

# New College

THE HONORS COLLEGE of Florida

## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**WELCOME (Chair):** We are so pleased to have you with us today. Your materials are impressive and we're looking forward to learning even more about you. In about an hour, we would like to explore eight themes with you that reflect New College of Florida's key priorities for the next president as included in our Leadership Profile. Time allowed for responses to each question is about 5 minutes. One of our committee members will start with the main question for each theme. Follow up questions related to theme may be posed by other committee members. At the end of the interview time allotted, you will be afforded an opportunity to dialogue with the Committee for about 10 minutes. The session will end promptly on time.

ASSIGNED COMMITTEE MEMBERS INTRODUCE THEMSELVES WHEN THEY ASK THEIR QUESTION

#### **CANDIDATE INTRODUCTION: (MARY RUIZ)**

Please tell us what motivates your interest in the presidency of New College of Florida and how your prior experiences have prepared you for the position.

#### **MISSION (SOFIA LOMBARDI)**

As the State of Florida's legislatively-designated "honors college for the liberal arts," New College is the only public college or university in the state whose sole mission is to provide an undergraduate education of the highest caliber to high potential students from around the country. Describe your experience enhancing excellence at your current or prior institution.

- What impediments did you overcome and how?
- How would you apply this experience to advancing the mission of New College of Florida?

#### **PURSUE VISION WITH ENERGY AND PURPOSE (DR. JAMES STEWART)**

The president will be expected to lead New College in reinforcing what makes New College distinctive and resist the call to replicate other liberal arts college and, instead, to build on the college's history as a unique model of liberal arts education that is open-minded, minimally prescriptive, customized, and evolutionary. Although the college has already put in motion key imperatives as laid out in its strategic plan, the world has changed since we adopted the ten-year strategic plan in 2018. In light of today's intense economic, public health and social issues, how would you assess New College of Florida's plan today?

- Are there adjustments we might want to make or strategies we want to intensify?
- What do you believe should be your highest priorities as president and how you might attend to them?

### **EXECUTE A PLAN FOR GROWTH (DR. DAVID HARVEY)**

The college's plan includes growing enrollment to 1,200 students in 2024-25 and increasing four-year graduation rates from 56% to 80%. New College must determine how to best align its character and experience it offers with what it will take to draw a diverse body of talent students in a fiercely competitive market not just in the state of Florida but nationally. What has your experience been in enrollment management, and what are some approaches that you think New College should explore?

- Have you operated in a University leadership role where performance metrics were used to evaluate institutional progress? If not, how would you prepare for it? How can performance metrics be used to support academic excellence and student success?
- Providing students with outstanding educational experiences both inside and outside the classroom is a fundamental commitment to New College students. How have you been involved in strengthening the student experience and how would you keep student success central to New College's priorities?

### **BUILD AN INCLUSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE FOR ALL (DR. SARAH HERNANDEZ)**

New College has strengthened its thoughtful work and commitment to the values of diversity, equity, inclusion and access but the college needs more platforms for open, campus wide discussions aimed at building community, respect and trust among all constituents and for celebrating and appreciating all that a diverse environment has to offer. What does this mean to you, and what does this mean for us?

- From a higher education leadership lens, what opportunities and challenges does this present?
- How have you advanced these core values in your current or prior institutions?
- How did you measure success?
- Describe a recent meaningful conversation you have had with a student and what you learned from it.

### **IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (DR. MIRIAM WALLACE)**

New College will benefit from a president skilled at maximizing performance by leveraging and engaging its rich mosaic of human, intellectual, financial and physical resources. A fundamental responsibility of today's president is to run a complex institution, to manage people and resources effectively in a resource limited environment while meeting performance metrics and goals. Would you tell us about your experience with or approach to building a team and infrastructure that would enable both you and New College to succeed?

- What does shared governance mean to you? How have you demonstrated your commitment to it?
- Effective university presidents stay in touch with the campus constituencies: students/faculty/support staff/maintenance workers, etc. How do you do this in your current role?

### **GROW THE RESOURCE BASE (DR SHARON RAMEY)**

While New College is in a financially strong position in terms of state funding to support growth, New College's next president serves as the college's lead fund raiser and will need to infuse energy and vision into the case for support and identify potential partnerships that would bring new supporters and revenue sources to the institution, and ramp up alumni engagement. The new president will also have to lobby at the state level to the state system or board, or to the legislature, for increased funds. What skills would you bring to this part of the role? Tell us about your experience and/or your institutional strategy for fund raising. What do you see as New College's greatest potential for success in fund raising?

- What experience do you have working with regional business, community, and political leaders to advocate for and strengthen external relationships with the institutions you have served? Do you have specific ideas that might enhance New College's partnership with key external stakeholders?
- Would you describe a situation where you have worked within a constrained resource environment to fund innovation?

### **RAISE VISIBILITY (FELICE SCHULANER)**

While New College has a stellar reputation as an academic institution among rankings entities, its low profile persists among potential students in Sarasota, the region, the state of Florida, and nationally. What would you do to change this situation?

- New College's relationships with system, city, state and community leaders and with alumni and donors have a direct impact on its reputation, resources and success. What if we faced a situation where the concerns and priorities of one of these constituent groups is in direct conflict with another? How would you address this situation?

### **LEADING CHANGE (RON CHRISTALDI)**

We are interested in how you have evolved as a leader and what it takes to lead change in a dynamic environment. Throughout your career and especially in the last year, what have you learned about leadership, about yourself, and about encouraging leadership in others?

- Can you give us an example of a successful change you helped implement, and a change initiative that was less successful?