

2020  
Annual Report

# Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities

Submitted for Approval August 2020



## Introduction

The famous American author, salesman, and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar once coined the phrase “detours are not dead ends”. He often used this phrase to describe the opportunities which can be found in adversity. I feel that is what describes the state of higher education at this moment and it the fundamental challenge for the three members of the Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities. Despite the challenges presented by the current Coronavirus Pandemic the theme of this year’s annual report will focus on how those challenges have been used as detours to a stronger and more impactful Consortium and has built a deeper and more meaningful partnership.

The Florida Consortium celebrated its fifth year on July 7, 2020 and continues to be committed to our core belief that we work together to Transform Learning into Talent for Florida. We believe in the idea that a college degree is the key to unlocking the limitless potential of every student we serve and through meaningful collaboration we can become more efficient in our work, more daring in our innovations, and accelerate success at a pace that keeps up with the needs of our students and state.

When 2019 ended the future of our collaboration was stronger than ever. Having adopted a new strategic plan in July 2019 we were fresh off of the successful implementation of our Helmsley STEM College to Career project, had formed the Florida Transfer Success Network, and had arranged for a series of regional engagements on the partnership between higher education and employers in Miami, Orlando, and Tampa Bay. However, 2020 had other plans.

When we moved to remote work in March, 2020 in response to the growing Coronavirus Pandemic it felt as if the world had stopped. But just as Mr. Ziglar had predicted this change in work and education was not a dead end but more a detour toward a better and more responsive partnership. This detour led us to a new partnership with Helios Education Foundation to provide funding for over 500 students to remain in school over the summer and to introduce our Webinar series, Consortium Meet-Ups. This detour led us to bringing over 50 STEM faculty together to work on introducing innovative online lab techniques to ensure students did not miss a beat just because they were taking their classes online. And we continue to grow the Transfer Success Network with the announcement of our October, 2020 online Conference.

This report is intended to catalog and chronicle the work we have engaged in since adopting our strategic plan and tracks the progress toward plan implementation and how that progress is of benefit to our member universities. We know this journey is going to be full of detours but we believe partnerships are strengthened when we go off the beaten path and find a new way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Preston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "P".

Michael Preston, EdD  
Executive Director

# Table of Contents

1. Strategy
  - a. Vision and Mission Statement
  - b. Statement of Strategy
  - c. Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges
  - d. Key Strategic Initiatives and Investments
    - i. Accelerating Learner Achievement
    - ii. Increase Career Success in our Metro Areas
    - iii. Advance Innovation to Scale
    - iv. Quantify Metropolitan Research University Impact
    - v. Achieve Operational Excellence
2. Performance Metrics
3. Consortium Comparison Data vs. SUS

## **Vision**

We leverage the unique assets of Miami, Orlando, and Tampa Bay to develop talent which enhances community well-being.

## **Mission Statement**

We strengthen Florida's talent pipeline through the of sharing ideas and scalable solutions which accelerate learner achievement and access to economic opportunity

## **Statement of Strategy**

The Florida Consortium believes all students, particularly first-generation, minority, and underrepresented students, should have the opportunity to walk across the stage at graduation prepared for a career of their choosing preferably in the state of Florida. Florida is an incredible place to live, work, play, and raise a family. But where will our citizens go to college, work, and live? What kind of skills and opportunities will they need to help build the Florida economy of the future? The member universities of the Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities; Florida International University, University of Central Florida, and University of South Florida are working together to ensure Florida continues to offer the opportunities our citizens desire by providing a college education which addresses the high skill needs of the state through an affordable, world-class university degree.

The Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities emerged from a common commitment to transforming students' lives and the metropolitan areas that we serve in Miami, Orlando, and Tampa Bay. Together our three institutions share:

1. Common values of serving our student bodies and promoting success in and beyond the classroom for students of all backgrounds, no matter what socioeconomic status;
2. Strengths as public research universities that also have earned the Carnegie Classifications of Community Engagement for Curricular Engagement, and Outreach and Partnerships; and
3. A preference for collaborative work to improve the lives and livelihoods of Florida's next generation workforce and leaders.

The combination of resources, expertise, and commitment allows the Consortium to launch and complete initiatives at a speed and scale that none of the universities could attain separately. The Consortium accelerates the pace and extent of change at our institutions by sharing, learning, and applying best practices, policies, and program designs. By producing more career ready graduates with lower debt, better training, and adaptable skill sets, the Consortium drives the economic development of Florida by creating synergies and efficiencies between the state's three large metropolitan public research universities and the public, private, and non-profit sector institutions that rely on them for a steady and growing supply of talented graduates.

We would like to thank Helios Education Foundation for their generous support of this plan and the members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee who gave their time to help us craft a plan that not only strengthens our bond as educational institutions but also be the economic engine for our state through impacting the lives of thousands of Floridians via higher education.

## **Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges**

Over the past five years the Florida Consortium has positioned itself as a leader in strategic collaboration and convening to further the student success advances of our three member universities. Along with the support of Helios Education Foundation we have worked hard to be the voice of metropolitan universities in the state of Florida and to assist each other in our efforts to provide the best educational experience for our students. In addition we realize each university is the keystone in our communities of Miami, Orlando, and Tampa Bay and provide about one in five workers who have their bachelor's degrees and live in our metro regions. The Florida Consortium is a concept that is in constant evolution. The advantage of a consortium is the ability to engage in both predictive innovation and responsive coordination. As the environment our universities operate changes we can begin that transition at the forefront and mobilize expertise and process analysis in a way each university could not do alone.

The strength of our collaboration is rooted in our connection to our cities and our state. Our student body and faculty are reflective of who is living in our cities and we know that the vast majority of our students attend our universities because of the pride they take in being from Miami, Orlando, or Tampa Bay and have no intention to leave. Each year we produce over 30,000 graduates combined and 74.5% of these graduates stay and work in Florida. Our strengths also include an almost endless resource of expertise located on our campuses. We have both pedagogical and process expertise for almost any need we have in teaching and learning, student success, data analytics, social justice, professional or economic development. This allows us to get the right people together to solve issues without the need to seek out and pay for others expertise.

This up coming year we have the opportunity to use the changes and challenges posed by the Coronavirus Pandemic to develop new ways to engage each other and to cover more ground by using our enhanced skills in communication to work with more efficiency. With the assistance of Helios Educational Foundation we have partnered with collaboration experts Equal Measure to explore how our universities can work with greater production and influence in mind. This work will forge new models for member engagement and help us create value for each university's investment of time and talent.

Joining together is also a challenge and we are not sure what the lasting impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic will have on our universities. Despite the will to collaborate the daily pressure to perform locally creates gaps in projects. We need to continue to build value and capacity to ensure that membership promotes efficiency and does not create situations where the collaboration is seen as added work. We must also acknowledge that the Florida Consortium is just a small part of what each university is required to be responsible for. While it is easy to cast a wide net of ideas, the likelihood is impact will be more enhanced if we learn to focus on a limited set of priorities and do them all very well. We know this work is not easy and can often be frustrating but the results speak for themselves.

## Three Keys Initiatives and Investments new to the Florida Consortium 2020

- 1. Regional Economic Convenings in Miami and Orlando** – In order to advance our strategic initiative of supporting student success to extend beyond graduation and into a career of purpose the Florida Consortium partnered with EMSI analytics and Helios Education Foundation to sponsor Regional Economic Meetings focused on local jobs projections, skills desired by employers, and how skills matching can lead to better outcomes for both students and employers. The end result was a commitment to continue to work on curriculum mapping at the university level and for the Florida Consortium to develop resources for employers to more effectively connect with qualified students and fill talent gaps. There was a similar meeting scheduled to Tampa Bay but was delayed due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. Over 100 participants between the Miami and Orlando meetings represented city officials, local employers, university and educational leadership, and non-profit leaders.
- 2. COVID-19 Summer Completion Grants** – When the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic shut down our campuses we scrambled to help thousands of students displaced because of the pandemic through assistance programs like the CARES ACT. Despite a program that was able to help thousands of students there were many students who did not qualify for the CARES ACT and were threatened to be left behind. The Florida Consortium partnered with Helios Education Foundation to provide \$650,000 in Summer Completion Grants for students enrolled in the summer. This fund assisted over 515 students and provided an average of \$1,030 in additional support to allow students to maintain their enrollment and in many cases, complete their degree. The funds were distributed to cover tuition, books, transportation, living expenses such as rent and food, childcare expenses, and technology. One area we found there was a need we did not anticipate was how many students lacked the technology or internet access to complete their courses when they went online and this fund helped fill that gap. The Florida Consortium convened a committee of professionals to determine eligibility and distribute funds.
- 3. COVID-19 Summer On-Line Meetups Webinar Series** – As our work moved online during the COVID-19 stay at home order many university professionals began working in an online space for the first time. This came with a set of challenges including assisting professors with moving STEM labs online, helping students with online tutoring, using chatbots to answer questions, advocating for Transfer Students, and engaging students in Co-Curricular activities at distance. Over the course of the summer we hosted 8 online engagements that reached over 550 registrations. All of the sessions were designed and delivered by Florida Consortium member schools and this form of engagement is being developed for an ongoing series. The great thing was this series required minimum investments, basically a GoToMeeting subscription of about \$200 a month.

## Strategic Plan Implementation Update

The Florida Consortium completed a strategic plan which was approved in April of 2019. This strategic plan resulted in the signing of a renewed Memorandum of Understanding which began on July 1, 2019 and began our FY2020 year. During the first year of plan implementation we have embarked on a journey to both stage the elements of the plan to meet our stated outcome and to create a communications strategy which is focused on educating people on the plan and how it can benefit their work. The core messaging this year has been that the Florida Consortium works when our personnel are strategic conveners. This means that the work of the Florida Consortium needs to be a grassroots effort where participants have a personal and professional stake in the student focused outcomes of the collaboration. This was not how the Florida Consortium had operated in past years and the Strategic Planning process exposed this strategy flaw. The other major communication target was to inform member institutions and external partners the beyond a strategic convening the Florida Consortium can also assist in providing external research and capacity for exploration of best practices and also can be a screener for collaborative projects to ensure they have fidelity to our universities strategic priorities.

In order to kick-off the Strategic Plan in a strong way the staff of the Florida Consortium along with support from Helios Education Foundation went on a campus tour to introduce the plan, update faculty and staff on early successes including our College to Career STEM Grant and to gain the endorsement of academic leaders on each campus. These meetings were scheduled between September and November, 2019 and over 600 faculty and staff attended. At each meeting the member university's Provost introduced the Florida Consortium and it's local impact.

Playing off of the success of the Campus Forums the Strategic Plan was also introduced at the October, 2019 Florida Transfer Success Summit in Orlando, Florida. During this event our Executive Director, Dr. Michael Preston introduced the Florida Consortium to an audience of over 300 Transfer Success professionals and the focus was the efforts we have engaged in to advance Transfer Success through our Transfer Success Network and joint student success projects.

A major component of the Strategic Plan is our continued work and partnership with Helios Education Foundation. The Strategic Plan roll out was not only funded using our Helios Strategic Planning Grant but they also have served as a key thought partner. This included sponsoring a white paper where we took a deep dive into the first five years of Consortium work and success. This paper became the cornerstone of our city wide Regional Economic Summits where Helios President Paul Luna served as a speaker and contributor. Finally, Helios has sponsored an evaluation team from a group called Equal Measure. This team of researchers will assist us in the coming year to provide more operational structure to the plan. Learning to work together is a difficult task. The push and pull of campus demands make networked projects harder to accomplish so the guidance and techniques provided by Equal Measure will be invaluable.

During this upcoming year our efforts will focus on elevating strategic plan supported projects and working with external partners to resource these projects. It is understood the financial realities COVID-19 is placing on our members make internal funding hard. So the Florida Consortium aims to build capacity in a number of ways.

## 15 Key Achievements in the Past Year

1. Produced a regional Economic Data Conference with EMSI in Gainesville, FL. Over 50 participants from all over the state took a deep dive into the capacity of workforce data.
2. All three universities participated in Career Source's State of Jobs Conference where over 3,000 high school juniors and seniors were introduced to the concept of college to career.
3. Keynote presenter at the HACU (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities) Conference in Chicago, IL on the concept of network improvement for higher education.
4. Sponsored the third annual Florida Transfer Success Drive-In at the University of Central Florida with Janet Marling of the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students at the keynote speaker – Over 300 participants from colleges and universities.
5. Participated in the Lumina Foundation's national meeting on degree completion. The Florida Consortium was the only university representation for the state of Florida.
6. Presented with EMSI, How to Use Labor Market Data to assist career planning for students and career services offices as part of EMSI's Learning Series.
7. Sponsored three featured sessions at the Sunshine Teaching and Learning Conference, an annual faculty conference coordinated by representatives from USF and UCF.
8. Co-Sponsored, along with USF our fifth National Student Success Conference in Tampa Bay. This year Shaun Harper was the keynote and over 500 participants were in attendance.
9. Was an appointed keynote session at the High Impact Practices in the States Conference in College Station, TX. The session was on our Florida Consortium Strategic Plan.
10. Authored a chapter for New Directions in Student Leadership on Florida Consortium member efforts to improve leadership competencies for students who work off campus.
11. Presented on the impact of the Helios COVID-19 Summer Completion Grant during Helios' summer retreat. To date over 500 students have been awarded.
12. Presented with FIU at the Strong Start to Finish Conference in Miami, FL on Understanding the Generational needs of students in career exploration.
13. STEM faculty at UCF, USF, and FIU have written an NSF Grant focused on creating a Consortium STEM Summer Research network for under-represented minority students.
14. Over 75 STEM faculty from UCF, USF, and FIU have formed a workgroup to support the moving of STEM labs to an online environment in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
15. Faculty at UCF, USF, and FIU issued a joint Consortium white paper titled; "Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI Program)". ([https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm\\_summ.jsp?pims\\_id=505512](https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505512)).



## **Florida Consortium by the Numbers – Metrics**

### **Statewide Impact**

Percent of State University System (SUS) Enrollment	48%
Percent of SUS Pell Eligible Students	55%
Percent of SUS Minority Enrollment	57%
Percent of State College Transfers	61%
Percent of SUS Degrees Earned by Minorities	58%
Percent of Graduates who Stay and Work in Florida	76%
Percent of Graduates Employed or Continuing Ed – 1 Year	68%
Six-Year Minority Graduation Rate	63%
Average Starting Salary for Graduates	\$38,000
Number of Bachelors-Degrees Awarded	Over 32,000

Metric	Definition	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020
		Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019 *
University of Central Florida	IPEDS UNITIDS 132903						
University of South Florida	137351						
Florida International University	133951						
Headcount Enrollment	UG/GR combined: Fall						
total		156,847	160,691	164,027	167,516	169,908	171,423
International/NRA		8,324	9,438	10,523	11,255	11,716	12,712
African American		16,885	17,501	17,836	18,321	18,340	18,139
Hispanic		51,342	53,525	55,653	57,520	59,276	60,493
White		65,397	64,736	63,763	63,481	63,033	62,723
Pell-eligible		75,069	76,100	76,587	78,742	77,597	77,966
First-generation	Federal definition	33,100	32,926	32,050	31,571	30,156	32,019
Percentage of SUS	UG/GR combined: Fall						
total		46%	46%	47%	49%	49%	***
International/NRA		49%	50%	51%	53%	55%	***
African American		39%	40%	41%	43%	43%	***
Hispanic		62%	62%	69%	66%	65%	***
White		39%	39%	39%	41%	41%	***
Pell-eligible		48%	47%	47%	46%	44%	***
Retention (FTIC)	Summer/fall to fall: Full-time, FTIC; IPEDS aligned	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18**	2018-19**
Retention (Transfers)		86%	88%	88%	89%	89%	90%
		81%	84%	80%	80%	80%	83%
4-year graduation rate (FTIC, FI; IPEDS methodology)	Full-time, FTIC; IPEDS methodology	2011-15	2012-16	2013-17	2014-18	2015-19	2016-20
4-year completion rate (Transfers, AA)	SUS = 6 year completion); align with BOG AR reporting	37%	40%	43%	46%	49%	***
		66%	65%	66%	67%	67%	***
6-year graduation rate (FTIC, FI; IPEDS methodology)	Full-time, FTIC; IPEDS aligned	2009-15	2010-16	2011-17	2012-18	2013-19	2014-20
		67%	64%	65%	67%	70%	***
Bachelor's degrees awarded		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020
total		30,946	31,661	32,612	34,589	36,199	***
First-generation		8,353	8,173	8,184	9,086	8,928	***
Pell recipients		17,293	17,727	18,136	18,779	18,941	***
African American		3,017	3,129	3,287	3,427	4,178	***
Hispanic		8,515	9,048	9,453	10,102	13,864	***
1-year post-graduation salary	FETPIP / BOG Data	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
1-year post-graduation employment rate	FETPIP / BOG Data	\$ 38,466	\$ 38,433	\$ 39,433	\$ 39,933	\$ 38,500	***
		68%	68%	69%	70%	67%	***

\* Drop/add (5th day) benchmark

\*\*Preliminary data available after October

\*\*\* To be reported 2020

## Student Success Metrics

Metric	Year	FCMRU	SUS AVG	SUS NO FCMRU
Percent of Graduates Employed	2017-2018	70.1	70.0	69.0
Median Wages	2017-2018	\$39,666	\$39,400	\$38,945
Average Cost (120 Hours)	2017-2018	\$10,376	\$9,400	\$7,544
Four Year Graduation Rate	2013-2017	45.2	45.7	46.1
Academic Progress Rate	2017-2018	87.8	85.6	84.5
Programs of Strategic Emphasis	2017-2018	52.3	52.2	52.1
University Access Rate	2017-2018	44.3	40.2	36.1
Percent of Degrees WO/ Excess Hours	2017-2018	75.2	78.8	82.1
Percent of Freshmen in top 10% of class	2017-2018	31.5	35.0	36.4
Time to Degree – 120 Hours	2017-2018	4.4	4.4	4.4
Six Year Graduation Rate	2012-2018	66.1	68.0	70.9
Bachelors Degrees Awarded	2017-2018	33,425	66,995	33,570
Percent of Bachelors Awarded to Black and Hispanic Students	2017-2018	49.5	41.0	33.8
Percent of students age 25+	2017-2018	19.7	17.0	13.4
Percent of FTE Undergraduates Enrolled in Online Courses	2017-2018	33.1	28.0	23.2
Percent of bachelors degrees in STEM and health	2017-2018	34.0	35.0	35.2
Total undergraduate Enrollment	2017-2018	137,433	277,670	140,237
Full Time Enrollment (FTE)	2017-2018	123,551	257,098	133,547

## Faculty Success Metrics

Metric	Year	FCMRU	SUS AVG	SUS NO FCMRU
National Academy Members	2017-2018	26	64	38
Faculty Awards	2017-2018	24	55	31
Total Research Expenditures (\$M)	2017-2018	1,003	2,321	1,318
Percent of Research Dollars from External Sources	2017-2018	46.0	54.0	54.5
Utility Patents Awarded	2017-2018	207	346	139
Number of Licenses Awarded	2017-2018	162	437	275
Number of New Start-Ups	2017-2018	12	27	15