

**2020-2021**  
**Unit Annual Report**  
**Division of Academic Affairs**  
**School of Arts & Sciences**

*There are amended instructions throughout this document to reflect the special circumstances of this academic year (AY20-21). You will find these in red. As an institution and as departments we have learned that we can use our creativity to deliver services and learning even in the most difficult of circumstances. This year's annual report should also serve as a memorialization of the lessons learned.*

**I Mission and Goal/Outcomes Statement:**

*Provide overall Mission/Goal Statement for your unit.*

*The School of Arts & Sciences merges scholarship and professional practice in a wide range of innovative programs. Our faculty inspire students to think and communicate clearly, to recognize and value diverse perspectives, and to act creatively when addressing complex problems in their communities and beyond. We prepare students to navigate a world of rapid change, while developing a foundation for a meaningful life.*

**II Personnel:**

*List all staff and note all personnel changes that occurred during 20-21.*

Name

Position

**Susan Guartafierro      Administrative Assistant II**

With the reorganization of the Schools in 2020-2021, Sue's appointment became 100% Arts and Sciences in January 2021

**Steve Fugere              Assistant Police Academy Director**

Works 8-10 hours per week during the academic year assisting the Police Academy Director with planning, facilitating, and implementing all processes in conjunction with the Police Program (and is hired separately, through GCE, as a Drill Instructor during the 17-week summer Police Academy)

**III Facilities/Equipment:**

*List any new facilities/equipment/software etc. acquired during 20-21.*

No facilities updates in 2020-21

Equipment for 4<sup>th</sup> Recruit Officer Course (CPR manikins, AED trainers, firing range equipment);  
Equipment for music program (acoustic shells, choral risers, music chairs for band room [CNFA 157], replacement equipment for music technology lab, percussion instruments, baritone and tenor saxophones, piccolo)

Equipment for art program (ceramic pug mill)

Equipment for Technical Theater program (light board)

**IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:**

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

*Please note any changes that resulted from the pandemic.*

No changes were made to the budget, which was not fully expended because of the pandemic.

**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. Please note which, if any, of these activities occurred specifically as a result of, or in response to, the pandemic*

The year entailed maintaining regular academic work (creating and staffing an annual schedule of nearly 700 Arts & Sciences classes, managing the various modalities for delivery during the pandemic, offering a larger Police Academy during a period of national unrest related to policing, and providing nearly 40 2<sup>nd</sup>-, 3<sup>rd</sup>-, 4<sup>th</sup>-, 5<sup>th</sup>-year reappointments, tenures, promotions, and post-tenure reviews). Beyond these, School programs and dean activities for 2020-2021 included

- **Committees, Working Groups, Boards**

- NECHE Committee for Standard 4: Academic Programs
- AUC Curriculum Committee
- LAS Subcommittee of the AUC Curriculum Committee
- LA&S Implementation Group
- LA&S/General Education Program Area: created and launched in AY2020-2021
- CTL Advisory Board: Restructured and expanded in AY2020-2021
- Honors Advisory Council
- Corporate Engagement Working Group
- Registrar Search Committee
- Center for Italian Culture/AVGC/Global Ambassadors Scholarship Group: restructured student scholarship process, together with Financial Aid: **study-abroad scholarship awards made and suspended due to COVID restrictions**
- CIC Executive Committee
- CIC Advisory Board

- **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

- **New Curriculum Development**
  - Saw new interdisciplinary Major and Minor in Digital Media Innovation successfully through governance (noted below)
  - Saw new Minor in Human Services successfully through campus governance
- **Transfer Pathways**
  - Approved Middlesex Community College's AS degree in Liberal Studies-Paralegal Studies Transfer as a linked program for MassTransfer, which will enable MCC graduates to be admitted into our B.S. Political Science or other majors
  - Transfer Articulation Agreement with New Hampshire Technical Institute Communications program into our Comm Media/Professional Communication degree

- **Grant Submissions/Awards**

- Awarded \$50,628 Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Community Safety Initiative grant as a Local Action Research Partners (LARP)
  - In partnership with the City of Fitchburg, Arts & Sciences faculty coordinated efforts to address youth and young adult delinquency, crime, and gang violence in the Fitchburg, Leominster, and Gardner areas with strategic, analytic, technical and research support, including focus groups with Shannon youth and young adults, trainings on evidence-based practices for reducing delinquency and crime, and assisting partner sites with quality improvement endeavors to enhance programs and practices during COVID19.
- Awarded \$51,743 Department of Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) grant for Heritage Language Program. Work beginning in Spring 2021 through summer, including
  - development of peer-mentoring training program for multilingual students, with Mt. Wachusett Community College's Business Certification Program

- development of a Multilingual Scholars academic program to provide credit-bearing and co-curricular support for ELL and heritage language students
  - development and implementation of a structure to recognize and award credit to incoming students with Massachusetts state bi-literacy seals
  - development and implementation of a “Spanish for the Professions” certificate to pair with any major
  - Submitted \$750,000 National Endowment for the Humanities Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant for the TheaterLAB, an applied learning laboratory/black box theater as part of the downtown Theater Block
    - Served as primary grant writer with Jeanette Robichaud
  - Submitted \$98,000 National Endowment for the Humanities Connections Implementation Grant to enhance digital humanities on campus in conjunction with new degree program in Digital Media Innovation and increase focus on community engagement, experiential learning, and ethics
    - English and Communications Media faculty served as primary grant writers
- **Community Outreach/Participation**
- Board member: US Congress-funded Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area
  - Worcester Art Museum: University Liaison Group
  - Friend of the Fitchburg Art Museum
  - Massachusetts State University Arts and Sciences Deans’ Discussion Group

**VI Action Plan for 2020-21** (based on 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, as 2020-25 plan had not been approved by the submission date):

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 1A:</b></p> <p><b>STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Prepare students for success in the workforce liberal arts and professional education (1A)</b></p> <p><b>1A1.</b> Align Liberal A&amp;S curriculum with skills valued in the workforce.</p> <p><b>1A2.</b> Increase collaboration in academic programs through team teaching, learning communities, interdisciplinary course development, and research opportunities; support high-impact learning experiences.</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Continue the implementation of LA&amp;S as a program; beyond approving individual courses, create a locus to underscore general education as part of the institutional mission to educate students broadly, support the major, and provide professional/workplace skills. (1A1)</p> <p>Work with campus to integrate Institutional Learning Priorities as a framework for new strategic plan (1A1-ish)</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Creation of a Program Area for the LA&amp;S curriculum; CTL programming specific to LA&amp;S learning outcomes and programmatic assessment.</p> <p>See ILPs through campus implementation (whether governance or not) (AUC)</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 1C:</b></p> <p><b>STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Make innovative use of developing technologies appropriate for students of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (1C)</b></p> <p><b>1C1.</b> Encourage a culture of experimentation and innovation with instructional technologies through operational &amp; structural improvements and academic initiatives</p> <p><b>1C2:</b> Encourage the use of alternative educational materials to reduce the cost for students</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Make Digital Humanities a distinction of Fitchburg State by expanding visibility and funding for digitally-enhanced faculty and student work (including space) (1C1)</p> <p>Support expansion of OER on campus (1C2)</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Collaborative digital learning studio in current CTL library space by end of 2020-2021, including a web-based repository of faculty work</p> <p>Inventory and increase number of Arts &amp; Sciences faculty adopting OER in their courses by the end of the 2020-2021 academic year</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 1D:</b></p> <p><b>STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Enhance and affirm student, faculty, and staff diversity as central to the Fitchburg State experience (1D)</b></p> <p>1D2. Identify and support appropriate and ongoing efforts to develop multi-cultural competencies in students, faculty and staff.</p> <p>1D4. Increase opportunities for study abroad, partnerships and faculty exchanges</p>
<p><b>Objectives</b> Collaborate with the CTL to advance faculty development and pedagogical programming focused on Inclusive Excellence</p> <p>Promote courses and programs offered by the School of Arts &amp; Sciences that directly address social justice, civil rights, responsive citizenship and social awareness</p> <p>Expand activities of the Heritage Language &amp; Culture Alliance, under the auspices of the Crocker Center on related programming (1D2; 1D6)</p> <p>Collaborate with Spanish-language faculty, CPS, and community constituents to explore market for a certificate in Spanish for the professions</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Collaborative workshop(s), perhaps with an outside speaker, to inspire innovations in teaching practices and learning outcomes for students</p> <p>Marketing and Advising materials for distribution to appropriate offices and departments on campus for the fall and spring semesters.</p> <p>Implement the Summer Intensive English Program for English Language Learners and Middle School Young Falcon's Camp (4-day camps during February and April school breaks) that had to be postponed due to Covid By end of year, have sufficient information to pursue development of pilot program</p> <p>Resume initial conversations (halted by Covid) with the University of Florence about faculty and student exchange (when travel is re-approved)</p>

Leverage contacts in Italy for faculty and/or student exchange (1D3 & 1D4)	
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<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 2A:</b></p> <p><b>PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS BY BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Evaluate obstacles to retention and completion through the analysis of student data and the creation of campaigns to address identified barriers (2A)</b></p> <p>2A2. Continue to refine the approach to remedial education</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Though not remediation, develop a cohesive campus strategy for the various English-language support initiatives for students across campus</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Finalize organization begun in summer 2020 with Tutoring Center, Education, A&amp;S, GCE to be able to leverage (through programming, marketing, etc.) English-Language Supports</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 2B:</b></p> <p><b>PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS BY BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Expand the use of high-impact practices (2B)</b></p> <p><b>2B2.</b> Bring cohesion to all academic programs by requiring a senior capstone experience, portfolio, or internship to align with workforce values.</p> <p><b>2B3.</b> Increase opportunities for community-based student research, service learning, and community-based learning and develop a central university point of contact for internships under the expanded mission of the Crocker Center</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Work with A&amp;S departments to identify existing and opportunities for the development of new High Impact Practice and Integrative HIP courses for the new LA&amp;S (2B2)</p> <p>Map all experiential learning/service-learning/internship requirements and sites</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> A&amp;S HIP and IHIP courses readied for governance in 2020-2021</p> <p>Work with 1 remaining A&amp;S program to plan intentional culminating experience (Sociology), after program review of last year</p> <p>Develop community-based academic projects in Economics, Professional Writing, Art/Music/Theater, with Crocker and various downtown-related to community development initiatives (including but not limited to Theatre Block).</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 2C:</b></p> <p><b>PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS BY BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Ensure student support services are adequate to meet the needs of our current and future students (2C)</b></p> <p><b>2C3.</b> Provide specific training for faculty and staff regarding the needs of diverse student populations with an eye toward creating a safe and accepting campus community</p>
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	for all, including... differentiated instruction, English Language Learners and cultural awareness
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Collaborate with Tutoring Center, Academic Coaches, English Studies and others for an organized, university-wide system of support for writing (2C)</p> <p>Collaborate with the CTL to advance faculty development and programing in Inclusive Excellence</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Planning document for campus Writing Center/Writing Associates program t by end of 2020-2021</p> <p>Collaboratively develop faculty development programing in Inclusive Excellence, building a community of practice, differentiated instruction, cultural awareness</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 3A:</b></p> <p><b>BUILD A UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY THAT EMBRACES CIVIC AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Collaborate and align with local business, industry, educational, extended campus, and cultural partners on community-based projects and internships (3A)</b></p> <p><b>3A1.</b> Support educational initiatives that extend and apply civic learning to regional, national and international settings.</p> <p><b>3A2.</b> Enhance efforts by faculty, staff and administration to use knowledge and expertise in community service to appropriate regional partners.</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Strengthen &amp; expand existing community partnerships that provide internship and/or community-learning opportunities for Arts &amp; Sciences students (3A1, 3A2)</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Develop new community-based academic projects in the Economics, Professional Writing, Art/Music/Theater programs, in collaboration with the Crocker Center and various downtown related to community development initiatives (including but not limited to the Theatre Block and Freedom’s Way Heritage Area).</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 3B:</b></p> <p><b>BUILD A UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY THAT EMBRACES CIVIC AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Promote the economic, social, and cultural health and development of the City of Fitchburg and the region. (3B)</b></p> <p>3B3. Promote the City of Fitchburg’s designation as a cultural arts district.</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Participate in development of the Theatre block, Reimagine North of Main, Creative Spark Studio, Innovation Field Lab/Town/Gown MOU, and related downtown initiatives (3B3)</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Pending outcome of NEH Infrastructure Grant, develop academic programming for Theatre Block and FAM, providing high-impact internship and other learning opportunities in Economics, Professional Writing, Art/Music/Theatre. Increase participation in Community ensembles; ensure productive use of the Game Studio.</p> <p>Host Town Hall (perhaps virtually) with Dr. Susan Albertine and NASEM (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering</p>

Strengthen regional collaborations in the Arts and Humanities with sister and 2-year campuses	and Medicine), as part of its initiative to integrate humanities and arts with science, engineering and medicine in higher education
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<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 4A:</b></p> <p><b>GROW AND STRATEGICALLY ALIGN FITCHBURG STATE'S RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Pursue opportunities to increase existing revenue and identify new revenue streams, including new program development, recruitment, retention, and overall enrollment strategies. (4A)</b></p> <p><b>4A2.</b> Review graduate, undergraduate day, and evening offerings to determine appropriate expansion as well as consolidation</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Work with GCE and chairs to assess status of A&amp;S programs in relation to university mission and growth strategy (4A2)</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Launch revised English MA and fully online MS CJ program; explore new online graduate program development in MS in Public Administration or eGovernment, a general MA in Liberal Studies or Organizational Leadership, and possible certificate in a field related to Arts or Nonprofit Management (in alignment with Theatre Block initiative)</p>

<p><b>Associated Strategic Plan Goal:</b> <b>GOAL 4C:</b></p> <p><b>GROW AND STRATEGICALLY ALIGN FITCHBURG STATE'S RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>Goals/Outcomes: Increase financial resources available to university through philanthropy, to support Strategic Plan initiatives and to strengthen financial position. (4C)</b></p> <p><b>4C2.</b> Increase funding for scholarships, academic programs, and student support initiatives through foundation monies to align fundraising priorities with the Strategic Plan.</p>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> On heels of CIC Strategic Plan (May, 2020), focus on increasing its financial base through fundraising (4C1)</p> <p>Increase funding for Digital Humanities initiative on campus</p>	<p><b>Performance Measures/Targets:</b> Leverage the board as a fundraising entity.</p> <p>Work with faculty on submission of related federal grant by end of 2020 -21 academic year</p>

## VII Assessment Report for 2020-21

Were the Action Plan objectives met? *Provide in list or table format in blue of accomplishments that parallels item VI above. Please note any changes to the plan that occurred as a result of the pandemic.*

### GOAL 1: STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

#### 1A: Align Liberal A&S curriculum with skills valued in the workforce.

- Continue implementation of LA&S as a program
  - o Saw larger number of LAS courses than expected – 623 – successfully through campus governance in 2020-2021
- Create structure to underscore general education as part of institutional mission to educate students broadly, support majors, and provide professional/workplace skills.
  - o Created and implemented a new Program Area for LA&S/General Education, with CTL programming specific to LA&S learning outcomes and programmatic assessment

- Work to integrate Institutional Learning Priorities as framework for new strategic plan.
  - o [Saw ILPs through campus governance and integration into new strategic plan](#)
- Increase collaboration in academic programs through team teaching, interdisciplinary course development, and research opportunities, support high-impact learning experiences.
  - o [Saw new interdisciplinary major and minor \(with English Studies and Communications Media\) in Digital Media Innovation successfully through campus governance](#)

**1C: Make innovative use of developing technologies appropriate for students of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

- Make Digital Humanities a distinction of Fitchburg State by expanding visibility and funding for digitally-enhanced faculty and student work (including space)
  - o [Submitted NEH Connections Implementation Grant to enhance digital humanities on campus in conjunction with new degree programs in Digital Media Innovation \(programs were approved through campus governance and have yet to go through state approval\)](#)
  - o [Collaborative digital learning studio in current CTL library space by end of 2020-2021, including a web-based repository of faculty work – Pandemic delay](#)
- Support expansion of OER on campus
  - o [Increase number of Arts & Sciences faculty adopting OER in their courses by the end of the 2020-2021 academic year – Increased use in English Studies, Economics, History, and Political Science; work ongoing, in collaboration with work of library](#)

**1D: Enhance & affirm student, faculty, and staff diversity as central to Fitchburg State experience**

- Collaborate with CTL to advance faculty development and pedagogical programing focused on Inclusive Excellence
  - o [Restructured CTL with faculty leaders for Inclusive Excellence, Advising, General Education, and Pedagogical Innovation. Organized and conducted faculty development workshops in each area, including IE, in May 2021 to inspire innovations in teaching practices and learning outcomes for students](#)
- Promote courses and programs offered in Arts and Sciences that directly address social justice, civil rights, responsive citizenship and social awareness
  - o [Compiled a marketing/advising catalog for distribution to appropriate offices and departments on campus for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters.](#)
- Expand activities of the Heritage Language & Culture Alliance
  - o [Implement the Summer Intensive English Program for English Language Learners and Middle School Young Falcon’s Camp \(4-day camps during February and April school breaks\): Pandemic postponement](#)
  - o [Awarded \\$51,743 Department of Higher Education Innovation Fund \(HEIF\) grant for Heritage Language Program. Work beginning in Spring 2021 through summer 2021](#)
- Collaborate with Spanish-language faculty, CPS, and community constituents to explore market for a certificate in Spanish for the professions
  - o [Awarded above-referenced HEIF grant, including development of a “Spanish for the Professions” Certificate; work underway in Summer 2021](#)
- Leverage contacts in Italy for faculty and/or student exchange
  - o [Covid postponed](#)

**GOAL 2: PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS BY BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS**

**2A: Evaluate obstacles to retention and completion through the analysis of student data and the creation of campaigns to address identified barriers**

- Develop cohesive campus strategy for English-language support for students across campus.

- Awarded above-referenced HEIF grant, including development of a Multilingual Scholars Seminar to provide academic English language support and campus operationalization of state's Biliiteracy Seal. Work taking place over summer 2021, to be completed by September 2021.

### **2B: Expand the use of high-impact practices (2B)**

- Work with A&S departments to identify existing and opportunities for the development of new High Impact Practice and Integrative HIP courses for the new LA&S (2B2)
  - 100 Advanced Integrative and 24 Integrated High-Impact Practice courses successfully passed through governance in 2020-2021
- Map all experiential learning/service-learning/internship requirements and sites
  - Completed Sociology Program Review with action plan that identifies development of a capstone/culminating experience
- Develop community-based academic projects in Economics, Professional Writing, Art/Music/Theater, with Crocker and downtown-related to community development initiatives.
  - Ongoing

### **2C: Ensure student support services are adequate to meet needs of current and future students**

- Collaborate with Tutoring Center, Academic Coaches, English Studies and others for an organized, university-wide system of support for writing (2C)
  - Planning document for campus Writing Center/Writing Associates program t by end of 2020-2021 In progress
- Collaborate with the CTL to advance faculty development and programing in Inclusive Excellence
  - Restructured CTL with faculty leaders for, among other areas, Inclusive Excellence. Organized and conducted faculty development workshops on IE in May 2021 to inspire innovations in teaching practices and learning outcomes for students

## **GOAL 3: BUILD A UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY THAT EMBRACES CIVIC & GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY**

### **3A: Collaborate and align with local business, industry, educational, extended campus, and cultural partners on community-based projects and internships**

- Strengthen & expand existing community partnerships that provide internship and/or community-learning opportunities for Arts & Sciences students (3A1, 3A2)
  - Develop new community-based academic projects in the Economics, Professional Writing, Art/Music/Theater programs, related to community development initiatives: **After a delay caused by COVID in spring 2020**, plans resumed in April 2021 to develop a pop-up art gallery at 699 Main Street to exhibit work of faculty, students, and members of the community. Marissa Monteiro of Reimagining North of Main is collaborating with Arts & Sciences faculty on this project, with a goal of featuring some student artwork in the Main St. storefront windows in September, 2021

### **3B: Promote economic, social, & cultural health & development of the City of Fitchburg and region.**

- Participate in development of the Theatre block, Reimagine North of Main, Creative Spark Studio, Innovation Field Lab/Town/Gown MOU, and related downtown initiatives (3B3)
  - Invited to revise and resubmit 2020 *NEH Infrastructure Grant* proposal; took lead in rewriting grant, which was resubmitted in May 2021; rest of work ongoing
  - Renewed formal partnership with the Fitchburg Art Museum, to benefit FSU students and FAM audiences as well as communities in the city and North Central Massachusetts
- Strengthen regional collaborations in the Arts and Humanities with sister and 2-year campuses
  - Pandemic postponed

- Host Town Hall (perhaps virtually) with Dr. Susan Albertine and NASEM (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine), as part of its initiative to integrate humanities and arts with science, engineering and medicine in higher education
  - o Covid canceled

**GOAL 4: GROW AND STRATEGICALLY ALIGN FITCHBURG STATE'S RESOURCES**

**4A: Pursue opportunities to increase existing revenue and identify new revenue streams, including new program development, recruitment, retention, and overall enrollment strategies.**

- Work with GCE & chairs to assess status of A&S programs in relation to university mission and growth strategy
  - o Launched revised English MA program with new hyflex and online modalities to expand appeal to broader student population
  - o Launched fully online MS CJ program
  - o Explore new online graduate program development in MS in Public Administration or eGovernment, a general MA in Liberal Studies or Organizational Leadership, and possible certificate in a field related to Arts or Nonprofit Management (in alignment with Theatre Block initiative): ongoing

**4C: Increase funding for scholarships, academic programs, and student support initiatives through foundation monies to align fundraising priorities with the Strategic Plan.**

- On heels of CIC Strategic Plan (May, 2020), increase its financial base through fundraising
  - o Planning major fundraising event/20<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala in October, 2021
- Increase funding for Digital Humanities initiative on campus
  - o Submitted NEH grant

**VIII Other Accomplishments:**

*List accomplishments not already captured above.*

*Please note which, if any, of these accomplishments are related specifically to your department's response to the pandemic.*

**Assessment**

- Completed two program reviews from previous academic year (Political Science, Sociology), with action plans under way, the first-ever program review in Game Design, reaccreditation of the Human Services program, and most of the program review of the five undergraduate and two graduate programs in the Humanities Department, with the site visit scheduled for September 2021.

**Recruitment**

- Identified mechanism for selection of World Languages or Speech General Education learning outcome as part of Admissions process
- Continued participation in Dual Enrollment and Early College initiatives, with courses offered in conjunction with area high schools

**Retention**

- o Davis Education Foundation grant mapping to improve department advising and mentoring (Economics, History, Political Science, English Studies, Humanities)
- o Fitchburg State University chapter of the Human Services Honor Society, Tau Upsilon Alpha, officially approved
- o Carried out collaborative research and exhibitions with students (Economics, English, History and Political Science)

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion**

- o Three Arts & Sciences faculty members received and conducted pedagogical research through support from the Deans' Anti-Racism Fund

- Five Arts & Sciences faculty are currently participating in the three-year Faculty Academy with Dr. Paul Hernandez (Budd, Goodlett, Harvey, Keyser, Unus, Tracy), with two more beginning their three-year participation in the coming year (Warmouth, Ryan)
- Our performing arts programs and ensembles have focused on the works of underrepresented composers and writers, building sheet music collections, for example, that reflect the campus commitment to diversity

**IX Action Plan 2021-2022:**

Planned Initiatives for 2021-22 Add more rows as needed	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 3.2	Indicate if a DEI initiative
Complete approval of existing LA&S courses into new General Education program through campus governance	Goal 1.1	
Support the development of new General Education courses, particularly integrative/high impact practice courses	Goal 1.1	
Continue to develop a campus-wide Community of Practice related to the new General Education curriculum	Goal 1.1	
With the new Program Area for General Education, develop and begin implementation of a new model of General Education programmatic assessment	Goal 1.1	
Implement General Education transfer policy	Goal 2.4	
In collaboration with George Mason University and the CJ program, develop a campus-based Conflict Resolution Study to support facilitated dialogues within departments and the wider campus community	Goal 1.4	x
Work with Sociology Program to develop an applied learning capstone, after which all programs in Arts and Sciences will include an intentional culminating experience	Goal 1.2	x
Develop series of in-class and co-curricular academic learning opportunities related to visit, hosted by the CIC, of author Maaza Mengiste, whose novel ( <i>The Shadow King</i> ) raises issues of Fascism, imperialism, World War II, Africa, and women soldiers who were left out of the historical record	Goal 1.3 Goal 3.6	x
Complete development and see through campus governance two new IDIS majors: <i>Expressive Arts Therapies</i> and <i>Arts</i>	Goal 1.4	

<i>Entrepreneurship and Management</i> (formerly IDIS concentration in Fine & Performing Arts)		
Complete development (and perhaps see through campus governance) new IDIS major in <i>Public Humanities</i> (formerly IDIS concentration in Humanities)	Goal 1.4	
Explore new online graduate program development in MS in Public Administration or eGovernment, a general MA in Liberal Studies or Organizational Leadership, and possible certificate in a field related to Arts or Nonprofit Management (in alignment with Theatre Block initiative)	Goal 1.4; Goal 1.5; Goal 1.6	
Complete and implement Articulation Agreement with Rhein Waal University in Germany	Goal 1.2 Goal 1.3	
Support diversity pedagogies and campus programming through the Deans' Anti-Racism Fund	Goal 1.4 Goal 2.1 Goal 2.3 Goal 5.1	x
Refine new CTL structure, including targeted faculty development in Advising	Goal 2.1	x (perhaps)
Implement work of HEIF grant, including Multilingual Peer Mentoring program	Goal 2.2	x
Refine new CTL structure, including targeted faculty development in Inclusive Excellence pedagogies	Goal 2.3 Goal 5.1	x
Expand departmental collaboration with colleagues on Davis Grant to identify career competencies	Goal 2.5 Goal 5.1	x
Pending outcome of NEH <i>Infrastructure and Capacity Building grant</i> , develop academic programming for the Theatre Block and the Fitchburg Art Museum, providing high-impact internship and other learning opportunities in Economics, Professional Writing, Art/Music/Theatre programs. Increase participation in Community ensembles	Goal 1.4 Goal 1.6 Goal 3.2 Goal 3.4 Goal 3.5 Goal 3.6	
Strengthen city and regional collaborations related to the area's social and economic development through the Fitchburg Local Innovation Project	Goal 3.3 Goal 3.4	x
Strengthen regional collaborations in the Arts and Humanities with sister and 2-year campuses	Goal 3.6	X (perhaps)
Make Digital Humanities a distinction of Fitchburg State by expanding visibility and dedicated space in current CTL library room, for digitally-enhanced faculty and student work.	Goal 1.4 Goal 4.3; Goal 4.4	X (perhaps)

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

## X Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

- 1) Initiatives that you may be considering for 22-23 academic year that you did not already capture above.
- 2) Reflect on how the department adapted to the pandemic. Reflect on actions that surprised you and on lessons learned that will help in the future.

Though exhausting for all involved, Arts and Sciences faculty adapted remarkably well to the sudden shift to online, onsync, and hybrid modalities in spring 2020 and continuing in the 2020-2021 academic year. Predictably, the necessary changes and safety protocols had a greater impact on applied pedagogies (performing arts, collaborative, equipment-heavy disciplines such as film and video), given the impossibility of hosting in-person events and the challenges associated with collective content-development. Faculty were resilient and innovative in supporting each other and creating, for example, an online “Teaching Writing Support Group” to share problems, solutions, resources, and technology tips.

Within the restricted environment, we found that virtual community events (class-based discussions, CTL pedagogy dialogues, etc.) were not only possible, but in some cases better attended than before the pandemic. The student newspaper pivoted to online, increasing its production and providing an important source of information for the campus community. Our Game Design program hosted a well-attended Global Game Jam (attracting current and prospective students, as well as alumni and community members), and all performing arts ensembles offered a full year of virtual performances, with our student-written fall 2020 theater production of “Our Reckoning” winning the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Cathy Hurst Award in Directing. Our celebrated Moot Court team again distinguished itself in national competition, with students finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in the country in appellate brief writing in what the faculty advisor described as “probably the most competitive season ever.” Once again, the American Moot Court Association (AMCA) ranked Fitchburg State in the top 20 schools – and the smallest public institution among national powerhouses – based on the past year's competition season.

Challenges there were, to be sure. Many faculty reported disappearances of students from classes, and a large number of S/U requests, even after the deadline, were processed. Some faculty found that hybrid modalities in which instructors met with some students in person while others attended remotely proved to be the most problematic in terms of sustained student engagement. Likewise, Writing classes posed unique challenges in terms of keeping students focused. These differences of experience will likely come into play as we develop “post-pandemic” academic schedules moving forward.

Evaluating the climate for the future in terms of teaching and workplace culture remains an area of uncertainty. While there is a clear desire for an in-person “return to normalcy” among some students and some faculty, the convenience of remote teaching, learning, and working (for staff) will leave its mark, I suspect, with some pockets of the campus (students, faculty, and staff) expressing more reluctance to return to five-day, full-time schedules.

It seems a moment of opportunity, to evaluate what went well and what posed obstacles, to think together about the future of responsive teaching, learning, and working at Fitchburg State.