NOTES
FAMU BOARD RETREAT
September 11-12, 2007

Facilitators: Dr. David “Dave” McFarland, Former President
Dr. Frank Pogue, Former President, Edinboro University
Of Ed Penson Associates, Inc.

Trustees Present: Al Cardenas, Pamela Duncan, Solomon Badger, Robert Brown,
Richard Dent, Maurice Holder, R.B. Holmes, Daryl Parks, Bill Jennings, Spurgeon
McWilliams

Chairman Jennings began the retreat by relaying the unique culture of Florida A&M
University (FAMU), relaying his interaction with several alumni during a recent
hospitalization. The essence was an expectation that FAMU Trustees would take all
necessary steps to turn things around. He noted that only two of the original trustees and
five presidents and four board chairs since the Board was created in 2001. There is
tremendous responsibility of the Board of Trustees and the president. The Trustees
should consider their job as one to give the president the tools that he needs to do his job.
This is an interdependent relationship. We have to work as a team.

President Ammons then spoke. He noted that being away six (6) years was good because
his only frame of reference about FAMU is the greatness. Therefore, he returns to move
beyond greatness to a new era, new time and unknown heights. He has and he senses
high energy. We are working together to cement this relationship and to exercise shared
governance. “I am excited and thanks for this opportunity.”

Dr. Pogue introduced himself and the facilitators’ role during the retreat. He noted that
FAMU is viewed as a flagship university in American higher education—not just
HBCUs. American higher education is tied to FAMU’s success among all American
universities.

Dr. McFarland interacted with Board members and discussed their unique role as
trustees. This role prevent the trustees from doing certain things that “as regular citizens”
you’re permitted to do. You are on a pedestal and you have to be careful not to come off
your pedestal. Dent remarked that you have to be “opinionless” in your discussions—
take issues that are presented to you—take it to the president and let him handle it. Bring
items to his attention and let he and the staff handle it. President should circle back to the
trustees. This slippery slope led to a review of the “10 Most Common Slippery Slopes to
be Avoided by Board Members.”

In breakout groups, the Trustees discussed the Major Challenges and the Major
Opportunities at FAMU.
MAJOR CHALLENGES:
- SACS & other units (law, pharmacy)
- Financial Integrity/Stability
- Student/Faculty Recruitment/Retention
- Improving Communication
- BoG Task Force & BoG (leverage)
- Maintaining academic integrity (PIMS, Pharmacy, MITE, SBI)
- Restoring morale (culture) all stakeholders; restoring faith
- Recruitment/Retention of high achieving students (Undergraduate/Graduates); restoration of marquee programs such as engineering
- Shortage of Resources (i.e., Budget Cuts)
- Fund-raising campaign
- Attention to new achievements (such as research)
- Restoring credibility

MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES:
- Task Force in noting the turn around
- Volunteerism
- Restoring
- More high school events held on campus (i.e., drama festivals, camps, etc.)
- Leverage key athletic programs (including Marching 100)
- International Programs—Study Abroad—FAMU as Global Center for students and faculty
- Growth of Undergraduate and graduate programs to meet state and national needs
- Redirect growth with smaller countries for interdisciplinary collaborations
- Improving the image
- New Board of Trustees; its potential and power

The trustees then discussed the BoT-Presidential Relationship
- General review v. formal review which involves all constituents
- Need to look at a way to keep President sharp and innovative. Facilitators reminded trustees of the development cycle of the presidency.
- Be wary of surveys, especially in a bright Sunshine state such as Florida.
- Need discussion of the Sunshine Law restrictions that apply to the trustees.

Discussion of Major Expectations & Timelines was led by President Ammons
- Provision o our contract between President and the Trustees, provision for mutual agreement on a set of expectations between each group.
- Since February 2007, he has been speaking with stakeholders re: expectations and with SACS and the audit issues clearly understands the key issues for the first year.
• Major Expectation #1: Improve the financial and operational management of the University.

• Major Expectation #2: Move the University and accredited disciplines toward compliance with the standards of their respective accrediting bodies.
  o Will review compensation packages, including overhead receipts to support graduate assistants and PIs.
  o Faculty and student ratios
  o Should FAMU be bigger or stay about the same? We should be about 15,000 and have the capacity to grow.
  o Talking about improving the faculty and staff wages.

• Major Expectation #3: Recruit and develop an effective Administrative Team
  o Correction: CIO and VP for Technology, and three interim deans in Arts & Sciences, CESTA and Education.
  o What do you do to retain students? Each college will be asked to develop a retention/graduation plan.

• Major Expectation #4: Develop an enrollment plan to increase recruitment efforts as well as retention and graduation rates
  o Are we recruiting diverse students?
  o Are students enrolled that are not ready to matriculate to college?
  o Do we get funds for special students?
  o Is the Gordon Rule still in effect?