

2019-2020
Unit Assessment Report
Division: Academic Affairs
Unit: Douglas and Isabelle Crocker Center for Civic Engagement

I Mission and Goal/Outcomes Statement:

Vision: Create a vibrant university-Fitchburg community wherein students, residents, and entrepreneurs live, work, seek an education, engage in recreation and leisure, and invest back into their community.

Mission: Heighten social capital and community cohesion by enriching the lives of neighborhood residents, local entrepreneurs, university students, and greater Fitchburg through evidence-based high-impact educational practices and community and economic development.

Community Investment Goals: Affirm, enhance, and maintain a partnership and collaboration between the university and its surrounding neighborhood residents, business owners, faith-based leaders, other community organizations and leaders, public officials, students and educators, for the greater purpose of community and economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

University Investment Goals: Increase student learning and success by engaging students in high-impact educational practices and learning opportunities through community-based internships, research, and civic learning projects.

II Personnel:

Administrative Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
David P. Weiss	Faculty Coordinator (3/4 th time, or approx. 28 hrs./wk.)

Support Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Nancy Robillard	Admin. Asst. II, Student Success (1/8 th time, or approx. 4-5 hrs./wk.)

III Facilities/Equipment:

No new facilities/equipment/software acquired during 19-20. Crocker Center office remains located at MART West, Rm. 108.

IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:

Budget for Crocker Center was \$25,000, split evenly between T65 & T76 Funds. Areas of expenditures included: (B) travel; (C) payroll, contracts; (E) supplies, awards, gift cards; (F) teaching materials; (H) honoraria; and, (J) food.

V Action Plan for 2019-20:

Please see attached Civic Action Plan (CAP), drafted in 2017, which serves as an ongoing, “living” document for the Crocker Center. From this, the CAP Working Group identified five civic action priorities and corresponding goals for Fitchburg State. They are:

Action Statement 1: We empower our students, faculty, staff and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus – nearby and around the world.

Goal: Build partnerships within our community to provide real-world opportunities for our students and collaborative solutions to community issues.

Action Statement 2: We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act and lead in pursuit of the public good.

Goal: Fitchburg State University prepares students to lead, serve, and succeed fostering lifelong learning and civic and global responsibility.

Action Statement 3: We embrace our responsibilities as a place-based institution, contributing to the health and strength of our communities - economically, socially, environmentally, educationally and politically.

Goal: As a community resource, we provide leadership and support for the economic, environmental, social, and cultural needs of North Central Massachusetts and the Commonwealth.

Action Statement 4: We harness the capacity of our institutions – through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practices to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

Goal: Create a culture of diversity to meet the needs of the region and enhance the personal and academic lives of the college community.

Action Statement 5: We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

Goal: A Fitchburg State education extends beyond our classrooms to include residential, professional, and co-curricular opportunities (mission).

VI **Programs/Activities:**

Action Statement/Goal 1:

LUK's Youth Empowerment Summit (Y.E.S.), April 2020: For the third year in a row, Fitchburg State University, including its Crocker Center, Admissions Office, and the Fitchburg State University Foundation, planned to sponsor, attend, and financially support LUK's Y.E.S. summit hosted by the Boys and Girls Club of Fitchburg & Leominster, wherein 100+ youth from the community come together for civic and community empowerment. [COVID-CANCELLED]

Crocker Center Funding of Faculty Community Engagement Projects: Our faculty, librarians, and staff are a creative and resourceful lot when it comes to serving our students and our greater community. If faculty have a civic or community engagement concept which involves a community partner and one or more of our students in a high-impact educational practice, such as an internship, community-based research, or some other act of civic or community engagement, then such can be funded up to \$1,000 from Crocker Center funds.

Diversifying the Faculty: Pathways Toward Equity: This \$100,000 Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) grant is shared between Worcester State, Salem State, and Fitchburg State University and seeks to launch an initiative whose primary goal is to create a campus environment that allows more diverse faculty members who increasingly identify as community engaged scholars to thrive as scholars, teachers, and leaders. The initiative proposes to build an equity agenda consortium of faculty leaders and administrators from across the state university system to create campus tenure and promotion resource materials and practices that account for community engaged work and support a commitment to building and maintaining diversity in the faculty. Resource materials will also be created for evaluation stakeholders.

Action Statement/Goal 2:

Constitution Day Panel Discussion, September 17, 2019: The Crocker Center worked with the Office of Student Development and Dr. Wafa Unus to put on a panel discussion of the 50th anniversary of *Antonelli vs. Hammond* wherein the

staff of Fitchburg State's student newspaper "The Cycle" clashed with administration over the right to publish printed excerpts of "The Black Moochie," a novella by Eldridge Cleaver—an American writer, and political activist who became an early leader of the Black Panther Party. The case went to federal court, where the students won what has become a landmark case in student journalism.

Fitchburg State Internships and Jobs: Working in concert with Dir. Melisa Alves of the Career Counseling & Advising Center, postings for university-wide internships and jobs (both FT & PT) will now go through her office with the new Handshake software, accessible to both students internally and community partners externally. Her office will also host more frequent and better-executed Career Fairs for students, graduates, and community partners alike.

Fitchburg Housing Authority (FHA): In 2019, FHA established a university internship program for those Fitchburg State University students who are in good standing per the standards set by the university and who also reside in the City of Fitchburg. FHA selects two interns that meet the criteria, who receive compensation paid out at the rate of the State's minimum wage, and who work no more than 18 hours per week. This partnership continues in the summer of 2020.

Action Statement/Goal 3:

Crocker Center's Community Research & Consulting Group (CRCG): The Community Research & Consulting Group's mission is to "collaborate on projects that solve real problems and answer practical questions. The Group will help design, develop, and implement projects that meet the needs of our partners. As an educational institution, we want to make sure our role in the community goes beyond the classroom and meets the comprehensive needs of our neighbors."

Urban Agenda Grant ("Creative Sparks Studio"): One objective of this grant is to establish a marketing and creative services project center which would be a faculty-coordinated, student-run enterprise (Comm. Media Dept.). This community-facing studio would address the needs of our community partners in the areas of marketing, content development, social media presence, graphic arts, etc.

Heritage Language & Culture Program (HLCP): The Crocker Center's Heritage Language & Culture Program hoped to host a week-long "Young Falcons Academy" in April 2020 for 20 5th & 6th graders with the goal of getting our local students, neighbors, parents and residents comfortable coming onto Fitchburg

State's campus and having these young students begin to think about attending college and/or Fitchburg State University. Eleven faculty, numerous Fitchburg State students, and public school teachers from both Longsjø and McKay planned to participate. [COVID-CANCELLED]

In collaboration with the Center for Professional Studies and other offices across campus, the Crocker Center sits on a newly-formed Corporate Relations/External Outreach working group. The purpose of this group is to identify, evaluate, and, possibly, eventually catalogue (via software) all community partners and partnerships that have been formed with Fitchburg State from across the region, and to dismantle the "silo" approach to reaching out to our community partners from various offices within the university.

Met with Drew Goodwin, Assoc. V.P. of Academic Affairs, to discuss Early College High School programming for our surrounding constituents.

Action Statement/Goal 4:

Crocker Center Advisory Board Meeting, Spring 2020: The advisory board, consisting of 11 members total, met in Spring 2020 to discuss the 4-pp. memo titled "For What Does Fitchburg State Want to Be Known?" and the future of the Crocker Center and civic and community engagement here at Fitchburg State and in the region.

Carnegie Classification Working Group: The Crocker Center's Carnegie Classification Working Group—consisting of numerous members both internal and external to Fitchburg State and representing both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs—seeks to evaluate the scope and achievability of applying for the notable and respected "Carnegie Classification" in the near future.

Action Statement/Goal 5:

Campus Compact's National Conference: Comm. Media Asst. Professor J.J. Sylvia was set to present his civic engagement work in a poster session at Campus Compact's National Conference in Seattle in March 2020. [COVID-CANCELLED]

Mass. DHE's Statewide Annual Civic Engagement Conference: In both 2018 and 2019, Fitchburg State University has hosted Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's Statewide Annual Civic Engagement Conference for approximately 120 to 130 attendees. This past May 2020, Holy Cross in Worcester has planned to host this conference, open and free-of-charge to faculty from the nine state universities. [COVID-CANCELLED]

VII Accomplishments 2019-2020:

Please see § VI Programs/Activities immediately above for accomplishments.

VIII Assessment Report:

Please see § VI Programs/Activities immediately above for assessment.

IX Future Directions:

Please see recently-submitted Crocker Center Annual Action Plan AY20/21.

X Reflection:

Please see attached “aspirational” memo dated December 4, 2019, and its accompanying graphic.

Additionally, a memo to the provost was authored on March 24, 2020, wherein the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Crocker Center and civic and community engagement at Fitchburg State was detailed. Said memo is also attached to this report.