

November 8, 2016

Ms. Lucy Leske
Mr. Robert W. Luke
Ms. Veena Abraham, J.D.
Witt/Kieffer
2015 Spring Road, Suite 510
Oak Brook, Illinois 60523

Dear Ms. Leske, Mr. Luke and Ms. Abraham:

I am submitting my application for consideration for the position of President at Florida Gulf Coast University. I am seeking an opportunity to collaborate with committed faculty, staff, and the senior leadership team to strategically position our university to meet stated strategic goals and fulfill its unique mission, while stretching towards its vision; to enhance our vibrant academic and intellectual culture; to help foster a positive climate and culture of inclusivity, and facilitate effective shared governance. I believe that my qualifications and experience may be a strong potential fit for the president position, given the desired qualifications and characteristics outlined in the search prospectus.

I am currently the dean of the Labovitz School of Business and Economics (LSBE) at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD). UMD's core values of learning, discovery, engagement, inclusiveness, sustainability, integrity and excellence are well aligned with Florida Gulf Coast University's emphasis on innovative, student-centered teaching and learning, environmental sustainability, diversity, community partnerships, public service and lifelong learning. My performance demonstrates a strong commitment to those values. I have worked to enhance the outstanding educational experience and career opportunities of the business students in the Labovitz School of Business and Economics while collaborating with the university's leadership team and the community to advance the institution as a whole.

With a strong personal interest in Florida, where I was born and raised, I am looking selectively for an academic leadership position within the region. I would welcome the opportunity to serve the educational and economic needs of Florida. I am impressed with the outstanding programs and educational experience that Florida Gulf Coast University provides to its students. As the first in my immediate family to earn a college degree, I deeply value education's transformational impact. I cannot imagine a better way to contribute to society than to lead an institution of the caliber of Florida Gulf Coast University.

Credentials

In terms of specific credentials, my doctorate is from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Carlson School of Management (business administration – organization studies). Both my Master in Business Administration (marketing) and Bachelor of Science (psychology) degrees are from Michigan State University. My work experience is primarily within regional public institutions, typically but not solely with a STEM focus. I served at the most diverse public baccalaureate institution in the Midwest, an urban, commuter university. I believe my range of experiences in diverse institutions have prepared me well to embrace the next level of administrative challenge.

I am a dean and full professor of management, since July 2013, in LSBE at UMD. Prior to joining UMD, I was at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) in Chicago. At NEIU, over the ten years I spent there, I served as faculty member, associate dean, acting dean, and dean. Overall, I have served in an

administrative capacity for over eleven years. Of those eleven years, I have served in a senior leadership (deanship) capacity for over eight years, with documented progressive leadership accomplishments and management responsibilities. My vita documents my administrative accomplishments, research output and record of teaching; I have earned numerous teaching awards and received both tenure and promotion at multiple institutions.

Accreditation Experience and Accomplishments

I have years of training and experience in advancing accreditation at multiple universities. UMD recently received accolades during its highly successful AACSB reaffirmation process. At NEIU, the college's significant progress under my deanship also demonstrates my ability to exercise consultative leadership while working effectively with diverse and multidisciplinary unionized faculty, and both unionized and non-unionized staff. At NEIU, I also participated on multiple university committees supporting their successful Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation effort. My accreditation experience demonstrates that I can recruit, retain and mentor high quality, diverse faculty, staff and students; provide intellectual and academic leadership for continuous improvement; create an environment that encourages collaborative research, teaching and service; and work collaboratively and effectively with faculty and staff to mobilize the college/school toward significant and challenging goal accomplishment.

Strategic Planning Experience and Accomplishments

I have been actively involved in managing the strategic planning process at multiple institutions and collegiate units, as my vita outlines. At NEIU, I co-chaired the university's strategic planning committee with President Hahs and coordinated the yearlong university-wide, large scale collaborative strategic planning initiative. At both UMD and NEIU, I facilitated revisions of the unit's strategic plans, and initiated collaborative development and implementation of annual college work plans. In summary, I have successfully facilitated long-term strategic planning processes that included active participation by all constituent groups at multiple institutions.

Fiscal and Operational Management Experience and Accomplishments

As business dean at two different institutions, I have ensured implementation of strategic priorities and been directly involved in accreditation/reaccreditation efforts. My primary responsibilities have included fiscal (budgets up to ~ \$10 million) and operational oversight; strategic planning; faculty and staff recruitment, retention, performance appraisal, promotion and other personnel issues; managing relationships with external constituents; fundraising; facilitating continuous improvement, including of policies and processes; and supporting faculty-led programmatic and curricular development, among other initiatives. I have significant experience in budgeting during financially challenging times, in change management, and in leading culture change. UMD is undergoing program prioritization initiatives. I have a track record of successfully navigating through external and internal challenges toward mission implementation. As an associate dean at NEIU, in addition to providing implementation support for the dean's strategic, managerial, fiscal, and operation oversight of the college, I personally oversaw academic advising; scheduling and enrollment management; grade appeal processes; and the resolution of student grievances. As both dean and associate dean, at two institutions, I have worked broadly with the university system, the university community, and institutional leadership on a wide range of collaborative projects, detailed further in my vita.

Personnel Management Experience and Accomplishments

I am strongly committed to empowering individuals and teams and successfully deploying the talents of faculty, staff, students and alumni. I have enhanced professional development opportunities for staff,

faculty and administration. Additionally, in order to enhance recognition of exemplary performance, LSBE created and awarded new teaching, research and service awards for faculty, staff, students, and LSBE clubs. With primary responsibility for academic personnel issues, I work closely with the department heads, associate dean, faculty search committees, provost and human resources staff. In both business schools, we successfully recruited, hired and retained high quality, diverse, tenured, tenure-track and term faculty, with salaries at AACSB market rates.

Leadership and Communication Experience and Accomplishments

My leadership style is anchored in the spirit of shared governance, collaboration, participation, and empowerment. Empowerment requires increased communication and education in order to promote accountability, responsibility, and performance. With a degree in organizational studies, my teaching areas include strategic management, leadership, motivation, managerial skills (conflict management, communication, team skills), culture, managing diversity, and change management. This background has strongly influenced my personal leadership and management style. My teaching performance demonstrated successful creation of an engaging and empowering classroom environment as well as authentic connection with students at multiple levels. I now create that environment on a much larger canvas. Our college leads the university among all units and overall performance on the university's annual engagement survey.

As detailed in my vita, I have increased administrative committee representation to facilitate broader communication, transparency and shared governance. More information flows out, especially in the areas of budget, enrollment, assessment and accreditation. Enhanced transparency and data sharing has occurred with faculty and staff retreats focusing on assessment, strategic planning, accreditation, and issues of concern to the entire school. We utilize task forces for making recommendations on complex school issues. We realigned structure and responsibilities within the school, reorganized departments and units where appropriate, increased training, professional development and recognition opportunities, and increased communication flow. I believe strongly in collaboration, both within the collegiate unit and throughout the university and system, and within the community.

Program and Curricular Innovations Experience and Accomplishments

As dean, I encourage and support faculty-led program development and initiatives that meet student and workforce needs. At UMD, we have launched a number of recent and successful programmatic initiatives, including an entrepreneurship major and minor, a financial planning major, a collaborative marketing and graphics design major in partnership with the School of Fine Arts, and an online certificate in business. We are seeking approval for an international business minor and an interdisciplinary minor in sustainability; a sales major and proposed sales center are in development, as is a business analytics major. We are in the process of adding two additional one (1) credit seminar courses (Interpersonal and Teamwork Skills and Career Development for the Business Professional) to our curriculum, to supplement the one (1) credit UMD Freshman Seminar. We have a "Passport" program that supports interpersonal skill development. Finally, over 50% of LSBE's summer offerings are offered online, typically full, boosting revenue and enrollment and improving time-to-degree. At NEIU, we also boosted online enrollment, internationalized the curriculum, implemented accounting at a satellite location, implemented writing-intensive courses in majors, and instituted an ethics curriculum requirement (taught by philosophy).

Advising, Recruitment, and Enrollment Experience and Accomplishments

As associate dean, I promoted students' academic success, fostered student development, and provided quality student services through my oversight of academic advising, scheduling and enrollment

management, grade appeal processes, and the resolution of student grievances. At NEIU, we secured a large (\$2.599 million) grant for COBM to improve the recruitment, retention and success of diverse students in the college's graduate business programs. More than \$300,000 in scholarships was awarded specifically to increase enrollment from underrepresented and low-income students. As LSBE dean now, I work closely with the associate dean and director of advising and student services, who manage advising, recruitment and enrollment. We restructured the internship function to be better aligned with best practices. New and innovative majors, as discussed above, continue to build enrollment. Collaborative efforts by the school's leadership team, development, faculty, staff and students groups continue to provide significant opportunities for enhanced co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences, internships and increased scholarships. We are collaborating with Student Life to implement a living-learning community of business students beginning next fall.

University, Community and Alumni Relationships Experience and Accomplishments

I am fully committed to engaging alumni and the community in the region through ongoing outreach, with a strong record of successfully developing and building external relationships with the public/private sectors and the community. We have partnered repeatedly and successfully with the business community on multiple initiatives. As an example, we created an entrepreneurship advisory board, comprised of successful local entrepreneurs, who provide significant input into the entrepreneurship program, the entrepreneurship center proposal, and the inaugural entrepreneurship conference. LSBE has multiple advisory boards and an advisory council to the dean comprised of business leaders and alumni from the community. I also serve as an external board member on several nonprofit boards and one UMD board, and attend meetings for many community economic development organizations (e.g., APEX, Arrowhead Growth Alliance). LSBE provides sponsorship support for many community and business events in the region, and LSBE supports faculty, staff and select student attendance. Our Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) director has increased the range and scope of projects handled. The BBER and Center for Economic Development (CED) play a major role in the organization and planning of the Regional Economic Indicators Forum (REIF). LSBE, under the associate dean's leadership, fielded a team that won the bid to deliver a series of corporate leadership training modules for Minnesota Power. The inaugural LSBE student-run entrepreneurship conference, with sponsorship by the local business community, was held in October 2015, with over 1000 students, staff, faculty, alumni and community members attending; the second equally successful one was held again this October. Entrepreneurship students planned and executed a student business plan competition last April. We have had many Distinguished Speaker events, a China Town Hall, and offer Dress for Success, in conjunction with local retailers and other university units; our Women in Business Club holds an annual Etiquette Dinner. The LSBE Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is the largest university-sponsored program in Minnesota, generating close to \$900,000 of tax returns last year for low-to-moderate income households. We have many "Company Days" and "Meet the Firm" days. Within UMD, I have collaborated across the institution on the proposed university-level entrepreneurship and innovation center, planning for the maurices building and LSBE programming, and have been in early discussions with senior system and UMD leadership regarding the possibility of an Allied Rural Health Center at UMD.

At NEIU, events such as the annual international business conferences, NETT Day, Smart Money Week, the international water nexus summit, and Mossadegh events all engaged the local community. I also collaborated within the institution as a member of the CORE team, chairing the search committee for a new vice president of development, co-chairing the university level strategic planning initiative, and as a member of the inauguration ceremony subcommittee, one of the subcommittees involved in planning the presidential inauguration. My vita shows even more examples of developing and building external relationships. I am strongly committed to university and school public engagement in the region served by our educational institution.

Fundraising Experience and Accomplishments

Development and fundraising is a significant portion of my job in the current budget climate. I embrace the opportunity to passionately convey my institution's story whenever possible. Giving to LSBE from July 1, 2013 to date is approaching \$3 million. UMD is almost halfway through a \$100 million campaign and will go public next year. LSBE's goal is \$20 million and we have met almost 40% of that goal. The typical gift ask is in the five to six figures, although I have been involved in gift asks of up to \$10 million (innovation and entrepreneurship center). Over 124 scholarships, totaling approximately \$207,500, were distributed to LSBE students in the fall of 2016. Over three years, the number of scholarships awarded has increased by over 20 scholarships and approximately \$50,000. In 2015, LSBE awarded its first full-tuition, renewable, endowed scholarship to a freshman pre-business major. We also awarded two significant MBA scholarships, also renewable, the first scholarships ever for our program. Since 2013, extensive direct contacts have been made with LSBE external stakeholders through correspondence, e-mail, events, personal visits, meetings, and phone calls. I have gone to CASE fundraising training with my development officer, and hosted/co-hosted alumni and donors at my home, football, hockey, and Timberwolves games, and a play at UMD. I am involved in ongoing collaboration with development on visits, UMD and LSBE initiatives, events, conferences, newsletters, custom holiday and birthday cards, case statements, and communication materials. More information on initiatives is provided in my vita. I work collaboratively and successfully to implement programs to increase gift acquisition. As detailed in my vita, at NEIU I worked with sponsored programs to secure a \$2.599 million Title V grant to benefit business graduate programs.

Inclusiveness and Commitment to Diversity

I am strongly committed to inclusivity and diversity. I spent ten years at the most diverse public comprehensive university in the Midwest, an institution that is also a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). FGCU's mission resonates strongly with my personal values. I encourage and promote recognition, understanding and respect of cultural and human diversity both within my unit and across campus. I hire, develop and promote diverse faculty and staff. Additionally, my teaching and research interests align with values of inclusivity and diversity. We have worked to enhance the climate and culture within the Labovitz School of Business and Economics in order to ensure fairness, diversity and inclusivity. I believe valuing diversity should be central to all that we do.

Climate for Student Success

We strive to provide experiences both inside of class and out that develop students to their fullest potential. Our freshman to sophomore retention rate, at almost 85%, exceeds the university's retention rate of 82%. The entire residential college experience, including participation in collegiate sports, contributes to personal growth. We emphasize innovative and student-centered teaching and learning experiences. Co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences, including internships and internship-like experiences (such as student-to-business initiatives and student-faculty research) provide a broad base of experiences, foster self-efficacy, independence, initiative, interpersonal skill development, tolerance, maturity, and self-actualization. We reorganized our internship office and have increased paid internship opportunities substantially. Approximately 98% of our students have jobs or are planning to attend graduate school within 6 months after graduation. We value community partnerships and learning experiences that create experiential learning opportunities. Study abroad and other cross-cultural experiences are essential to reducing sexism, racism, and promoting tolerance, understanding and celebration of diverse cultures. Education drawing from diverse disciplines and experiences will serve our students better, foster critical thinking skills, and unlock the creative potential that will be essential to solving the complex and challenging problems facing society today and tomorrow.

In conclusion, I hope that the administrative experiences and unit accomplishments discussed above demonstrate that I have the requisite knowledge and experience required for consideration for your position. The various initiatives and accomplishments I have discussed demonstrate that I utilize a highly participative, inclusive, empowering, yet decisive, leadership style. I strive to manage communication and conflict productively, facilitate consensus-building among individuals and constituents with differing perspectives, and collaborate effectively with a broad range of stakeholders on diverse issues. I believe my track record indicates that I can successfully engage and mobilize individuals, groups, and units to respond to the demanding challenges facing today's educational institutions as a whole, and help to position my university to meet those challenges successfully.

I hope that this letter conveys my enthusiasm about this opportunity, and demonstrates how my experience aligns with the areas identified in the profile. Should you see a strong fit between my background and the president position at Florida Gulf Coast University, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the position in more detail with your team.

Sincerely,

Amy B. Hietapelto

Amy B. Hietapelto, Ph.D.
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Labovitz School of Business and Economics
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