

Reaffirmation of Accreditation Self-Study
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

University of Florida

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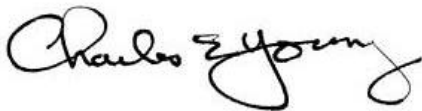
Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you materials developed as part of our accreditation process for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges. This process has been a laborious one for the University, but also, I believe, a very valuable one as we think through our educational goals for our students and our efforts to internationalize the campus. These volumes are the result of the collaborative efforts of our faculty, staff, students and administrators.

We entered into this process with two primary goals in mind: one was to respond thoroughly to the specific criteria of accreditation prescribed by SACS – COC; and the other was to determine whether we are preparing our students fully to participate in the global community. We believe that we have been successful in meeting these goals and we are confident that you will agree with our assessment. We welcome your critical feedback in this process to ensure that we are, indeed, achieving our goals.

I look forward to welcoming the site team to campus and assisting them in every way possible to make their visit a successful one.

Sincerely yours,



Charles E. Young

Preface

There are a number of ways that one could express the sense of accomplishment that comes with completion of any large undertaking such as the preparation of these volumes for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges. But the one that seems to me to be most representative of our journey over the past two years is from W. H. Murray in The Story of Everest: “Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth- that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves, too.” Higher education governance in the state of Florida has continued to evolve throughout the development of this self-study. For this reason, the Compliance document (Volume I) was developed based primarily upon the University of Florida’s manner of operating and governance in the 2001–2002 academic year.

A number of statutes and rules were revised and/or repealed by legislative action with an effective date of January 7, 2003. At the time of development of this report all replacement processes had not been implemented or, in some cases, specified. In those instances where new processes and procedures were in place as of December 31, 2002 we have tried to provide updated information and supporting documentation.

Since passage of the legislation affecting all of education in the state of Florida, other actions such as a voter approved constitutional amendment to re-establish a statewide governing body (Board of Governors) for the university system, have complicated the operational aspects of the university’s functions. These legislated actions have had an impact on the operational processes, but at this point in time there is no clear indication as to what if any, effect there will be on the delivery of academic programs.

At their initial meeting on January 7, 2003 the newly appointed Board of Governors (BOG) confirmed their intention to allow the university boards of trustees (BOT) to retain virtually all of the powers vested in them via the devolution of responsibilities from the previous Board of Regents. Additionally, the BOG used its power of appointment to reinstate virtually all prior members of the university BOT impacted by the constitutional amendment. This action will most likely be advantageous to university operations.

The opportunity provided by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges to complete an alternative review focused on Internationalizing the University of Florida (Global UF, Volume II) has facilitated the work of the many faculty, staff and administrators involved in this process. The international focus element helped us all to maintain our enthusiasm for the important, but sometimes, routine tasks dictated by the Compliance documentation and reporting.

Everyone that had a responsibility with this process was exceptionally responsive. Faculty, staff, students and administrators all responded when called upon. The Colleges and other units across campus provided excellent self-studies on their international activities. It is evident that we have many things going on via the world arena, but it is also evident that there is much more that we could be doing.

The dedicated effort from across campus, those who assisted in this process in an always-busy academic world is greatly appreciated. For our site team visitors, we hope that we have provided you with the information and materials that you need to accomplish your work. We appreciate your giving your time to assist us as we continue to realize our vision as a great university recognized nationally and internationally for excellence in teaching, research and public service.

Jill W. Varnes
Self-Study Director and
Chair of the Steering Committee

Reaffirmation of Accreditation Self-Study, Volume I
University of Florida

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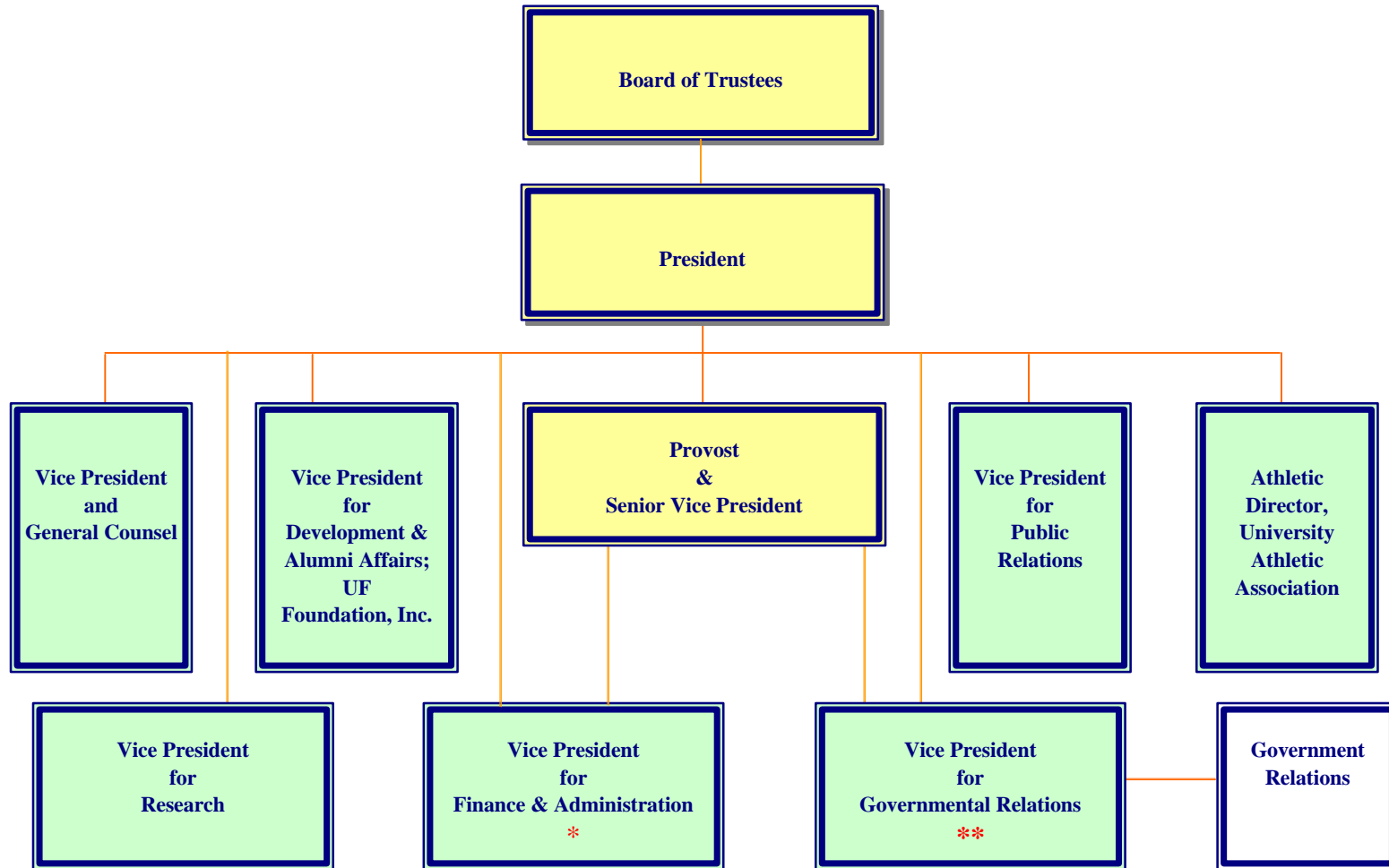
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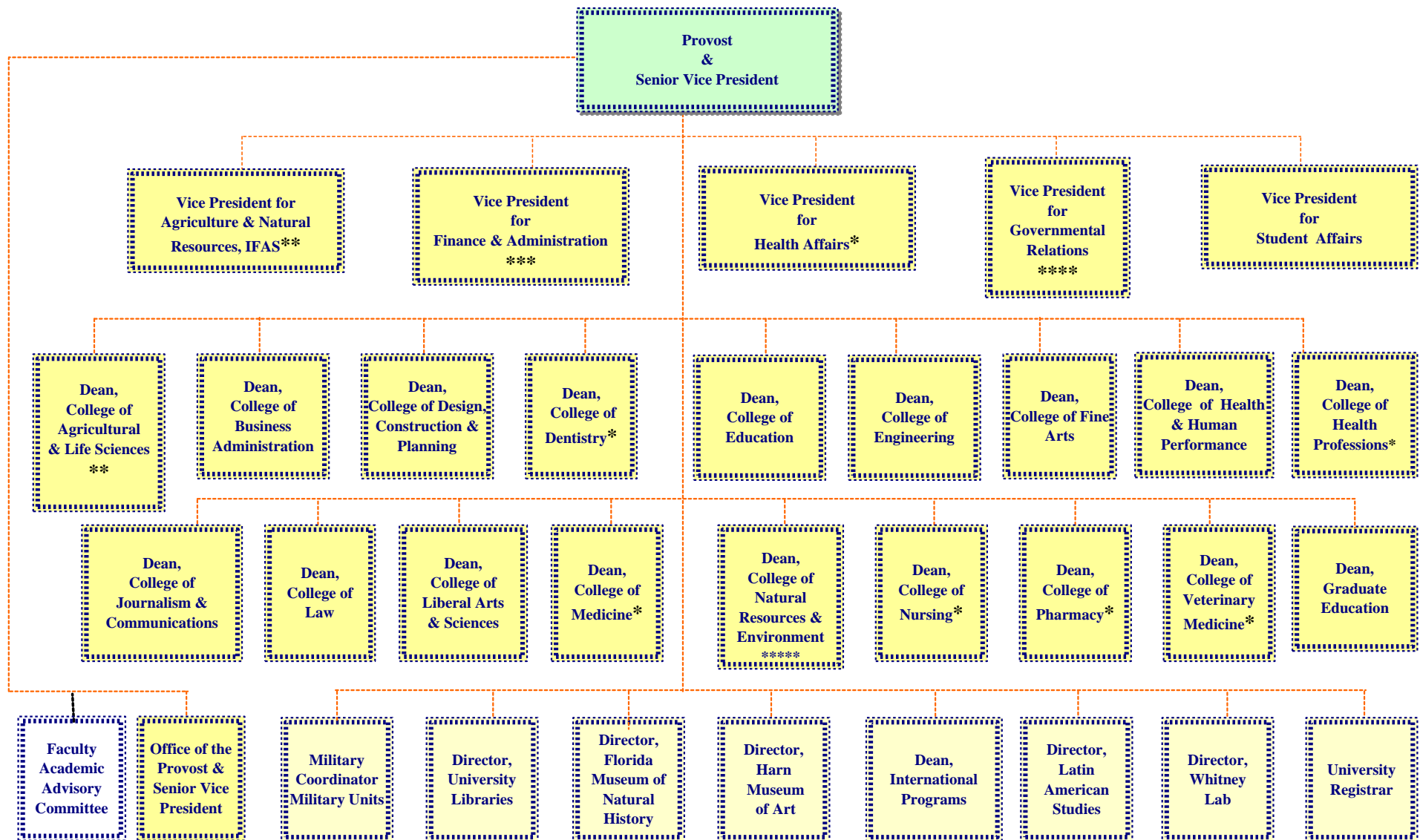
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