University of South Florida Consolidation Planning Study and Implementation Task Force February 12, 2019

USF Consolidation Planning Study and Implementation Task Force

<u>Final Report</u>

February 12, 2019

<u>Contents</u>

Letter from the Chair	2
Overview and Executive Summary	3
Summary of Activities	4
Recommendations	9
Appendix A: Florida Law Ch. 2018-4	17
Appendix B: Task Force Charter	23
Appendix C: Task Force Membership List	28
Appendix D: Guiding Principles	30
Appendix E: Public Comment Record	32
Appendix F: Task Force Subcommittee Recommendations	73

USF Consolidation Planning Study and Implementation Task Force

February 12, 2019

Mr. Brian Lamb Board of Trustees Chair University of South Florida

Dear Chair Lamb:

I am pleased to present the final report of the USF Consolidation Planning Study and Implementation Task Force.

The Task Force has worked extremely hard over the last ten months, meeting 35 times, hearing testimony from several dozens of subject matter experts and the USF community, and engaging in robust dialogue with various stakeholders. Task Force meetings have been open to all members of the public and the Task Force's work has been widely publicized. The recommendations made here are the result of careful deliberation and thoughtful discussion following the extensive input the Task Force received.

The Task Force's recommendations are focused on not only on strengthening the university's preeminence position but achieving greater student success on each campus. The Task Force is passionate and dedicated to enhancing opportunities for students, faculty and staff post-consolidation. USF is an incredible asset to the Tampa Bay region and the State of Florida that will only become stronger through the consolidation process.

Sincerely,

Mill E. Sto

Michael E. Griffin Chair, USF Consolidation Task Force

Overview and Executive Summary

On March 11, 2018, Governor Rick Scott signed the Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2018, requiring the USF System – comprised of the University of South Florida Tampa, the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee – to consolidate under a single accreditation (see *Appendix A* for legislation). The Legislature and the Governor recognized that a single, unified accreditation will enhance the success of all USF students, faculty and staff.

The law established the USF Consolidation Planning Study and Implementation Task Force and appointed to it 13 community leaders from across the region and state (see *Appendix C* for a list of Task Force members). The Task Force was charged with submitting recommendations to the USF Board of Trustees by February 15, 2019 on specific topics (see *Appendix A* for list of topics outlined in the legislation) aimed at improving student success while phasing out the separate accreditations.

The consolidation process has been governed by a set of guiding principles which ensure USF maintains its accreditation, strengthens its stature as a Preeminent Research University and preserves the distinctive identities of each of its three campuses. These guiding principles include: (The full list of guiding principles can be found in *Appendix D*.)

- Strengthening the Preeminent stature of the campuses
- Preserving distinctive campus identities
- Prioritizing expanded student opportunities
- Building a clear, accountable leadership structure
- Establishing centers of excellence on each campus
- Promoting regional economic development without unwarranted duplication
- Maximizing operational efficiencies

From April to November 2018, the Task Force held public meetings and townhalls at each USF campus. Task Force members divided into three subcommittees:

- Student Success, Academic Programs, and Campus Identity;
- Shared Governance and Transparency; and
- Student Access.

Each subcommittee held public hearings to gather expert testimony and hear from USF leadership and community members. Based on their assigned topics for review, (see summary of activities) each subcommittee produced comprehensive recommendations, found in *Appendix F*.

Summary of Activities

The Task Force commenced its work immediately and provided a short timeline for completion, with a deadline of February 15, 2019. The Task Force implemented a process that allowed for engagement and exchange of ideas with various stakeholders including students, faculty, staff and community members. The Task Force's goals include understanding how USF's current structure works, listening to the concerns of the USF community, and recommending initiatives to create a unified USF, geographically distributed.

Within a few days of the law being signed, a website was created to provide the USF community and general public with information regarding consolidation and the work of the Task Force. Agendas, meeting notes, background materials and other important information are accessible via the website. Additionally, the website provided the general public, faculty, staff and students with a mechanism for submitting electronic comments and suggestions to the Task Force. (The above mentioned information can be found at the following website: https://www.usf.edu/system/board-of-trustees/system-consolidation/index.aspx)

The Task Force held its first official meeting on April 25, 2018, at which the chair assigned members to one of three subcommittees: Student Access, Shared Governance/Transparency, and Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity. Each subcommittee was charged with developing and delivering recommendations pertaining to specific requirements addressed in law. Each subcommittee held a series of public hearings –one on each USF campus – with testimony provided by subject matter experts and community leaders. At the end of each hearing, members of the public had the opportunity to offer comments.

Task Force:

After its initial meeting in April 2018, the full 13-member Task Force met monthly, either by phone or in person to discuss updates and recommendations emerging from the subcommittees.

It also held Town halls at USF Sarasota-Manatee, USF St. Petersburg, and USF Tampa. These Town Hall meetings were well attended, Task Force members heard input from approximately 103 members of the USF community and general public. (The full public comment record can be found in *Appendix E*)

Date	Activity	Location
April 25, 2018	Task Force Meeting	USF St. Petersburg
May 30, 2018	Task Force Call	N/A
June 29, 2018	Task Force Call	N/A
July 26, 2018	Task Force Call	N/A
August 22, 2018	Town Hall	USF Tampa
August 22, 2018	Task Force Meeting	USF Tampa

September 11, 2018	Town Hall	USF St. Petersburg
September 26, 2018	Task Force Call	N/A
October 2, 2018	Town Hall	USF Sarasota-Manatee
November 29, 2018	Task Force Meeting	USF St. Petersburg
December 19, 2018	Task Force Call	N/A
January 23, 2019	Task Force Meeting	USF Tampa

Subcommittees:

Three subcommittees were created to address the focus areas of the Task Force as prescribed by law:

- 1. Student Access:
 - a. Equitable distribution of programs and resources to establish pathways to admission for all students who require bridge programming and financial aid.
- 2. Shared Governance/Transparency
 - a. Establishing budget transparency and accountability regarding the review and approval of student fees among campuses, including fee differentials and athletic fees, to enable the identification of the equitable distribution of resources to each campus, including the University of South Florida Health;
 - b. Developing and delivering integrated academic programs, student and faculty governance, and administrative services to better serve the students, faculty, and staff at the University of South Florida College of Marine Sciences, the University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee, and the University of South Florida St. Petersburg;
 - c. Maintaining faculty input from all campuses during the review and development of general education requirements to reflect the distinctive identity of each campus.
- 3. Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity
 - a. Identification of specific degrees in programs of strategic significance, including health care, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and other program priorities to be offered at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and the University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee and the timeline for the development and delivery of programs on each campus;
 - Maintaining the unique identity of each campus and an assessment of whether a separate educational mission is beneficial to the future of each campus;
 - c. Developing the research capacity at each campus.

Student Access Subcommittee:

The Student Access subcommittee included Anddrikk Frazier, Chair; Alison Barlow, and Byron Shinn. The subcommittee's focus area was the "Equitable distribution of programs

and resources to establish pathways to admission for all students who require bridge programming and financial aid."

The subcommittee held one hearing at each of the USF campuses; USF St. Petersburg on June 13, 2018, USF Sarasota Manatee on July 17, 2018, and USF Tampa on August 7, 2018. The hearings included presentations on topics related to student access, including:

- Student access as a part of overall student success;
- Challenges facing low-income, first generation, first time in college, transfers, minority or other under-served populations;
- Changes in admissions criteria and best practices to mitigate any unintended consequences;
- Financial aid and scholarships;
- Pathway programs and concerns for transfer students; and
- Community outreach and engagement to prospective students.

Presenters included: USF representatives from the offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Success, the USF Foundation, Institutional Effectiveness, Diversity and Inclusion, and Communications as well as external speakers from Hillsborough Community College, St. Petersburg College, the Florida College Access Network, UnidosNow, Pinellas County Schools, and Manatee High School.

The Student Access subcommittee was provided abundant information on areas and topics that impact access. The information, including testimony, written documents, presentations and public comment was broad, but themes emerged including community outreach, financial impact, diversity, transfer students and access to academic programs.

Date	Activity	Location
May 18, 2018	Student Access Call	N/A
June 13, 2018	Public Hearing	USF St. Petersburg
July 17, 2018	Public Hearing	USF Sarasota-Manatee
August 7, 2018	Public Hearing	USF Tampa
August 16, 2018	Student Access Meeting	USF Tampa
August 21, 2018	Student Access Call	N/A

The Student Access subcommittee met on the dates below and presented recommendations to the full Task Force on August 22, 2018.

Shared Governance / Transparency Subcommittee:

The Shared Governance / Transparency subcommittee members included Melissa Seixas, Chair; Kayla Rykiel, and Nicole Washington. The subcommittee focus areas were:

a. Establishing budget transparency and accountability regarding the review and approval of student fees among campuses, including fee differentials and athletic

fees, to enable the identification of the equitable distribution of resources to each campus, including the University of South Florida Health;

- b. Developing and delivering integrated academic programs, student and faculty governance, and administrative services to better serve the students, faculty, and staff at the University of South Florida College of Marine Sciences, the University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee, and the University of South Florida St. Petersburg; and
- c. Maintaining faculty input from all campuses during the review and development of general education requirements to reflect the distinctive identity of each campus.

The subcommittee held one hearing at each of the USF campuses: USF Tampa on July 18, 2018, USF St. Petersburg on September 11, 2018, and USF Sarasota Manatee on October 2, 2018. Presenters included representatives from the Board of Governors for the State University System of Florida, and leadership from USF System and regional campuses, including SACSCOC Liaisons, the General Counsel, Financial Affairs, student and faculty government, and General Education.

The Shared Governance and Transparency subcommittee focused efforts on university, faculty and student governance along with general education models, student fees and shared services. Much of the work of the subcommittee centered on building strength in consolidation while maintaining existing campus unique benefits.

Date	Activity	Location
May 23, 2018	Shared Governance Call	N/A
June 14, 2018	Shared Governance Call	N/A
July 16, 2018	Shared Governance Call	N/A
July 18, 2018	Public Hearing	USF Tampa
September 11, 2018	Public Hearing	USF St. Petersburg
October 2, 2018	Public Hearing	USF Sarasota-Manatee
October 8, 2018	Shared Governance Call	N/A
October 24, 2018	Shared Governance Meeting	USF Health (CAMLS)
November 1, 2018	Shared Governance Call	N/A
November 13, 2018	Shared Governance Call	N/A

The Shared Governance/Transparency subcommittee met on the dates below and presented recommendations to the full Task Force on November 29, 2018.

Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity Subcommittee:

The Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity subcommittee included Michael "Mike" Griffin, Chair; Frederick "Rick" Piccolo, and Dr. Tonjua Williams. The committee focus areas were:

a. Identification of specific degrees in programs of strategic significance, including health care, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and other program priorities to be offered at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and the University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee and the timeline for the development and delivery of programs on each campus;

- b. Maintaining the unique identity of each campus and an assessment of whether a separate educational mission is beneficial to the future of each campus; and
- c. Developing the research capacity at each campus.

The Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity subcommittee held one hearing at each of the USF campuses: USF Tampa on July 9, 2018, USF Sarasota-Manatee on August 28, 2018, and USF St. Petersburg on October 18, 2018. Speakers included: leadership from USF System and regional campuses, including SACSCOC Liaisons, student success and student affairs, innovative education, community engagement, academic affairs and career services, the Board of Governors for the State University System of Florida, the Tampa Bay Partnership, St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, Burning Glass Technologies, Huron Consulting Group. Additionally, the regional chancellors and several deans presented, as did leaders from the region's businesses, including BayCare Health Systems, and FCCI Insurance Group.

In addition to the three hearings, the Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity subcommittee held two additional in person meetings to discuss academic programming in the context of consolidation.

The Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity subcommittee worked through an incredible amount of information, feedback and comment to develop recommendations that provide equity while improving student success. While student success was the core focus of the subcommittee, it also reviewed subject areas including academic programs, campus identity, research capacity and community engagement.

Date	Activity	Location
May 16, 2018	Student Success Call	N/A
June 25, 2018	Student Success Call	N/A
July 9, 2018	Public Hearing	USF Tampa
August 28, 2018	Public Hearing	USF Sarasota-Manatee
September 19, 2018	Student Success Meeting	USF Health (CAMLS)
October 18, 2018	Public Hearing	USF St. Petersburg
November 6, 2018	Student Success Meeting	USF Health (CAMLS)
November 14, 2018	Student Success Meeting	USF St. Petersburg
November 19, 2018	Student Success Call	N/A

The Student Success/Academic Programs/Campus Identity subcommittee met on the dates below and presented recommendations to the Task Force on November 29, 2018.

Recommendations

The Task Force wishes to highlight key recommendations for special emphasis, based on the subcommittees' extensive deliberations. The Task Force also recommends that through the consolidation transition, the USF Board of Trustees implement a process to review progress toward these recommendations on an annual or otherwise reasonable basis.

I. Student Success, Academic Programs and Campus Identity Recommendations

Student Success

- Develop guiding principles for a unified student success movement through an inclusive and collaborative campus stakeholder engagement process.
- Provide all campuses with the necessary support to serve their unique student populations while ensuring that equitable services are offered across USF.
- Leverage the new Student Success Committee to promote a unified approach to student success.
- Develop Persistence Committees on each campus and leverage the unified Student Success Committee to ensure coordinated retention and completion efforts including application of predictive models and the "Finish in Four" initiative.
- Strengthen intervention initiatives and ensure the programs are reflective of and responsive to all student populations.
- Empower faculty to have conversations with students about potential career paths in their academic discipline.

Academic Programs

- Develop recommendations for expanding academic degree offerings at the Baccalaureate, Master's and Doctoral levels, based on a multi-layer, multi-year approach [see Appendix F for "Unified Response" plan].
- Strengthen processes for the expansion of existing academic degree offerings such as examining evidence of student demand, critical mass, and capacity to deliver.
- Empower local university leadership to strengthen employer partnerships to inform curriculum development.
- Consider including updated labor market data sources in Program Reviews, so that students are better situated/equipped to understand real-life applications of degree programs.
- Increase master and doctoral degree program delivery on the St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee campuses no later than July 1, 2021.
- Increase online, blended and hybrid course offerings at all levels.
- In consultation with Regional Chancellors and using established academic benchmarks, promote the opportunity for colleges to be homed across regional campuses.
- Unless otherwise prescribed by law, develop guiding principles for a college unit, such as
 - One college per academic discipline;

- Establish realistic and manageable-sized college units informed by benchmarks for what constitutes a College;
- A comprehensive resource plan and reasonable timeframe for attaining established benchmarks and a defined process for underperformance; and
- Meeting local workforce needs of the communities USF serves.
- Ensure that existing academic offerings available on campuses pre-consolidation remain available under a single accreditation pursuant to determinations made according to faculty-led program reviews and continued demand evidence.
- Add a student representative as a full member to the USF System Academic Program Advisory Council with provision to rotate by campus on an annual membership basis.

Campus Identity

- Identify high-impact practices that reflect campus identities through community collaboration, service learning opportunities, and civic engagement.
- Communicate distinctive academic and programmatic elements with external audiences to increase community awareness of campus identities and offerings.
- Continue to increase opportunities for existing and new faculty to develop academic programs, increase research contributions, and strengthen campus identities.
- Support on-campus student housing on the Sarasota-Manatee campus, which is critically important to enhance its identity, utilizing housing demand studies and other relevant information.
- Strengthen academic and non-curricular programs, initiatives, and research on all campuses, to further the identity of the campuses.
- Develop new academic programs on each of the campuses, which are part of the master academic plan and lead to more vibrant connections with the business communities and other communities of interest.
- Foster cross-university collaborations to support the needs of the communities each campus serves.
- Coordinate undergraduate admissions processes and outreach to emphasize one USF while highlighting the distinct campus identities.

Research Capacity

- Encourage proactive engagement of the USF Research & Innovation Office with faculty on all campuses.
- Support the growth of campus research initiatives and strengths through strategies including joint appointments for faculty on the St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee campuses.
- Empower faculty on all campuses to identify research assets and opportunities and to engage in the planning efforts designed to expand research capacity.
- Design an online database that highlights the research resources and centers that are available to all USF faculty.
- Develop state-of-the-art technologies to promote cross-campus collaboration.

• Prioritize the construction of the Integrated Science and Technology Complex (ISTC) on the Sarasota-Manatee campus to serve local research and teaching needs.

Community Engagement

- Strengthen relationships with local businesses and non-profit organizations in relevant industry sectors including the arts, aviation, healthcare, insurance, engineering, real estate, etc. to leverage community strengths.
- Enhance partnerships with educational organizations, including K-12 schools and regional community colleges, to foster community collaboration, innovative programs, and student access and success.
- Establish mechanisms that allow engaged partners to inform the design of contemporary, real-world curricula and the development of relevant applied research.

II. Shared Governance and Transparency Recommendations

University Governance

- The governance structure of USF should reflect several principles. First, the President of USF has ultimate accountability for all actions within USF and all lines of authority should ultimately end at the President. Second, university campuses are distinct entities and governance structures should reflect university imperatives rather than corporate or bureaucratic structures. Third, the structure should facilitate the overall development of the university while maintaining the unique advantages of the branch campus model.
- Each branch campus should have a regional chancellor who shall report directly to the president. The chancellor shall manage, supervise, hire, promote and fire all branch campus employees academic and nonacademic in a manner consistent with USF policies, procedures, and guidelines, and, for personnel matters at or above the director level, the regional chancellor shall act in consultation, collaboration and concurrence with the appropriate senior vice president. Colleges and schools located on branch campus would have a reporting obligation to the branch chief academic officer. The regional chancellors will coordinate campus budgets with the senior vice president for business and finance and submit to the President who will forward those recommendations to the USF Board of Trustees along with any additional recommendations from the President.
- This governance structure preserves the President's singular leadership role while recognizing that strong regional chancellors provide a more dynamic on-site management presence to ensure USF's continued preeminence as well as provide a greater on-the-ground understanding of how to foster the unique advantages of each branch campus.
- Develop an organizational structure that clarifies delegated authority and furthers mutual accountability among leadership through transparent processes, communication and reporting. Ensure assignment of local accountability for coordinating, integrating, and delivering value-added student experiences.

- Designate USFSM and USFSP as branch campuses as defined by SACSCOC, which includes the following:
 - Permanent in nature
 - Offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential
 - \circ $\;$ Has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization and
 - Has its own budgetary and hiring authority
- Define, update and communicate roles and responsibilities for clear understanding of the advisory, not governing, role of the campus board. Establish a practice of collaborative review of campus governance by the board including, but not limited to, review of campus plan, budget, and legislative agendas. Although not governing/binding, those actions should maintain a high degree of well-informed members who represent USF among external stakeholders.

Faculty Governance

- Empower Faculty Governance to contribute to the coordination and delivery of valueadded student experiences.
- Develop one Faculty Senate, including campus councils, across the university to include equitable representation by campuses.
- The Faculty Senate organizational structure should allow for Campus Senate Councils or Committees with officer representation serving on the system Executive Committee (either as officers or council/committee chairs). Officers (Pres, VP, Sec, and Sergeant – at- Arms) should have diverse representation from all campuses.
- Carefully assess the potential impact of organizational changes to academic structure (Colleges and Schools) on the structure and representation of all campuses to ensure maximum faculty engagement across USF.
- Clearly define the accountability and defined powers of faculty governance. Review, update and communicate roles and responsibilities of all faculty governance councils and committees to support consolidation and ensure delivery of consistently high-quality curricular and extra-curricular experiences to students in each geographic location in which USF operates and no compromise of campus identity.
- Review and identify opportunities to consolidate committees with similar functions such as awards councils, academic committees and Gen. Ed. committees without negative impacts for any campus.

General Education

- Create a unified general education curriculum and identify core values that ensures maximum ease of transition for FTIC and transfer students to USF.
- Appoint a representative faculty leadership to oversee the transition to a consolidated gen ed curriculum to ensure consistent learning outcomes and seamless student mobility among USF campuses.

- Establish equitable representation of faculty from all campuses in the identification of high-impact practices that reflect campus identities through community collaboration, service learning opportunities, and civic engagement.
- Update governance processes and documents for the General Education Council of the Faculty Senate to support a unified university while creating equitable participation opportunities from all campuses.
- Implement an assessment plan for annual review and approval oversight of general education curriculum.

Student Governance

- Create a system-level SGA and ensure alternating campus officer representation on the system-level SGA.
- Allow for equitable representation of student-elected positions across all three campuses.
- Define a clear process for equitable budget allocation.
- Outline and communicate processes and tools for student input/feedback during the consolidation transition.
- Develop a process for student leaders to assess and refine the student government structure two years post-consolidation

Budget Transparency

- Create a mechanism for transparency in the prioritization and decision-making processes of budget initiatives that meet a certain threshold.
- To maintain the university's commitment to affordability, examine and determine a fee structure that minimizes impact on students' costs and ensures that current students continue to benefit from the fee structure under which they entered USF. The consolidation of USF is an opportunity for improved coordination and efficiency not an opportunity for the redistribution of burdens. Students at branch campus should not be subject to fees for services that are not readily accessible to branch campus students.
- Student fees should be collected and maintained at each campus with intra-university transfers used to reallocate funds when a centralized service is determined by the regional chancellors and senior vice president for business and finance to be a more cost effective means of delivering an equivalent level of service.
- Streamline the process for funding derived from student fees to allow for system student leadership structure to review and approve budgets while maintaining regional campus allocation processes.
- Create a continuous communication process/plan for prospective and current USF students and families regarding how fees are assessed (home campus flat fees v. course/tuition-based fees), applied and services rendered.
- Implement ongoing processes to monitor students' utilization of and satisfaction with services provided, such as conducting a student survey to determine interest in system-wide events and intramural activities to determine proper fee support and likelihood of using services located on other campuses.

- Proposed post-consolidation shared services should consider a menu of options: inperson/home campus access, online/virtual options, and collaborative space/resource initiatives.
- Engage and challenge staff to identify efficiencies and business process. Consider incentives to empower and reward staff for identifying efficiencies and implementing best practices.
- Encourage USF to identify opportunities for cross-training of staff and leveraging of innovative technologies to promote efficiencies across the university.

III. Student Access Recommendations

Communications & community outreach

- Appoint a "Community Advisory Board" to strengthen connections and track access goals.
- Develop a unified USF communications plan to provide an understanding of college access options including bridge programs.
- Dedicate additional resources at each campus to foster community partnerships.

Scholarships, financial aid & admissions

- Expand the reach of existing USF Foundation scholarship programs.
- Deliver communications to prospective students often and beginning in middle school and early high school to provide a clear understanding of the application process requirements, timing, financial aid resources and degrees offered.
- Partner with local communities to identify new sources of financial assistance to attract students from underserved populations.
- Hire additional recruiting and admissions staff to strengthen support for prospective students and families and engage further with local high schools, school districts, and education foundations.

Promotion of a diverse student body

- Engage the community in ways that encourages a diverse applicant pool to USF.
- Foster student readiness among potential applicants, for example, by developing partnerships to provide free or discounted SAT prep courses to low-income prospective students.
- Introduce families in the community to USF early on in a student's educational journey by organizing campus visits, open houses, and other activities.
- Promote diversity among USF faculty and staff.

Transfer students & student mobility

• Educate potential transfer students from the Florida College System early on regarding the admissions process and academic and social transition to USF.

- Dedicate resources to fostering a welcoming environment for transfer students by providing similar programs and supports to those received by incoming freshmen.
- Dedicate financial and staffing resources to expanding and marketing bridge programs, including FUSE.
- Promote student mobility for FCS students (and across the three USF campuses) by expanding access to a broader array of courses and degree programs.

Academic programs & course delivery

- Enhance the flexibility, accessibility, and relevancy of course programming at each campus location for the undergraduate and graduate level.
- Continue to explore alternate delivery models (e.g. hybrid, virtual, asynchronous) and creative uses of technology to increase student access.
- Disseminate resources and expertise broadly across the USF system in a way that is flexible and aligns with student needs and schedules at each campus.
- Expand access to relevant programs to better align with local workforce demands.