

FSU PRESIDENCY: POLITICAL PLUM OR SEED CORN?

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The trustees of Florida State University are designing a search to find that school's next president. The job has been described in the media as a "political plum" ripe for some well-connected Floridian in the new era of politicized university governance. Meanwhile the faculty union and faculty senate have called for nothing less than a national academic leader who brings credibility and vision to move FSU higher in respectability and impact. Amidst the controversy, it would be useful to consider who leads the universities that FSU competes with.

Florida State keeps a state-mandated list of peer-institutions including the other eight schools of the ACC (Clemson, Duke, Georgia Tech, North Carolina, North Carolina State, Maryland, Virginia and Wake Forest), the universities of Florida, Michigan, Texas, and Washington, plus Indiana University, Michigan State and Northwestern. That's twelve public and three private universities; ten in the South; all but two classified as Research I institutions by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

The four women and eleven men who serve as CEOs of these fifteen universities are an accomplished lot. They include two members of the National Academy of Sciences, two members of the National Academy of Engineering, the former chairman of the Association of American Universities, former vice president of the American Political Science Association, former director of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant

Colleges, former president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, chair of the College Entrance Examination Board, president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the editor of *World Politics*.

What were they doing before they became CEO? Twelve of the fifteen were senior administrators at other universities. Four were sitting CEOs: Michigan's Mary Sue Coleman from the University of Iowa, North Carolina's James Moeser from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Virginia's John Casteen from the University of Connecticut, and Duke's Nannerl Keohane from Wellesley College. Six came to their presidency from the number two position at another school: Indiana's Sharon Brehm was provost at Ohio University, Texas' Larry Faulkner was provost at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, Washington's Richard McCormick was vice president for academic affairs at North Carolina, Georgia Tech's Wayne Clough was provost at Washington, Maryland's Dan Mote was vice chancellor at the University of California-Berkeley, and Wake's Thomas Hearn was Senior Vice President at University of Alabama-Birmingham. Two came from other senior academic leadership posts: Northwestern's Henry Bienen was dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of public and international affairs at Princeton, North Carolina State's Marye Anne Fox was vice president for research at Texas.

Florida's Charles Young, was recently retired from the top spot at UCLA. Clemson promoted from within. Current president James Barker had been Clemson's dean of architecture, arts and humanities.

Only one of the fifteen current CEOs at FSU's peer institutions came to the job from a non-university post. Michigan State's Peter McPherson was executive vice president at Bank of America.

All together, three campus leaders had held senior positions in business or government at some time in their careers. In addition to McPherson, who was also Deputy Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration, Casteen had been Virginia's Secretary of Education from 1982 to 1985, and

Barker had maintained an architecture practice until 1986. Each of the other twelve CEOs spent the past 25 years on one campus or another.

How were they schooled? Fourteen of the fifteen have doctoral degrees: three in political science, two in engineering, two in chemistry, one each in biochemistry, English, history, law, music, philosophy and psychology. Only Barker stopped shy of a doctorate: his master's degree in architecture was earned from Washington University in St. Louis. The doctoral degrees all come from *U.S. News* top 50 institutions (Yale, Duke, Dartmouth, Chicago, Virginia, Cal-Berkeley, Vanderbilt, UCLA, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas) except McPherson's American University degree.

Sandy D'Alemberte's nine-year tenure at FSU's helm is within the norm. Only four of the other CEOs have been in their jobs longer: Wake's Hearn (since 1983), Virginia's Casteen (1990), Michigan State's McPherson (1993), and Duke's Keohane (1993).

What have they accomplished in these years? Fund raising figures prominently. Steeling his campus to the reality of continued state budget cuts, Virginia's Casteen led a capital campaign that netted \$240 million last year alone. Under Barker, Clemson surpassed its five-year fund raising goal by 40%.

Boosting revenues from research grants is high on the list. Under Moser, UNC advanced into the vaunted top 20 universities in federal research and development support, drawing \$254 million last year. Michigan's Coleman touts a 68% increase in extramural support to \$300 million during her years as CEO at Iowa.

Facilities are a major concern. Under Bienen, Northwestern undertook a substantial facilities expansion, including new office and classroom buildings, laboratories, residence halls, sports venues, a broadcast center, and health care facilities. NC State has tripled the business partners in its innovative Centennial Campus under Fox. Texas' Faulkner has championed "anytime, any place learning" through technology enhancements in the

curriculum and facilities.

Intellectual leadership remains a big part of the job. Under Keohane, Duke established the John Hope Franklin Center for Interdisciplinary and International Studies to "make humanities central once again to intellectual life" at Duke. Under McPherson, Michigan State underwent wide expansion of international programs, leading to its current goal of 40% study abroad participation by its students.

Internal organization must be attended to. Washington's McCormick created a program of budgetary reallocation aimed at promoting interdisciplinary opportunities. Florida's Young has completed a controversial strategic planning process that will lead to restructuring and expenditure reallocations. Brehm has announced a similar process to begin at Indiana.

Service to the state and region is significant. Under Clough, Tech began a state-wide regional engineering program. Maryland aims at promoting its state in the high-tech economy under Mote's leadership, emphasizing biotechnology and the information sciences. Wake's Hern has promoted civic responsibility throughout his presidency.

Outside their institutions, these CEOs have been important shapers of policy. Clough and Fox were appointed by George W. Bush to the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. Casteen and McPherson are on the Board of Directors of the American Council on Education. Bienen is on the Board of Directors of the "Internet 2" corporation. Keohane is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Moeser's a member of the National Board for College Education. Barker is on the Commission of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The group includes current members of the boards of directors or trustees of Dow, IBM, Wachovia, Sallie Mae, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the John G. Shedd Aquarium, Research Triangle Institute, and many other organizations.

The FSU Board of Trustees faces a significant test of its mettle this

year. If the institution is to achieve its stated goals of becoming a nationally top-ranked public university, of contributing to the solution of critical problems of our state and region, and of expanding the sources and amount of funds available for its work, it must appoint a president who has the vision to give direction to the disparate activities of 5,000 faculty and staff, 35,000 students, and hundreds of thousands of alumni, donors and sports team followers; who will command the respect of many of the brightest scholars and accomplished artists of our time; who has the saavy to negotiate among corporate sponsors, state politicians and professional and disciplinary leaders; and who has the acumen to manage a budget approaching one billion dollars in state, contract and support organization funds.

If the Board treats this decision as a political plum, it takes a precarious gamble on the future of the state. Alternatively, if the Board views FSU's next president as a kind of economic and cultural seed corn for the state, it raises the likelihood that the search will result in a new president who can stand with the competition. If the Board seriously examines the skills required for presidential success, engenders confidence in the legitimacy of the search, and portrays a university bent upon enhancing its state through the advancement of knowledge and the arts, then candidates capable of meeting the challenge will apply.

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