OUTREACH

Greater Ft. Lauderdale Alliance World Class Faculty Award
On Thursday, May 2, 2013, a team from FAU, including Dean Gary Perry, Associate Provost Anthony Abbate, and Vice President for Community Engagement Jennifer O’Flannery-Anderson, was on hand to watch Dr. Nwadiuto Esiobu receive the Greater Ft. Lauderdale Alliance’s 2013 World Class Faculty Award. Dr. Esiobu is the Director of the Microbial Biotechnology Laboratory at FAU’s Davie Campus and received her Ph.D. from the University of Louvain, Belgium, and did her postdoctoral training in molecular biology and biotechnology at MIT. Dr. Esiobu’s recognition also continues a wonderful tradition of academic excellence for FAU, as six of the last nine World Class Faculty recipients have been members of the FAU faculty.

GOING FORWARD

The Office of University Relations will be composing a 2013 Legislative Session Executive Summary that will be released after the Governor has taken final actions on the pieces of legislation that are currently awaiting his approval. Please contact the Office of University Relations if there is a specific topic or piece of legislation that you would like to see addressed in the Executive Summary.

BILLS IN BRIEF

SB 1664 / HB 863 – Teacher Preparation and Accountability
The measure revises the uniform core curricula for each state-approved educator preparation program. The bill requires individuals in postsecondary educator preparation programs who instruct or supervise field experience courses or internships where a student must demonstrate an impact on student learning growth to have specialized training in clinical supervision. The bill revises the reporting requirements of institutions that offer state-approved preparation programs. Last Action: Passed by the House and Senate and currently awaiting the Governor's signature.

SB 50 / HB 23 – Public Meetings
The measure requires that a member of the public be given a reasonable opportunity to be
the goals and priorities of the city as well as worked to set the Policy Agenda for 2013 – 2014. During the meeting, the City reinforced the importance of its relationship with FAU, which remains a top priority. The City is committed to continuing its support of the University and our growth and economic development efforts.

COMMITTEE WEEK ROUNDUP
Appropriations Conference Committees
On Monday, April 29, 2013, the Senate and House concluded their general budget negotiations and released the amended version of SB 1500, the 2013 Appropriations Act. As the week progressed the chambers finalized the budget’s conforming bills and proviso language and debated the individual allocation provisions. The Florida Constitution requires the final budget be on Members’ desks for at least 72 hours before a vote on final passage. Both chambers are poised to vote this afternoon and send the budget to Governor Scott for his signature.

It should be noted that in Florida the Governor has the ability to line-item veto any individual funding provision that is determined not to have statewide significance. The budget and its individual funding provisions are not guaranteed until Governor Scott signs the document.

The budget agreement to be passed contains the restoration of the $300 million that was removed from last year’s budget, a three percent tuition increase for state colleges and universities and an increase in Bright Futures of over three percent. Moreover, the budget provides for a $1,400 general pay raise for state employees earning less than $40,000 a year and $1,000 raise for those who earn more than $40,000. These salary increases are set to take effect on October 1, 2013. In addition, there are a number of budgetary provisions that are of specific importance to FAU. Below is the list of FAU’s budgetary priorities and their final outcome in SB 1500:

- Increased funding for Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine
  - $500,000 in nonrecurring funding for medical school simulation center
  - $946,000 in recurring funding to assist in the development of FAU’s graduate medical education program
- $7.5 million in total funding for the state’s 7 Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD)
  - A $2.1 million increase over current fiscal year funding of $5.4 million
  - FAU’s CARD Center is slated to receive $713,387
- $1.5 million for FAU/AMIkids, an experiential learning program funded through Pine Jog.
- $222,801 in recurring funds for the Louis and

hearing by a board or commission before it takes official action on a proposition. The bill provides that a circuit court has jurisdiction to issue an injunction under certain circumstances. However, an action taken by a board or commission which is found in violation of this section is not void.

Last Action: Passed by the House and Senate and currently awaiting the Governor’s signature.

HB 705 / SB 546 – Targeted Economic Development
The measure expands the purpose of the Institute for the Commercialization of Public Research to include the commercialization of products developed by an innovation business. The bill authorizes the institute to create corporate subsidiaries and provides conditions under which the institute may develop or accrue certain interests in companies or products. In addition, the legislation creates the Florida Technology Seed Capital Fund.

Last Action: Passed by the House and Senate and currently awaiting the Governor’s signature.

SB 1076 – K-20 Education (Legg)
The measure revises educational programs and creates certain funding incentives to increase the likelihood that educational programs in Florida’s public schools, colleges, and universities will better prepare students for future occupations and careers. The bill designates three areas for university performance funding: computer and information technology; high-demand programs as identified by the Board of Governors (BOG) using a gap analysis; and cloud virtualization and related large
The Center has never before received state operating funds

$2 million in nonrecurring funds for Harbor Branch’s Indian River Lagoon Observatory (IRLO) Water Project

The fiscal year 2013 – 2014 budget and the education conforming bill SB1514 can be viewed in their entirety below.

-SB 1500 -SB 1514

**Issues in Motion**

**Florida Retirement System (FRS)**

On Wednesday, May 1, 2013, the Senate defeated a measure that would have made sweeping changes to the Florida Retirement System, specifically in regard to new employees. One of Speaker Weatherford’s main legislative priorities during the 2013 Session has been to reform the FRS.

Specifically, the Speaker’s proposal would have closed the defined benefit pension plan retirement option to any new state employees hired after January 1, 2014. New employees would only be allowed to enroll in the defined contribution investment plan. Speaker Weatherford has stated that the current pension plan is a drain on state resources, and plans to move to the investment option that has been embraced by many other states. Opponents to the Speaker’s proposal have argued that Florida’s current pension program is fiscally sound and that there is no need to make any changes to the program.

The Senate’s vote on Tuesday killed the bill for the year. Speaker Weatherford has stated that he will continue to pursue FRS reform in the 2014 Session.

**Digital Learning**

On Thursday, May 2, 2013, the Senate considered HB 7029, a measure related to digital learning and virtual schools at the K-12 level. The bill originally expanded the pool of eligible applicants who may apply to become approved virtual education providers to include individuals or organizations who provide individual online courses, including, but not limited to, massive open online courses (MOOCs), that are measured by state assessments. However, during consideration on the Senate floor, HB 7029 was amended to include aspects of another piece of legislation, SB 904.

In addition to the issues addressed above, the newly amended legislation would create the Florida Accredited Courses and Tests (FACTs) Initiative to expand student choice in relation to courses and corresponding assessments that a student may take to satisfy various secondary and postsecondary education requirements. The bill also provides for the application data management. In addition, the bill Development of a Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List for industry certifications that may be funded for school district workforce programs, Florida College System institutions, and state universities. 

**Last Action:** Signed into law by Governor Scott on April 22, 2013.

**SB 1720 – Education (Galvano)**

The measure revises the purpose, membership, and guiding principles of the Higher Education Coordinating Council and also revises the requirements for the common placement test to assess basic computation and communication skills of students who intend to enter a public postsecondary education degree program. In addition, the bill expands the authority of the Board of Governors while also requiring the Board to make data available to the Department of Education to be integrated into the K-20 data warehouse.

**Last Action:** Awaiting Action in the Senate and House
of certain courses and assessments toward promotion, graduation, and degree attainment. The legislation authorizes a school district, a Florida College System institution, and a state university to contract with qualified contractors to administer and proctor statewide standardized assessments or assessments associated with Florida-accredited courses.

As stated previously, institutions offering these types of courses note the challenges in implementing MOOCs, such as technical issues like web-hosting and platform requirements, as well as making sure the MOOCs are high quality. The SUS institutions have expressed concern about whether legislation like SB 904 is necessary. The newly amended HB 7029 was passed by the Senate and must now return to the House for final approval.