

2024-2025
Unit Annual Report
Division of Academic Affairs
Unit: School of Business & Technology

Please submit by June 1st to the AVP for Institutional Research & Planning

I Mission and Goal/Outcomes Statement:

Provide overall Mission/Goal Statement for your unit.

The School of Business fuses academics and practical experience through our programs and areas of concentration. Our programs equip students with the essential knowledge of business theories, practical business skills, and innovative technology; then apply that knowledge strategically and ethically along with the ability to adapt to world changes. We strive for excellence through continual improvement and engagement with local business leaders. We support the inclusivity of all students, including those with varying abilities, and cultural backgrounds, and both active military and veterans. Our faculty prepares students to think critically and communicate effectively, act ethically and professionally, recognize and value creativity and diversity, and become socially responsible strategic leaders in both business and the community.

II Personnel:

List all staff and note all personnel changes that occurred during 23-24.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Patricia LaFontaine	Administrative Assistant to the Dean
Jannette McMenemy, Ph.D.	Interim Dean, School of Business and Technology

III Facilities/Equipment:

List any new facilities/equipment/software etc. acquired during 23-24.

N/A – see department reports

IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:

Was the budget expended as planned? Were additions/changes made, and if so, explain.

The B&T budget supported School initiatives, including the B&T student ambassadors program, a faculty gathering, faculty summer work to begin the IACBE reaccreditation process, and ABET/IACBE fees. Funds also supported professional development in accreditation (e.g., attending the IACBE reaccreditation workshop). UIF funds awarded were used to support the embedded tutors program for key gateway STEM courses.

V Programs/Activities:

List major campus activities, events etc. that the office participated in/supported; committees served; community outreach; etc. List events provided to current and prospective students. Also, provide professional development of all staff.

Building Community as the Interim Dean of the School of Business and Technology

- Conducted a listening and visiting tour with all B&T departments and administrative offices (e.g., SGOCE, Admissions, Student Affairs) (Fall 2024)
- Met monthly with all department chairs and twice per semester with all B&T/HNS Chairs (Fall 2024, Spring 2025)
- Sent Weekly Update Emails to Department Chairs (September - May)
- Hosted faculty events in Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 in collaboration with the Deans of Arts & Sciences, Education, and the Library
- Provided oversight for the B&T Student Ambassador program, engaging with students at multiple points throughout the semester (All B&T departments participated with at least one student from each department.)
- Attended department events, career nights, and campus events throughout the year
- Celebrated faculty accomplishments with personal notes throughout the year

Retention and Recruitment

- Worked closely with PIs of the National Science Foundation S-STEM grant to develop an organizational structure, including reimagining the professional development program, for faculty mentors. The first cohort of S-STEM scholars will enter the university in Fall 2025. The grant cuts across HNS and B&T.
- Oversaw the 2nd year of implementing our Embedded Tutoring Program for key gateway STEM courses. As the Faculty Fellow for Innovation and Engagement, Daniel Welsh expanded the program to serve 350 students in 14 sections of STEM courses (Fall 2024 data). Almost 90% of students reported benefitting from their engagement with embedded tutors. These STEM courses are taken by both HNS and B&T students.
- Oversaw the High Impact Practice Coordinator in STEM. In his second year, Chris Cratsley coordinated multiple sessions, in collaboration with Career Services and Advising, for STEM students in both HNS and B&T departments looking to pursue internships and employment.
- Monitored Slate, collaborated with Admissions, and discussed funnel reports with department chairs
- Met with Enrollment Management to discuss targeted marketing for key academic programs
- Attended Open Houses and Future Falcon Days, and suggested B&T ambassadors for department-specific shadow days
- Sent targeted emails and texts to unregistered students in all B&T departments
- Maintained a strong open-door/open-access approach to connecting with students, meeting with any student who needed assistance in B&T departments

Supporting Curricular Innovation and the Ongoing Provision of High-Quality Programs

- Supported the Department of Engineering Technology's conversations (e.g., attending department and curriculum committee meetings, meeting with the Chair and faculty) about curriculum change, focusing on streamlining the curriculum

and providing additional opportunities for electives. Conversations are ongoing. As of June 2025, there is a tentative proposal to reduce the number of concentrations and credits, and to develop a more streamlined core.

- Discussed (ongoing conversations) the development of an interdisciplinary Master's degree in Sustainability, in partnership with Rhine-Waal University
- Participated in the IACBE reaccreditation workshop for the BSAD department
- Worked to develop the organizational structure for next year's IACBE self-study, supporting Dr. Denise Simion's work in Summer 2025
- Collaborated with Dr. Denise Simion and the BSAD Department on the successful submission of their IACBE mid-term report
- Provided information to Dr. Ozge Ozay and Dean Levine about IACBE accreditation to help their work in developing the new Finance major
- Collaborated with the Computer Science Department in the writing and submission of their ABET self-studies for CSC and CIS, with a site visit occurring in Fall 2025
- Participated in the Eduventures conference, as part of our review of academic programs, in June 2025 as a representative of the FSU team
- Collaborated on faculty searches in Engineering Technology (successful hire of Dr. Ana Emlinger) and Business Administration (to be reposted next year)
- Reviewed curriculum proposals and provided feedback to department chairs prior to AUC submission

Expanding and Enhancing External Partnerships

- Industry Advisory Boards: Participated in the Engineering Technology event; Computer Science maintains an active advisory board. I had key conversations with BSAD about bringing back their advisory board (scheduled to begin again in Fall 2025)
- Outreach: Supported STEM Month events across campus and in the community, and collaborated with Admissions on events to bring Monty Tech students to campus for visits (unfortunately cancelled due to snow event)

Operations/Committees

- Served as Institutional Official for all compliance committees (IRB, IACUC, IBC)
- **Committees:** Institutional Review Board (*ex-officio*); Institutional Animal Use and Care Committee (*ex-officio*); Institutional Biosafety Committee (*ex-officio*); AUC- Curriculum Committee; Provost Council; Global Ambassador Scholarship review committee; Search Committee for Director of Human Resources; Head of Search Committees for Lab Technicians in EGPHS and Chemistry (June, 2025 searches – under HNS dean role)
- **Invited remarks or attendance:** Psychological Science Psi Chi Induction (04/18/2025 – under HNS dean role); Mass ClimateTech Hub Meeting at WPI (4/1/2024); Mass BioEd LifeSciences Workforce Conference – Educator/Industry Working Session (6/2/25 – more under HNS dean role but lessons also relevant to B&T departments)

- **National, State, and Regional Conferences/Professional Development Meetings attended:** Association of College Academic Deans Annual Institute (11/19/24); IACBE reaccreditation training workshop (2/4/25 – 2/6/25); Mass ClimateTech Hub at WPI (4/1/25); MassBioEd Life Sciences Workforce Conference (6/2/25); Eduventures Conference (6/14 -16/25)

VI Action Plan for 2024-25:

Insert your Action Plan from last year's report, 2024 - 2025

Planned Initiatives for 2024-25	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy	Indicate if a DEI initiative
Building a Sense of Community in the School of Business and Technology		
Continue B&T communications at the School, department chair through All-School meetings and email	4.5, 5.6	
Continue and improve B&T Student Ambassador Program	4.2	
Continue B&T Dining Together Program	4.2	X
Plan a guest speaker series and other events that bring together the faculty, staff, and students	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	
Review and revise School mission statement.	4.5, 5.6	
Plan an engaging, well-attended STEM Week	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.6	X
Recruitment		
Enhance academic collaboration and communication with the Admissions office and Student Affairs	2.6, 5.3, 5.6	
Continue work with Slate data to provide analysis regarding yield and trends to B&T department chairs throughout the recruitment cycle.	5.6	
Work with Department Chairs, Admissions, and Marketing to create a strategic enrollment plan for majors, and targeted marketing videos and materials.	2.6	

Continue multifaceted efforts to recruit students – Business, STEM Shadow Days, specialized tours, Email-a-thons, virtual sessions, etc.	2.6	
Supporting Curricular Innovation		
Support ENGT in curricular change process and alignment to ABET standards.	1.2, 1.4	
Create a Business/Biotech certificate, minor, or concentration	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	
Support BSAD and CS with accreditation	1.2	
Work with all programs to identify innovative, interdisciplinary courses, minors, and certificates that meet the needs of the workforce.	1.2, 1.4, 1.7, 6.2	
Retention		
Launch multifaceted Health Professions Meta Advising and Mentorship Program	2.1	
Work collaboratively with Mathematics, Student Success, and Institutional Research to analyze Math Pathways and Math Placement success.	1.1	X
Expanding and Enhancing External Partnerships		
Identify new industry and educational partners for all departments, including bolstering BSAD advisory board.	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
Enhance alumni relations through the development of a School newsletter.	3.6	
Formalize internship agreements with industry partners.	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
Develop new articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
Bolster support for high-impact practices		
Identify and support a new High-Impact Practice Coordinator.	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	
Continue to assist departments in pre- and post-award support.	4.5, 4.4	X

VII Assessment Report for 2023-24

Were the Action Plan objectives met? Provide in list or table format that parallels item VI above.

Planned Initiatives for 2024-25	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy	Were the Objectives Met?
Building a Sense of Community in the School of Business and Technology		
Continue B&T communications at the School, department chair through All-School meetings and email	4.5, 5.6	Yes
Continue and improve B&T Student Ambassador Program	4.2	Yes
Continue B&T Dining Together Program	4.2	No, initiative under last dean, decided to cancel due to low attendance
Plan a guest speaker series and other events that bring together the faculty, staff, and students	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	Yes, to events for faculty, staff, need more for students, including speakers
Review and revise School mission statement.	4.5, 5.6	Pending, was waiting on decisions regarding structure of School; will set as goal for new, permanent dean
Plan an engaging, well-attended STEM Week	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.6	Yes, focused on STEM <i>month</i> activities
Recruitment		
Enhance academic collaboration and communication with the Admissions office and Student Affairs	2.6, 5.3, 5.6	Yes, ongoing
Continue work with Slate data to provide analysis regarding yield and trends to B&T department chairs throughout the recruitment cycle.	5.6	Yes, ongoing
Work with Department Chairs, Admissions, and Marketing to create a strategic enrollment plan for majors, and targeted marketing videos and materials.	2.6	Ongoing (met with Rich Toomey, will continue under the new structure)

		of enrollment management)
Continue multifaceted efforts to recruit students – Business, STEM Shadow Days, specialized tours, Email-a-thons, virtual sessions, etc.	2.6	Ongoing – ambassadors were available for a variety of activities; not all initiatives were completed
Supporting Curricular Innovation		
Support ENGT in curricular change process and alignment to ABET standards.	1.2, 1.4	Ongoing
Create a Business/Biotech certificate, minor, or concentration	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	No, discussions should be revisited.
Support BSAD and CS with accreditation	1.2	Yes, mid-term IACBE report was successful, and ABET self-studies for CS and CIS have been submitted
Work with all programs to identify innovative, interdisciplinary courses, minors, and certificates that meet the needs of the workforce.	1.2, 1.4, 1.7, 6.2	Ongoing
Retention		
Launch multifaceted Health Professions Meta Advising and Mentorship Program	2.1	Yes
Work collaboratively with Mathematics, Student Success, and Institutional Research to analyze Math Pathways and Math Placement success.	1.1	Yes, Ongoing (APR awarded for Math gateway assessment)
Expanding and Enhancing External Partnerships		
Identify new industry and educational partners for all departments, including bolstering BSAD advisory board.	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Ongoing; BSAD advisory board set to be reconstituted and re-established in Fall 2025. (This was a transition year for BSAD due to the loss of elected chair John Crawley at the end of the last academic year.)

Enhance alumni relations through the development of a School newsletter.	3.6	No (item developed by previous dean – not one I decided to pursue)
Formalize internship agreements with industry partners.	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Ongoing, discussions at ENGT advisory board meeting
Develop new articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Updating some; no new ones in pipeline at this point
Bolster support for high-impact practices		
Identify and support a new High-Impact Practice Coordinator.	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	Yes
Continue to assist departments in pre- and post-award support.	4.5, 4.4	Yes

VIII Other Accomplishments:

List accomplishments not already captured above.

Proposal Title	Funder	Amount
NSF-STEM grant	National Science Foundation	\$1,000,000
Mass Capital Skills Grant	Executive Office of Education	\$300,000
AY 2024-2025 Grants Managed in Post-Award	\$ 1,000,000	

IX Action Plan 2025-2026:

Updates to the Action Plan may be submitted via a revised Annual Report

Planned Initiatives for 2025-26	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy	Indicate if a DEI initiative
Building a Sense of Community in the School of Business and Technology		
Ensure strong B&T communications within the School through the department chair, All-School meetings, and email.	4.5, 5.6	

Review and revise School mission statement to include all three departments	4.5, 5.6	
Recruitment and Retention		
Collaborate with Admissions, Enrollment Management, and Marketing to develop targeted recruitment plans for the school	2.6, 5.3, 5.6	
Collaborate with Admissions on multifaceted efforts to recruit students into B&T	2.6	
Supporting Curricular Innovation		
Support ENGT in curricular change processes, including conversations about ABET standards. Considerations should include reducing credit hours in the major, streamlining the curriculum, and consolidating concentrations.	1.2, 1.4	
Create a Business/Biotech certificate, minor, or concentration, and collaborate on conversations regarding the interdisciplinary Master's degree in Sustainability	1.2, 1.3, 1.4	
Support BSAD and CS with re-accreditation from IACBE and ABET	1.2	
Expanding and Enhancing External Partnerships		
Identify new industry and educational partners for all departments, including reconstituting and re-establishing the BSAD advisory board.	3.1, 3.2, 3.3	
Bolster support for high-impact practices		
Continue to assist departments in pre- and post-award support.	4.5, 4.4	X

X Reflection:

In July 2025, Dr. Al-Odeh will be arriving at Fitchburg State University as the new Dean of Business and Technology. Given that he will be at the helm shortly, I deliberately did not fully flesh out the B&T action plan for 2025-2026.

Instead, I have included a handful of key initiatives that stand out as priorities: 1) working on the ENGT curriculum; 2) re-establishing the advisory board in BSAD; 3) assisting CSC and BSAD on their reaccreditation efforts with IACBE and ABET; 4)

developing a new mission statement for the School of B&T; and 5) working with Enrollment Management, Admissions, and Marketing on recruitment efforts. Dr. Al-Odeh will also be brought into the conversations about the possibility of developing an interdisciplinary Master's degree in Sustainability with Rhine-Waal University.

During the past year, I have engaged in many conversations and meetings with members of the School of B&T. The items noted above stand out as essential priorities for the upcoming academic year. I have tried to lay a foundation in these areas for the new, permanent dean.

I would like to propose that I meet with Dr. Al-Odeh after he arrives to review a transition plan and to discuss this annual report. After that, we will submit a revised annual report with an updated action plan for AY 25-26.