational endeavors.
- Pressures to become more "efficient" in the delivery of higher education while maintaining quality are unrealistic. The assumption of "efficiency" has come to mean – and prioritize above all else – the numbers of degrees granted or students enrolled at the least possible cost/expense. In reality, the efficiency-quality standard also involves assessing student learning and achievement, engaging in continuous improvement initiatives individually and institutionally, investing in student progress toward graduation, and understanding the risks to quality as class sizes increase and modes of instruction change and evolve.[12] (For more on the fraught nature of "efficiency" rhetoric, see page 14 below.)

From these themes and the previously discussed data, the Panel created a set of three focus areas and posed three related questions to FGCU faculty through an online forum in November and

December 2012. Faculty were asked to respond with open-ended comments to the following prompts:

- *Funding/Cost Structures*
  What strategies should FGCU pursue to increase revenue streams and/or curb expenditures in the future? Our current Strategic Plan points us toward expanding the breadth of academic programs that we offer, expanding the number of degrees awarded, hiring faculty for these purposes all while providing financial support for graduate programs and increasing scholarship and research. This plan relies on increasing tuition by enrollment growth and by increasing the tuition rate (page 36 of 2010 Strategic Plan located here). What do you think of these ideas and what other ideas should we consider as we move forward?

- *Academic Quality*
  Various entities at the state level (including the Legislature, Governor's Office, Board of Governors) have been moving toward a focus on areas of strategic emphasis, such as education, health professions, emerging technologies, high wage/high demand degrees, which would leave other liberal arts programs at risk. In the context of increased emphasis on specific types or clusters of "valuable" degrees, what should guide our decision-making about the relative value of other degree programs?

- *Institutional Growth*
  FGCU has grown at a steady rate since we opened in 1997. The current FGCU Strategic Plan (located here) and the Strategic Plan of the Board of Governors (located here) both identify enrollment growth as a continued strategy in the future. The graph (see Figure 1 on page 1 of this report) is from page 11 of the most recent FGCU BOTIS quarterly report (see page 11 in the report located here). With this data in mind, if we must use resources strategically, what should guide our decision-making process?

In an attempt to solicit faculty feedback on the issues noted above, a discussion forum was created on ANGEL with an invitation for faculty to submit anonymous recommendations and comments. Appendices 1-3 collect faculty responses to these questions.

The number of comments received as a proportion of the entire faculty population was not large enough to generalize across the faculty as a whole; however, the responses did identify constellations of internal issues surrounding the FGCU faculty perspectives on the growth-quality-budget triad.

VI. ANALYTICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS
Early and throughout the Panel's work, a constellation of key issues came into sharper focus:

- The urgency of changes needed to address the chronic funding crisis within state higher education in general and FGCU in particular.
- The sense that the trajectory or arc of FGCU's development has reached a turning or inflection point.

- The systemic nature of the budgetary and organizational challenges facing all members of the SUS. FGCU's problems are not its alone but shared in differing degrees by all institutions in the SUS.
- The extent to which faculty may feel disengaged from these wider issues and disempowered in their ability to influence change with University administration and the political process.
- The centrality of informed, concerned, shared and strategic leadership and governance processes, without which the institution risks quick organizational fixes and short term financial solutions that do not benefit the institution or its values in the long-run.

Running through the Panel's discussion of these issues, a question that prevailed and recurred was the challenge faculty face in defining what academic quality means. This question – what do we, as a faculty, mean by academic quality and what does it entail? – is particularly important for faculty to help articulate our role as custodians of the curriculum and academic standards. Without a shared definition of quality, the pressures of continued enrollment growth in the context of flat or decreased funding could lead to resource allocation that focuses on short-term problems rather than the critical issue of maintaining a quality education experience for all students.

Academic quality is commonly defined by a set of core features, expectations, and conditions related to resources, curriculum, and regulation of standards. According to Eaton (2006):

> Faculty and administrators, when asked about academic quality, usually refer to the resources and processes needed for a vibrant learning environment. For many, a traditional view of higher education academic quality is about a credentialed and talented faculty, robust academic standards, research productivity, and rich and diverse curricula. These characteristics of quality are buttressed by adequate financial resources and physical facilities. In this context, there is often discussion about fundamental academic values such as responsible institutional autonomy, academic freedom and commitment to a mission-based system as vital to the academic success of higher education. This view of higher education rests on an acknowledgment that critical academic decisions should be and have been, for centuries, the province of faculty. Faculty decide the content of curricula and academic standards. Faculty develop new programs and revise existing programs. Faculty are responsible for decisions about transfer of credit. Faculty are pivotal in decisions about the organizational structure of a college or university through which academic programs will be offered. Faculty, through these acts, define the academic quality of the higher education enterprise for millions of students[13]

Though these factors and conditions are almost universally present wherever institutions of higher learning consistently achieve academic quality, the precise measures of quality may vary, sometimes considerably, depending on the character or identity of an institution. Commonly defined accountability factors such as graduate rates, job placement rates, transfer rates, and attrition and retention make most sense as measures of quality when understood in terms of localized factors and contexts.

A definition of quality at FGCU must take into account the institutional mission and vision, regional needs, and student demographics. Such a definition should include a mix of both the conditions that must exist for academic quality to take root (norms and practices along the lines of those described by Eaton above) and correlated accountability measures that quantify outputs in light of the values and priorities the institution has identified as central to its identity and purpose.

The need for FGCU faculty to define academic quality more clearly is discussed further in the Conclusions and Recommendations section of the report below. For now, it must be noted that any meaningful definitions and measures of academic quality flow from a clearly defined mission and vision that make a clear, compelling case for FGCU's identity – who we are as an institution, what we stand for, and how specifically we see ourselves fulfilling a unique role in the SUS and standing out within the state and nation. Without the proper foundation on which to define and measure institutional progress in achieving academic quality, FGCU can neither effectively document success nor allocate resources efficiently and effectively. Indeed, FGCU may have reached a point in its development – and external dynamics may be trending in such a direction – that a reconsideration and substantive revision of the mission and vision of the institution are in order.

Finally, the discussion that follows assumes that the challenges and opportunities the University faces are of such a momentous nature that no clear sense of how to proceed from a faculty perspective can come into focus without thoroughly engaging a wide range of relevant issues, dynamics, options, and potential actions. The Panel grappled often with the need to take seriously fashionable ideas and commonly proposed solutions that seem to violate fundamental norms of academic life and practice, and often common sense. Discussion of these concepts and some of the strategies that exist to deal with relevant issues should not be taken as an endorsement by the Panel unless expressly indicated.

VII. STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUES – CLOSING THE GAP
Strategies for closing the resource gap discussed above could take at least four separate or combined paths.

- The first strategy maintains the status quo model of continuing to grow enrollment (at whatever rate) to generate the bulk of additional operating revenue.
- The second strategy aims to increase FGCU's state appropriations and/or to expand other sources of revenue.
- The third strategy focuses on better identifying overlapping or ineffective institutional efforts or programs and thereby increasing efficiency in the use of existing revenue.
- The fourth approach aims to strategically reduce and/or control FTE enrollment growth over time to a degree and in a way that has not historically been present in the University's approach to enrollment management.[14]

What follows is a discussion of each strategy and a reflection on some consequences of that approach from a faculty perspective. The sequence in which these strategies are presented should not imply any order of preference or endorsement. Additionally, the delineation and discussion of these four strategies is undertaken with an awareness that individual strategies might work in

various combination(s), and that features of some or all of them are already part of the budgeting and planning process to a certain extent. The focus here is to provide an exploration of the main options available and/or the primary approaches most often raised or implied in discussions of budgeting and planning.

A. Closing the Gap: Maintain the Status Quo
One option for addressing the growth-quality challenges facing FGCU is to do nothing differently – that is, continuing the current approach of growing student enrollment at some rate to generate operating revenue and (attempt to) fill existing budget gaps.

Discussion
For some time now, while each new cohort of enrolled students has generated additional revenues (dollars per FTE) that apply to operating costs, these revenues have fallen short of the actual cost to deliver a quality education to FGCU students (in effect, a student admitted today is generating revenue to pay for students who have already been admitted). The divergence between actual and funded FTE beginning around 2007-08 (see Figure 1) has increased pressure on personnel and infrastructure. Since there is no guarantee that faculty and staff hires will keep pace with enrollment growth (indeed, class sizes are expected to rise in the coming years), there is a real and present limit to FGCU's ability to continue to grow effectively in a way that maintains academic quality.

Consequences of this approach
FGCU's current approach to managing growth – continued enrollment growth without adequate funding to support the lifecycle costs of educating students – is not sustainable. This is the operational reality of Figure 1 on page 1 of this report that tracks the gap in real versus funded FTE.

To a certain extent, the status quo is self-limiting under current conditions. The significant and sustained fall-off in Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds – the money the state has historically used to fund, among other capital projects, new construction in the SUS – means that for the first time since its opening, FGCU does not currently have a new academic building under construction even as enrollment has continued to grow. Consequently, the University is approaching a point at which the physical plant will reach capacity.[15]

Simply continuing to increase enrollment in individual sections has a limited ability to absorb growth as the University reaches the capacity of classrooms, even without considering the possible impact of this trend on quality of education. Once the saturation point of classroom utilization is reached (that is, when all classrooms are fully utilized with maximum section sizes during an extended instructional week of six days), additional enrollment growth beyond the current limit of the physical plant would require the utilization of off-site facilities, significant changes in the academic calendar (such as a switch to a full three-semester calendar year), or substantial and potentially disruptive expansion of distance learning (DL) course offerings in order to significantly increase FTE generation.[16]

Over the short term (until the limits of the University's physical space are reached), the consequences of the status quo strategy will be to increase the workload of the current faculty

and staff. Faculty loads are based on contact hours, which are based on the number of sections taught and the hours of instruction, not on the numbers of students instructed. Yet the effort required for grading, delivery of in-class active-learning activities, field and laboratory preparations, mentoring of student scholarship and creative efforts, and community service learning projects, is directly related to student numbers. In addition, successfully teaching larger sections requires preparation and accommodation that are substantially different than what is required for smaller classes. Scaling up class size can impact FGCU faculty's ability to provide an effective learning environment for students, ultimately impacting recruitment and retention and the viability of the mission and vision.

This situation gives rise to a faculty concern about the sustainability of the University's current trajectory. Such perspectives surfaced in the Panel's call for faculty feedback, in which several faculty respondents indicated concern regarding what appears to be uncontrolled growth at FGCU. Representative examples include:

> "It is my feeling that this University's largest problems are being caused by continued unmanaged growth. The quality of this University will decline as more students are allowed in without regard for who will teach them and where they will be taught. This University needs to stop its growth until it can manage it at a level that will not cause the learning of our students to be negatively affected." (See Appendix 3, page 3)

> "So far, I believe in the strategic plan as given - and the manner in which it has addressed growth. Yes we need to cap growth - to be sustainable given the lousy budget card from the state. However, use this as an opportunity to examine what we are doing and what we ought to do better. In terms of undergraduates, it is very difficult to ascertain which majors the incoming freshman will populate and complete with a degree. So capping growth must be linked to which programs attract most students and how well we assist students in making the choices that are of interest and serve as a good fit. This is definitely a guessing game that I would leave up to the experts in this area, but my two cents is to tie institutional growth back to the numbers game - retention rates, program capacities. Not directly linked but important to consider is to provide students with realistic expectations - include a freshman/beginning students at FGCU (even those who are not freshman level) with a seminar that allows them to understand what their areas/programs of best fit are." (See Appendix 3, page 4; complete faculty feedback collected in Appendices 1-3)

None of this is to say or imply that overall growth rates have not declined on a percentage basis (they have as part of what has been described as a "soft landing" from the boom years of recurring double-digit enrollment growth in the mid-2000s). Rather, the concern in this regard seems to center on the absence of a clear funding and resourcing strategy to meet the University's needs that does not centrally rely on perpetually growing enrollments at some rate. Indeed, the Panel's review of the FGCU 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (pp. 24-25) noted that the current strategies for managing growth continue to emphasize enrollment growth and increased space utilization to accommodate increased FTE.

Living within the University's means may mean reconsidering this access-driven growth approach if quality of education is to remain a primary goal – if, in the words of the University's mission, FGCU will attain "national prominence in undergraduate education with expanding recognition for graduate programs." Without a shared definition of quality at FGCU, it is difficult to document any impact of the current approach. At the point of departure from the funding levels per enrolled FTE provided by the state ca. 2008, FGCU increased student numbers with unknown consequences and impacts to the quality of curriculum and instruction. An array of measures exist and are tracked – many mandated by external agencies or oversight bodies – in a variety of reports (the quarterly BOTIS reports, the President's Performance Measures, internal program review, and external accreditation processes, among others). But the precise way these metrics indicate or measure quality is either not always clear or remains implied and unarticulated. The Conclusions and Recommendations section discusses actions faculty may wish to undertake to help clarify these matters, but it seems clear that faculty have a role to play in FGCU's articulation of a comprehensive and encompassing statement of how to define the core values and conditions that make academic quality possible, and connect that definition to specific metrics and measurable outcomes.

B. Closing the Gap: Increase Revenues
Another strategy to (attempt to) close the budget and quality gap is to consider how the institution can raise funds without significant increases in cost. If FGCU fails to engage thoughtfully in enrollment growth management (or does not do so in a sufficiently timely manner), there are several avenues that must be explored to increase revenues (indeed, this options require consideration whatever the future of more targeted enrollment management). These strategies are not mutually exclusive.

Discussion
Tuition and Fees
Increasing tuition or fees has a limited ability to address the gap in FTE funding, not least of all because of state control and oversight that constrains local maneuverability in setting tuition rates. Raising significant future revenue through tuition increases will require effective lobbying at the state level to address the substantial disinclination to support tuition increases (or provide regular, predictable non-tuition funding support from the state) among lawmakers and political appointees to SUS Boards of Trustees and the Board of Governors.

Distance Delivery
FGCU has embraced technological innovation in learning since its inception.[17] Many FGCU courses and even whole programs are available online.[18] The pace of technological change in higher education more generally has accelerated in recent years with the widespread acceptance of mobile technologies such as smart phones and tablet devices. Massively open online communities (MOOCs) offer non-credit education on a large scale and at no cost to the student. At the other extreme online MBAs offered by universities such as Rochester Institute of Technology and Washington State University charge fees in the region of $50,000 per student. These and other developments and dynamics may drive an assumption both within and beyond the University that online education is a way to educate large numbers of students at low cost/high margins without sacrificing overall quality.

<u>Political and Community Engagement</u>
Another strategy to increase revenue involves engaging FGCU's community partners who may advocate for the University in Tallahassee. Several members of the local legislative delegation serve on key appropriations and education committees. Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto (R-Fort Myers) serves as vice chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee and is a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. Senator Garrett Richter (R-Naples) serves on the Appropriations Committee and is a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. Representative Heather Fitzenhagen (R-Fort Myers) serves on the Education Appropriations Subcommittee and the Higher Education and Workforce Subcommittee. Representative Ray Rodrigues (R-Estero), an FGCU employee, serves on the Higher Education and Workforce Committee. Representatives Matt Caldwell (R-Lehigh Acres), Dane Eagle (R-Cape Coral), Matt Hudson (R-Naples), and Kathleen Passidomo (R-Naples) comprise the remainder of the FGCU local legislative delegation. Additionally, Governor Rick Scott has made appointments of local figures to both the local BOT and the BOG: Dudley Goodlette, former state representative and former interim president of Edison State College, to the BOT, and Ed Morton (former FGCU BOT member), Ned C. Lautenbach and Alan M. Levine, all of Naples, to the BOG. These individuals and others are well-positioned to influence state policy, including state fiscal policy, to benefit FGCU.

Donations from the community (individuals and private sector entities) have been a source of revenue for FGCU since its inception and will continue to be vital to the University's longevity. Faculty should continue to seek and look for opportunities to advance the institution's outreach and cultivation of potential private-sector donations where and when possible.

Consequences to these approaches
Although tuition might potentially address funding shortfalls, as a strategy it involves many negative consequences and diminishes the University's ability to serve the region effectively by providing affordable opportunities for students to receive a higher education, particularly first generation college students. Right now, the Florida SUS has the 45th lowest tuition rates in the country; however, it is also true that relying to a disproportionate degree on increasing tuition over time will at some point block access to a diverse student body, a value that lies at the heart of the FGCU mission and public higher education generally. Further, increasing tuition without addressing the quality of programs and instruction can result in well-resourced programs of questionable quality; the value of a degree does not simply lie in its cost, but in its outcomes.

FGCU has strengths in distance learning through the virtual learning platforms and the experience of faculty in the use of these course management and instructional delivery technologies. There are opportunities to leverage learning management systems (LMS) such as ANGEL and its upcoming replacement (Canvas) and thereby provide some cost savings and also allow innovative course delivery to a wider catchment area. While these possibilities exist for revenue enhancement, delivering online education at the level of quality and efficacy associated with traditional face-to-face instruction requires significant investment in upfront course design, support and technology enhancements, and on-going training for faculty and staff. The benefits of further focus on online course delivery can be summarized as: (1) revenue growth and enhancement of courses offered to existing students; (2) reducing the pressure on classroom space on the campus; and (3) the further development of high value courses such as the executive

MBA aimed at working professionals. Issues that need to be addressed include the fee structure for such virtual and hybrid courses and the impact on faculty workloads and administrative support. These benefits are only possible with effective planning and dedicated, adequate funding (in a recent presentation to the BOT, administration estimated that FGCU spends roughly $719,000 to mount and sustain current online course offerings over and above the costs associated with face-to-face instruction; this number does include the cost of developing and offering additional online courses and/or programs).[19] Administration has indicated its intent to ask the BOT for approval of a distance-learning fee to offset these costs (FGCU is currently the only SUS institution offering substantial numbers of DL courses without charging a DL fee). However, there are unknown factors – potentially positive and negative – associated with rapidly increasing online education even with adequate resources. These may (on the positive side) include additional – and much needed – resources to mount and sustain DL courses and programs, and (on the negative side) include degrading the competitiveness of fully online programs with other colleges and universities. An institution-wide conversation about the place of online education at FGCU and the ways it may develop while protecting student learning outcomes is essential.

As much as additional, adequate, regular, and predictable funding from the state legislature is essential for the University's viability, simply raising revenue – from whatever source – will likely not address the fundamental conflict between growth and quality that is inherently putting pressure on both budgeting and planning as well as the University's efforts to fulfill its institutional mission. Greater political engagement is necessary, but requires institutional resources in the current funding climate (the University is experimenting with new forms of political engagement, as evidenced by the recent launch of Eagle Advocacy, which attempts to leverage relationships networks in Tallahassee). Effective efforts in this area may require us to shift resources and efforts away from current mission priorities to respond to perceived priorities at the state-level (e.g. emphasizing STEM curricula or helping shape the performance funding model that develops). Moreover, cultivation of additional community-based donations will require additional administrative and staff resources as well. Faculty may be an underutilized voice in both the University's political outreach and community engagement. Who better than faculty to talk in an informed and engaged way about higher education policy and its impact on the quality of the educational experience available to citizens of the State of Florida?

C. Closing the Gap: Allocate existing revenue more efficiently
A third option for closing the gap targets more strategic use of existing resources. For some, this might be efficient use of resources, such as eliminating duplicative activities. For others, this might imply greater effectiveness, such as ensuring that programs generate the kinds of outcomes the institution values. Though the Panel uses the term "efficiency" here and throughout, this should in no way imply the notion that FGCU should think of ways to perpetually "do more with less" as a sustainable solution to budget constraints and reductions. Indeed, the problematic nature of "efficiency" as a term, concept, and strategy was a subject of considerable discussion among the Panel, which concluded that "efficiency" and "effectiveness" are fundamentally about coordination: the question is not whether it is possible to do more with less (there seems to be little dispute that FGCU has gone well past the point where it can continue to sustain acceptable and expected levels of quality and effectiveness – much less continue to grow – with fewer

resources and monies), but rather, what activities can the institution better coordinate and still achieve its goals?

More efficient use of current resources can take several forms. As indicated above, enrollment growth without adequate physical infrastructure development will inevitably force a more "efficient" use of classroom facilities, such as higher classroom utilization to ultimately include extension of the instructional week and possibly reorganization of the academic calendar. Further, cost savings may be possible through better coordination in the areas of administration, instruction, and enrollment. All such moves will require careful consideration and may have unintended consequences, which (if taken to one logical extreme) could involve the consolidation or elimination of programs and positions.

Discussion
Bureaucratic, Administrative, and Committee Efficiency[20]
There are several areas of administrative efficiencies that could result in better resource usage. These include:

- *Bureaucratic Procedures.* The faculty feedback to the Panel reflects a concern over increased bureaucracy throughout the institution and the negative effect that has on productivity. Although some increase in more rigid policy and procedures is inevitable as the institution grows and matures and the culture of accountability intensifies at the state and national level, the perception of inefficiency impacts morale and culture and, ultimately, the range of possible solutions. Cost savings may be realized through a periodic assessment of those procedures that are duplicative or unnecessary. Further, as new regulations or policies are considered, an accompanying bureaucratic workload analysis would make the impacts more explicit.

- *Administrative Positions.* Faculty feedback reveals a sense that the institution funds more administrative positions than other comparator institutions. There is a perception that too much administration inefficiently allocates resources away from direct provision of quality education and adds to bureaucratic procedure.[21] Compared to FGCU's nine aspirational comparators, FGCU spending in various categories is as follows:

    o FGCU spends slightly more on "instruction" (74%/73%)
    o Slightly less on "research" (49%/50%)
    o Significantly more on "public service" (72%/58%)
    o More on "academic support" (70%/60%)
    o Significantly less on "institutional support" (49%/63%)
    o Equal in "student services" (57%/57%)[22]

    The categories cited here reflect the National Center for Education Statistics' schema for defining various categories of budget allocation and expenditure for institutions of higher education in the Center's Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Data Tool (aspirational comparators are chosen by the University). These definitions and categories do not always easily align with or map onto customary faculty assumptions about what constitutes "administrative," "academic," "support" or other such often-

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referenced sectors of a university budget (a complete glossary of IPEDS definitions is available here). The IPEDS data and approach to analysis are themselves not dispositive indicators that faculty perceptions in this regard are entirely unfounded, or that administrative positions should be eliminated. Rather, FGCU might use this information to prioritize new positions in all categories. In any case, the Panel acknowledges that any potential savings generated by eliminating or reducing some administrative positions is not sufficient to cover the funding-quality gap.

- *Committees.* Finally, institutional efforts to honor a commitment to shared governance may have resulted in a situation where FGCU is committee-rich but sub-optimally efficient in the ways decisions are processed and conclusions reached. Previous feedback from faculty highlights a concern over service loads and the relative effectiveness of faculty's community engagement through service.[23] More committees do not necessarily translate into effective governance (which is to say, the focus here is expressly on the degree to which the University's committee structure and workflow make effective and respectful use of participants' time, energy, and expertise to accomplish the necessary work of a complex institution). A more in-depth examination of current faculty campus service load might help determine if this allocation of faculty time is effective or sustainable, or on par with other institutions. Similarly, from the administrative perspective, committee proliferation can be an inefficient and ineffective allocation of time. A more thorough examination of the multiple, overlapping committee structures and responsibilities could move the institution toward more efficient use of human resources overall, and the Panel expresses its support for efforts along these lines currently underway in the Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee of the PBC.[24] Increased efficiency and effectiveness in our committee structure may free up both faculty and administrative time and increase meaningful shared governance.

Instructional Efficiency
As the institution has grown at a rate beyond that at which faculty and staff have been hired, FGCU personnel have had to focus somewhat myopically on delivery of isolated programs.[25] This situation has created a range of connected but somewhat different challenges. At one end of the spectrum, some programs – whether because of the pressure of rapid enrollment growth, the demands of external accreditation, or both – have had to concentrate the bulk of faculty energy and resources on delivery of a single program or cluster of allied programs. In these cases, these programmatic demands leave insufficient faculty resources available to contribute to instruction in, say, University Colloquium, which in turn requires additional adjuncts and/or full-time faculty overloads somewhere, and in any case undermines the spirit and aims of interdisciplinary curriculum across campus. At the other end of the spectrum, there are situations in which the course offerings required in under-enrolled programs or certificates mean course enrollments struggle to meet sustainable levels. If these under-enrolled courses proceed, they create growing pressure on the ability of the department and/or unit to meet its per-section enrollment target averages in an equitable and sustainable way. If these under-enrolled courses are cancelled, faculty absorb the pressure to take on uncompensated independent studies for the students who need the under-enrolled course (four students in a course is often not enough; four uncompensated independent studies for a single faculty member receiving no additional compensation for supervising independent study projects is far too much).

In between are a range of other inefficiencies and sub-optimal dynamics. Among them: the risk of new program and/or course creation being used as a (faulty) mechanism to secure additional faculty resources for understaffed departments or units; and missed opportunities among programs with (officially or unofficially) allied or shared areas of focus to identify effectively overlapping learning objectives that could be met in interdisciplinary or co-listed course offerings.

Faculty have a role in ensuring that new programs: (1) meet a real need academically (to shore up gaps in the University's educational process and offerings, to offer majors that will attract and retain high quality students), regionally (address and fulfill needs of the local Southwest Florida community) and strategically (provide curriculum consistent with the University's vision and mission and respond to the plans of the BOG in ways that are appropriate to FGCU); (2) are conceived in a way that will attract and retain adequate resource allocations; and (3) have quantifiable learning targets. Similarly, faculty have responsibilities to examine existing programs for their relevance to the University mission, relevance to regional needs, and success in achieving learning outcomes (quality). This is not to say that FGCU should increase its focus only on STEM degrees, but rather that FGCU is stronger as an institution by maintaining excellence in those areas that the institution does choose to pursue.

Enrollment efficiency
A final possible path to close the growth-quality gap would be to carefully track and assess enrollment trends alongside more robust and comparative data about the costs of program delivery. Unit and department level budgets provide one indicator of program costs, of course; however, the level of resolution of this information is low. Moreover, the total and lifecycle cost of delivering programs is not as clear as it would need to be to inform decisions about how effectively current resources are being used to deliver and sustain the academic program array, and where additional enrollment could be absorbed more and less effectively.[26]

A better understanding of program costs provides decision makers with the information required to strategically shift enrollment and recruitment efforts. Such an understanding might well include tracking enrollment trends by major longitudinally alongside a uniform calculation of cost of delivery. This data would illuminate several important issues: areas where there appears to be excess enrollment capacity; sectors of the program array where there is room to grow in high efficiency programs (that is, programs that maintain agreed upon standards of academic quality at comparatively low cost); and areas in which low cost of delivery is not so much an indicator of efficiency as a sign of insufficient resources. Among other things, those points where excess enrollment capacity occurs in genuinely high-efficiency programs (as opposed to programs that are under-staffed) present opportunities for targeted enrollment growth.[27]

This approach allows decision makers to ask such questions as whether more expensive programs per FTE can be "right-sized" with an eye towards increasing the quality of the students enrolled and the excellence of the educational process. This is not to say that only cost-effective programs (those with lowest dollars spent per-FTE) should be maintained, but that a better match between numbers of students in programs relative to cost can be maximized while maintaining quality.

Consequences of this approach
Clearly, achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness throughout the institution requires a broad-based approach involving staff, faculty, and administration. This approach would require a significant investment of time, not least of all because much of the savings from so-called "low hanging fruit" in achieving efficiency has already been realized. For example, understanding the bureaucratic impacts of policy, administrative positions, shared governance and instructional efficiency requires considerable analysis at the University, college, and department level. Similarly, amending the University's practices regarding program development and enrollment targets and management requires additional analysis and new procedures. The risk, of course, is that this exercise would in and of itself contribute to an increased burden on all University personnel. However, if these efforts model application of shared governance in the decision making process, it may be enormously beneficial for FGCU in terms of its budgetary health, community morale, and academic quality.

D. Closing the Gap: Limit and Control Enrollment Growth More Strategically
With more than 13,000 students, FGCU enrollment has reached a critical mass at which basic programs and services can continue to be provided on a cost-effective basis. However, the University is dependent on enrollment growth to address budgetary shortfalls, and freezing growth immediately would have a direct and immediate impact on FGCU's ability to provide programs and services to current students. There are at least two related issues that would need to be addressed in this regard, including 1) how selective admissions can be balanced with the fundamental desire for student access and 2) implications for capping (that is, establishing more selective) degree programs at both the undergraduate and graduate.

Discussion
Selective Admissions
One approach to slowing growth is more selectivity in the admission process. This would require that FGCU address its admission standards. Adjustments to standards that would achieve greater selectivity might include targeting admission to those students who present the greatest promise of university success through traditional indicators (high school GPA and ACT/SAT test scores) as well as non-traditional indicators (e.g., high school course rigor, written essay, pre-admissions interview).

One element of the question might be not, who is admitted? but for what area(s) of study are they admitted? This approach requires a fundamental discussion throughout the institution related to what the University community perceives of as FGCU's "niche" both in the region and within the state. To take just two possible examples (from among many): Is FGCU to be known for a quality undergraduate liberal arts education? Is it to pursue a niche as a STEM-focused or STEM-intensive institution? There is either a dearth of information or a perception of a dearth of access to information regarding which among existing programs are more likely to generate graduates and/or meet the desired demand of students (and this question is complicated by political rhetoric that asserts the economic demand for and desirability of STEM degrees often without sufficient empirical evidence to substantiate the basis for such claims).

Selective admissions requires a greater emphasis on understanding program viability. Without a clearer, data-driven understanding of where the University's strongest opportunities for highly efficient, high-quality degree production exists, FGCU will lag in its ability to target students for whom the institution can be most a transformative force in their education and lives.

Access
One of the fundamental values of FGCU has been student access for traditionally underserved populations. Much of the University's sustained enrollment growth has been predicated on this value. Access for students who are first time in college (FTIC) or who are racially and culturally diverse has traditionally been supported by the institution (see FGCU undergraduate enrollment targets for 2013).[28] Two challenges should be noted here. First, since at least 2008, when the state stopped adequately funding new enrollment growth, it is difficult to make the case that access continues to be a funded priority at the state level. However, if the seemingly logical response to this shift in funding priorities from the state is to de-emphasize access (and this is the second point), a challenge arises: limiting admissions to "quality" students as judged by traditional metrics can put at risk the higher education opportunities of precisely those underserved populations to whom the University is committed.

Maintaining a culturally diverse student population while encouraging more selectivity in admissions requires several approaches:

- Outreach and collaboration. More emphasis would have to be placed on the FGCU Admissions staff (already stretched thin), supported by the Office of the Provost, to pursue more targeted and strategic collaboration with school districts and Edison College. The goal here should be to better prepare students for study at FGCU in whatever focused areas emerged from a more clearly defined statement of institutional identity and a more targeted and sophisticated management of enrollment capacity in the upper divisions. A subsidiary, but by no means secondary, goal would also be to improve retention rates once these students are admitted to FGCU.
- Emphasis on generating data and analysis to better understand the best mix of student characteristics matched to the most viable programs.
- Emphasis on programs – such as First Year Experience initiative – to support FTIC and diverse students after admission to FGCU. This may include continued and expanded collaboration between the Divisions of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs.
- Addressing institutional priorities through campus conversations about student quality, access, and support.

Limits on New Programs
In addition to instituting more selective admissions criteria, the growth of new programs should be seriously (re)considered in light of changing emphases in accountability measures from the state. Such reconsideration might productively also include an examination of the appropriate proportion of graduate students to undergraduate students at an institution that states a commitment to prioritize quality undergraduate instruction. This may require changes to the program approval process and new program development policies, as well as ongoing program review procedures. All programs are required to predict enrollment and the impact they will have on faculty needs and other resource requirements. FGCU needs to institutionalize a program

review process (e.g. ca. 5-year) that not only evaluates current rigor and quality but also revisits the projected enrollment compared to actual outputs and, based on that analysis, determine whether recommendations for the reallocation of resources (including possibly cutting programs) is in order.

Consequences of this approach
The main consequence of limiting growth while maintaining student access inherently causes conflict. The simplest way to limit growth is to raise the admission standards for all students. However, this approach alone may threaten the ability of FTIC or diverse students to enter the University. Limiting growth while protecting student access will have to be carefully considered so that unintended consequences are avoided or minimized. Similarly, limiting new undergraduate and graduate degrees or eliminating programs is a fairly drastic course of action that requires careful consideration and much circumspection. Most importantly any approach to limiting growth and maintaining access has to involve faculty, administrative, staff, and student perspectives in ways that all stakeholders see meaningful responses in the final decision to their interests.

VII. CONCLUSIONS, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
A. Conflicts and tensions
Given all this, where – then – do we find ourselves as an institution and a faculty? What are the prevailing themes that unavoidably surface when thinking about productive and constructive ways forward in a faculty governance system?

Perhaps most pressingly, FGCU faces a tension between increasingly competing commitments to access and quality. Access (enrollment growth) is being more and more driven by budgetary necessity (the need to generate operating revenue through new FTE enrollment because of unsustainable legislative cuts to non-tuition dollars – so called E&G monies) even though the institution is well past the point where more students can be educated with fewer E&G resources. As custodians of the curriculum and academic standards in an environment of continued growth and receding resources, the faculty have a responsibility to continue to ask and collaboratively seek an answer to the question: at what point is it no longer possible for FGCU simultaneously to prioritize access and maintain the University's vision of "national prominence"? The Panel takes this phrase to be synonymous with academic quality in its courses and programs. How do we know when – or if – we have reached that point?

If the access/quality dynamic raises issues of identity that must be largely resolved internally, the University faces a second related challenge imposed for the most part upon us by forces external to FGCU: the perceived or declared tension that is purported to exist between the push for workforce job-skills development, on the one hand, and on the other, academe's longstanding commitment to the liberal arts baccalaureate as a cornerstone of an educated and engaged citizenry in a free society and a dynamic free-market economy.

Without recapitulating the central themes of this debate, the Panel notes that there may actually be less division than is commonly thought between the values and aims of liberal arts education and the real needs of employers.[29] In any case, the practical reality is that performance-funding models seem inevitable. Even though the form these frameworks will take is still evolving, the

final result will likely mandate an intense emphasis on job placement to the detriment – and perhaps outright exclusion – of other sectors of the curriculum that have long been associated with the liberal arts and its corresponding values. It may be possible to hold those crosscutting interests that exist between workforce readiness and liberal arts education in productive tension, but to do so requires more resources than FGCU has or can reasonably expect to secure in the foreseeable future.

In the Panel's view, it may be difficult, perhaps even impossible, for FGCU to make the coming transition to performance funding while also maintaining its strong commitment to liberal arts education across the breadth of the current program array without an honest dialog – even and especially among faculty – about what core values and programs FGCU wants to invest in, to be particularly good at, to be known for. What, in other words, should or will FGCU's niche be?[30]

While the Panel finds much to value, admire, and aspire to in the University's current mission, vision, and guiding principles, it is also possible that these statements may envision a university of breadth, depth, and quality beyond that which can be sustained here in this prolonged season of austerity and within the new funding paradigm waiting on the other side. If FGCU is to come through the changes and upheavals roiling American higher education in general and the Florida SUS in particular, it will require a steadfast, mission-driven focus on protecting core priorities and values. Throughout its work, the Panel struggled with the question of whether FGCU's current statements of purpose and institutional focus provide the necessary level of guidance for making tough choices about allocating increasingly limited resources among seemingly equally valued and valuable enterprises.

A related challenge is the absence of a commonly understood definition of academic quality at FGCU, given who we are and who we (may) wish to be. There is a "know it when I see it" aspect to "academic quality" that makes precise definition elusive. Even if the Panel had a definition at hand (it does not), the Panel feels strongly that it is beyond the scope of its charge to offer such a definition here. Rather, we wish to emphasize, as discussed above, that academic quality exists both as a function of certain necessary conditions (allocated resources, available materials, functioning governance structures, and widely accepted cultural norms and practices related to academic freedom) and as the core character of successful higher education that can be inferred by certain outputs and measurable results. What those conditions and metrics entail in an institutionally specific context is a much more complex, complicated, and – in the Panel's view – essential conversation the faculty would do well to undertake with some urgency.

Finally, the ability to respond effectively to these dynamics is at least partly constrained by the culture and climate conditions within the University – conditions that themselves are shaped, perhaps not always positively, by the dynamics described above. The Panel discusses below potential approaches and actions the Faculty Senate might consider leading the faculty at large in undertaking as constructive responses to the challenges FGCU faces. However, we offer these recommendations with an awareness of powerful perceptions among the faculty that FGCU's governance structures do not always operate optimally or functionally, and that faculty (perhaps not alone among University stakeholder groups) are nearing or have reached a certain level of what might be called forum and feedback fatigue. One byproduct of everyone's having had to do so much more with so much less without any relief in sight is the emergence of a community-

engagement deficit arising from certain low levels of employee morale and dispiritedness. In turn, disengaging or withdrawing from active participation in the life of the institution's problem-solving and decision-making processes deepens the very problems driving the disengagement and withdrawal.

B. Guiding Principles for Faculty Representatives and Leaders

As this report is primarily aimed at faculty leaders representing faculty interests and voices in the governance of FGCU, the Panel recommends the following guiding principles for faculty participating in decision-making processes regarding budget, planning, resource allocation, the oversight of curriculum and instruction, and participation in assessment activities.

1. Protect FGCU's ability to continue to provide and go beyond existing levels of quality education (recognizing that the definition of "quality" remains elusive at best).
2. Support uses of new resources in ways that strategically achieve the mission and build on existing concentrations of academic quality.
3. All things being equal, live the mission (recognizing that there may be room for a sharper articulation of how the mission is or could be lived out).
4. Enrollment growth is not inevitable. Continued FTE increases to fund today's budget without ensuring adequate resources will be present to support the entire lifecycle of instruction tomorrow is academically unsustainable. The best way to grow the University in terms of academic quality and mission sustainability may well be the more purposeful pursuit of a dynamic steady state.

C. Recommendations for Next Steps

The Panel recommends that the Faculty Senate consider the following actions as constructive modes of faculty engagement in collaborative solutions to the budget-quality-growth challenges FGCU faces.

1. Lead the faculty in articulating a shared definition of academic quality, both the conditions that must exist for quality to be present, and the metrics and output measures from which to infer the presence, continuous achievement, and ongoing pursuit of greater levels of academic quality.
2. Encourage, explore, and invite University stakeholders to reengage in a campus-wide discussion of FGCU's mission, vision, and guiding principles in light of the current budgetary, regulatory, and political environment.
3. Work with stakeholders across campus to understand how revisions to the University's statements of purpose and focus can more clearly ground and guide decisions about resource allocation. The recent successful conclusion of the Shared Governance Initiative may present a model from which to work for this effort.
4. Initiate a faculty conversation and identify a consensus faculty position on the place and purpose of online education (realizing that some factors related to DL are controlled and regulated externally). Here the question facing the faculty is how it perceives and envisions the role of online education: is DL understood primarily as a new medium in which to achieve traditional learning goals, an arena in which to fundamentally rethink the content, delivery, and outcomes of curriculum and instruction, a way to grow enrollment, a mix of all of these and/or something else entirely?

5. Continue to support and help implement the findings of the work of the Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee of the Planning and Budget Council to list, define the scope of, and identify potential efficiencies between and among all University-wide committees with decision-making, oversight, or advisory roles in University governance and operation.

6. Continue to support efforts within the Enrollment and Retention Management Committee of the PBC – and pursue other constructive ways throughout the University – to carefully track and assess enrollment trends. Any such effort should include pairing enrollment data alongside more robust and comparative data about the costs of program delivery as a way to understand opportunities for targeted recruitment and smart enrollment growth initiatives.[31]

7. Explore ways to evaluate current program rigor and quality while also measuring new and existing programs' performance effectiveness by comparing actual outputs with originally projected enrollments and other performance targets as described in new degree creation processes. Such data are one dimension of a more textured understanding of where and how to most effectively (re)allocate resources.

8. Work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop faculty engagement on campus and the faculty voice off-campus in the public and political arena, respecting all statutory requirements with respect to public employees and political activity.

9. Undertake a faculty review of curriculum to identify opportunities for and policies or practices governing co-listed courses, collaborative teaching opportunities in the program or at the course level, and other academically viable options for strengthening student learning across disciplines – forwarding any Faculty Senate approved recommendations to administration.

10. Study, document, and benchmark how other universities have made the academic and curricular transition to new funding models (i.e. state appropriations of between 15-20% and/or performance funding).

VIII. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Faculty Feedback in response to Faculty Select Panel on Growth and Quality Question 1: Funding/Cost Structures

Appendix 2. Faculty Feedback in response to Faculty Select Panel on Growth and Quality Question 2: Academic Quality

Appendix 3. Faculty Feedback in response to Faculty Select Panel on Growth and Quality Question 3: Institutional Growth

Appendix 4. National Center for Education Statistics Customized Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System Data Report, 2011

Appendix 5. FGCU New Student First Time in College (FTIC) and Transfer Enrollment Targets for 2013

Appendix 6. Distance Learning at FGCU, a report to the FGCU BOT. January 2013

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[1] For trends in state support for FGCU, see FGCU BOTIS quarterly report, page 19.

[2] The funding gap begins to emerge most precipitously around the same time that FGCU asked for and was granted permission by the BOG to be exempted from a BOG-mandated freeze on student enrollment growth in the SUS. Regardless of the potential reform of state allocations, FGCU faces a significant challenge in the current funding model going forward. Based on information provided in the BOG 2010-2011 Annual Accountability Report,

FGCU's total Appropriated Funding per Student FTE in FY2012 is below that of nine of the eleven SUS institutions. FGCU's total appropriation is $8,875 per Student FTE. Only UCF is lower at $8,677 per Student FTE. The highest total appropriated funding per student FTE in FY2012 is at New College at $21,731. UNF and UWF are at $9,784 and $9,548, respectively. The total appropriated funding per student FTE in FY2012 includes allocations from general revenue (so-called E&G funds), lottery funds, other trust funds, and tuition and fees. Backing out tuition and fees, and assuming those that are actually paid by students, FGCU's total appropriated funding per student FTE in FY2012 is $4,206, which places it last among the SUS institutions. In comparison, New College receives $15,891 per Student FTE. UNF and UWF receive $5,174 and $5,417 per student FTE, respectively. Differences in institutional mission justify some differences across institutions. However, the magnitudes of these differences and how they influence appropriations have not been addressed to date. The challenge created by this funding gap is significant not only because it strains the institution's ability to adequately resource the current operation but also because of the risk that any new funding models for public higher education would take the current state of affairs as the starting point for new approaches. In this, FGCU would begin at a seriously inequitable position compared to most other SUS institutions.

[3] Florida Governor Rick Scott's 2013 budget includes significant funding to advance performance-funding models, and though the House and Senate have yet to release their budget proposals, the Florida BOG is already developing performance funding frameworks.

[4] For more on performance funding, see here; for a discussion of threats to the liberal arts model of higher education, see here.

[5] As outlined in the BOG's initial draft of an accountability framework based on performance funding. For legislative efforts focused on STEM education, see House Bill 7135 – the so-called Proctor Bill. For differential tuition models, see the report of Governor Scott's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Higher Education.

[6] This was a central focus of the report by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Higher Education Reform.

[7] See Faculty Senate President's communication to all faculty, October 1, 2012.

[8] See also Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee, January 27, 2012, "Nine Flawed Assumptions of Higher Education Reform."

[9] Ibid, 9.

[10] Colson, Dean. "Florida Board of Governors State of the System Address Talking Points." January 17, 2013.

[11] Ibid., p. 5.

[12] Op. Cit., Colson.

[13] Eaton, Judith S. "Higher Education, Government and Expectations of Academic Quality and Accountability: Where Do We Go from Here?" *American Academic*, 2006: 74-75.

[14] Current processes within the Planning and Budget Council appear to have some version of this approach as the goal of a charge currently being addressed by the Enrollment and Retention Management Committee, and related initiatives within the Division of Academic Affairs to understand enrollment trends and enrollment capacity in greater degrees of focus also carry with them the potential to move the institution toward more sophisticated and targeted management of enrollment.

[15] Though precise projections of when the campus will reach physical-plant capacity are difficult to make given the complexity of factors and the various methods available to calculate carrying capacity, there is widespread acknowledgement across the University that FGCU is very near the upper limit of students the main campus infrastructure can accommodate without new construction and that that limit is probably no more than 3-5 years away if current conditions and trends hold.

[16] Distance Learning is discussed more fully in Section VII.B below.

[17] For a history and context of the early vision of technology in the University's identity, see McTarnaghan, Roy. *On Task, On Time: The Development of Florida Gulf Coast University*. Florida Gulf Coast University, 2003.

[18] For more specifics, see Distance Learning at FGCU, a report to the FGCU BOT, January 2013, Appendix 6.

[19] Current collaborate work among administration, faculty, and staff to develop an online quality scorecard should help clarify opportunities for strengthening the administrative support for online education at FGCU.

[20] This section discusses key areas of potential focus from the faculty perspective; it should not be taken to mean that the University has not already and is not continuing to address organizational efficiency changes and improvements deemed to be effective efficiency measures, as evidenced by the rationale for the Positioning and Alignment Task Force's work and the implementation of its approved recommendations as well as recent announcements regarding reorganization within the President's cabinet.

[21] Here, it should also be noted that significant investments of administrative and staff time and energy are involved in responding to directives, requirements, data "requests" and other interactions with SUS institutions unilaterally

initiated by state level authorities. Without diminishing the importance of robust assessment and accountability processes for public higher education, many of the external mandates for information imposed upon the University create significant constraints on administrative employees' ability to focus on the mission-critical aspects of institutional life on a day-to-day basis. If there is a legitimate faculty perception that universities in general are top-heavy with administrators, it is also an administrative reality that serial reductions in state resources and support have accompanied a dramatic increase in the data that must generated, analyzed, packaged and reported to multiple agencies and bodies in the name of accountability.

[22] Data cited from National Center for Education Statistics Customized Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Data Feedback Report, 2011. For full report, see Appendix 4.

[23] See, for instance, the Campus Climate and Culture Report data and a UFF survey on uncompensated instructional activity, both of which included concerns registered by faculty about unsustainable service loads.

[24] The Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee of the PBC is currently working to create and analyze a comprehensive list of all University-wide committees in existence as a way to identify areas where duplication of effort, redundancy of function, or functional obsolescence may allow for improved efficiencies and effectiveness in governance and oversight processes.

[25] Though in recent years, faculty to student ratio has held steady, the trend over the course of the University's history has been one of student enrollment growth outpacing faculty and staff hires. Stability now does not address historical inequity. See, for instance, FGCU BOTIS quarterly report, January 2013, page 14.

[26] This point reinforces the Panel's support for the work of the ERMC as described in note 14 above and further developed below.

[27] Though cost-of-program-delivery calculations are complex to make and not always popular insofar as the results can become potential drivers of intra-institutional conflict based on real or perceived inequities in resource allocation, the move toward performance funding at the state level is likely to make such a measure standard practice for SUS institutions; in addition to contributing to strategic enrollment management efforts, the identification of an institutionally-specific mode of calculating such costs might well arm the institution with an alternative to propose should the externally imposed formula prove less well suited to FGCU's institutional contexts.

[28] See ERMC, ERMC Meeting Notes, 10/2/12, retrieved 1/31/13.

[29] It has not been unknown for political or regulatory processes to cloak ulterior aims or motives by making claims to represent the interests of private sector job creators in ways that would seem to pit liberal arts and job readiness against one another. When given the chance, local job creators themselves talk about the skills they most need and want as closely aligned with the outcomes often associated with liberal arts coursework: critical thinking, problem solving, written and oral communication, self-directed engagement in community, etc. (see, for instance, panels of local employers addressing this issue at the recent Fort Myers News-Press Education Summit).

[30] One way to conceptualize possible end results of such a conversation is to look at two different examples of how institutions of public higher education have identified and then worked to fulfill a particular niche vision of themselves: at one end of the continuum stands an institution such as George Mason University (enrollment: 33,000; annual budget, approximately $880M), which has built its growth around a strong liberal arts base. Compare this to University of Wisconsin-Stout, only one of two of UW's so-called special mission institutions that provides programs "related to professional careers in industry, technology, home economics, applied art and the helping professions." UW-Stout cultivates extensive resource-bearing relationships with private industry and enterprise and receives a comparatively small portion of its operating budget (17%) from state appropriation.

[31] These efforts might well include exploring what other institutions in similar situations have done (i.e. benchmarks) to strategically limit admissions while minimizing negative impacts on student body diversity.