



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
Office of the President

21 December 2020

From: Steven C. Currall, President and Professor

Re: Strategic Planning Advisory Task Force

To: **Charles Stanish**, *Task Force Chair*; Professor of Anthropology, College of Arts and Sciences; Executive Director, Institute for the Advanced Study of Culture and the Environment
Sylvia Wilson Thomas, *Task Force Vice Chair*; Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering, College of Engineering
Golfo Alexopoulos, Professor of Interdisciplinary Global Studies, College of Arts and Sciences; Founding Director, Institute on Russia
Mya Breitbart, Professor of Biological Oceanography, College of Marine Science
Michael Cross, Instructor, Judy Genshaft Honors College
Bárbara Cruz, Professor of Social Science Education, College of Education
Michael Foley, Professor of Dance, College of the Arts
Robert Frisina, Distinguished University Professor and Department Chair of Medical Engineering, College of Engineering and Morsani College of Medicine; Director, Global Center for Hearing & Speech Research
Ramon Gonzalez, Professor and Florida 21st Century World Class Scholar of Chemical, Biological, and Materials Engineering, College of Engineering
Clifton Gooch, Professor and Department Chair of Neurology, Morsani College of Medicine; Tampa General Hospital Endowed Chair, Department of Neurology; Vice President, Clinical and Translational Research, Tampa General Hospital
Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman, Associate Professor of Sociology, College of Arts and Sciences, Senior Advisor to the President and Provost for Diversity and Inclusion
Matthew Knight, Associate Librarian; Affiliate Faculty of History, College of Arts and Sciences
Claire Mitchell, USF Student Body President; Member, USF Board of Trustees
Sunil Mithas, Professor and World Class Scholar of Information Systems and Management, Muma College of Business
Zacharias Pieri, Assistant Professor of International Relations and Security Studies, College of Arts and Sciences
Angela Sklenka, Vice President of Human Resources
Gregory Teague, Associate Professor and Department Chair of Mental Health Law and Policy, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences
Thomas Unnasch, Distinguished USF Health Professor and Department Chair of Global Health, College of Public Health
Edelyn Verona, Professor of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences

"The bedrock of our strategic renewal is a commitment to community principles that reinforce inclusion, civility, open expression, evidence-based deliberations, and vigorous debate."

I made these comments shortly after I arrived at USF in July 2019, and believe they remain true today. Now enshrined in our Principles of Community, this shared sense of purpose has already served to help us navigate the complexities resulting from deep social unrest and the global public health crisis, and will continue to guide the process of deliberation about USF's strategic renewal.

To this end, I ask you to serve on the USF Strategic Planning Advisory Task Force (“Task Force”). Guided by our shared Principles of Community, the Task Force will help craft a strategic plan for the university that will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration in June 2021, and subsequently to the Board of Governors.

Strategic renewal, as distinct from a completely new strategic planning initiative, begins with many fundamental questions already answered regarding USF’s identity, our direction, and our values. This existing work will promote efficiency in the planning process, as well as focus in our forthcoming dialogue. The Task Force will also leverage and build upon the numerous planning documents and activities that were the result of substantial inclusive initiatives across all of our campuses during the past few years. These initiatives include:

- The **2025 System Strategic Plan**, as approved by the Board of Governors in October 2019, which focuses on three critical points of emphasis for the targeted State University System 2025 Goals—Excellence, Productivity, and Strategic Priorities for a Knowledge Economy—and recognizes the universities’ teaching, research, and public service priorities.
- **2017-18 Campus Strategic Plans** that—although interrupted by Consolidation—already put us down the path of examining our sources of sustainable competitive differentiation, our opportunities, and our strategic priorities.
- USF’s current **Mission Statement, Goals, and Principles of Community**, each of which involved many hours of engagement and consensus building across our campuses, and necessarily represent the foundation of any effective strategic plan.
- **Consolidation**, another inclusive process that resulted in the USF community collectively defining what it means to be One USF.
- **SACSCOC Accreditation Requirements** in support of our consolidated university give clear direction for USF to operate relative to its stated Mission.
- Presidential **listening tours**, comprising nearly 80 hours of direct engagement with campus as I visited many academic and administrative units during 2019 and 2020, before COVID-19 precautions necessarily paused this effort.
- USF’s **2020 Accountability Plan**, which was approved by the Board of Trustees in April, and the Board of Governors in July of this year, sets very clear operational targets and goals for the University that each unit on each campus plays a role in achieving.
- The **President’s 2020-21 Annual Goals**, also approved by the Board of Trustees, articulate explicit targets and metrics we are using as measures of success.
- USF’s **Strategic Performance Management Framework**, which details the work before us to achieve our vision of not only maintaining Preeminence in the state of Florida and continuing to achieve our performance-based metrics but also pursuing our aspirations of becoming a Top 25 public research university and becoming eligible for membership in the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU).
- The **anti-racism statements** and recommendations produced in 2020 by USF academic and institutional units, including major committees, task forces, and community organizations.

The Task Force is asked to focus its work on:

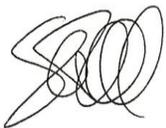
1. Soliciting feedback from faculty, staff, and students regarding the content of the new strategic plan for the university. Mandatory consultations will include, for example, engaging with deans, regional chancellors and vice presidents, shared governance organizations (e.g., Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Administrative Advisory Council, Student Government), Presidential Advisory Councils, all three campuses (including, for example, campus faculty councils and campus advisory boards for St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee), Tampa Bay regional stakeholders (e.g., corporations, governmental officials, K-12 administrators, economic development organizations), alumni and donors, and USF-affiliated unions.
2. Developing formal vision and strategy statements, ensuring that the University maintains a flexible and agile posture.
3. Articulating a list of the university's core commitments and/or values.
4. Assessing One USF's existing strengths and current gaps relative to our aspirations.
5. Describing the University's opportunities, sources of differentiation and sustainable advantage, and contemporary societal dynamics that might shape USF's success in the context of the competitive landscape of higher education.
6. Articulating an optimal strategy for the entire institution, not for individual colleges, units, or campuses.

I am assigning Charles Stanish to chair this Task Force, and Sylvia Thomas to serve as its Vice Chair. Brian Ten Eyck, Vice President for Executive Affairs and Chief of Staff to the President, and Paige Beles Geers, Deputy Chief of Staff, will provide support and further information to the Task Force as it works on the items listed above.

The pace of this Task Force's activities this spring will be brisk. To formally launch the Task Force, I will host a mandatory meeting from 1:00-2:30 EST on Thursday 7 January 2021 (a Teams link will be forthcoming). At this time, I will provide my formal charge to this group, further explain my expectations and the timeline before us, and respond to questions you may have.

Thank you for your service on the Task Force. I look forward to receiving your draft recommendations in time for our Board of Trustees Strategic Initiatives Committee meeting on 23 February 2021, and your final recommendations by the end of April 2021.

Sincerely,



Steven C. Currall, Ph.D.
President and Professor

Cc: Ralph C. Wilcox, Provost and Executive Vice President
Brian C. Ten Eyck, Vice President for Executive Affairs and Chief of Staff to the President
Paige Beles Geers, Deputy Chief of Staff