

**Unit Action Plan
2020-2021**

Division: **Academic Affairs**
Unit: **Crocker Center for Civic Engagement**

Unit 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.

Unit 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.

Unit Goals/Outcomes:

Community Investments: 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 Investments: 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.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Performance Measures/Targets</u>
<p>Establish relationships with community partners, including site visits, memoranda of understand, agency.</p>	<p>Fitchburg Housing Authority (FHA): Now in its second year, FHA and Fitchburg State continue their partnership wherein FHA brings on two paid interns for the summer; said Fitchburg State interns <i>must</i> be permanent Fitchburg residents. The interns, paid at state minimum wage, take on both clerical and substantive housing projects that are critical to the reform and improvement of FHA. The interns work no more than 18 hrs. per week throughout the months of June, July, and August, and are supervised by FHA’s Executive Director, Doug Bushman.</p>
<p>Continually identify additional disciplines willing to make a commitment to service learning/civic engagement.</p>	<p>In an effort to continue to inculcate the philosophy of service learning and civic engagement into the classroom, into our university environment, and into the greater North Central MA region, the Crocker Center will continue to offer—and increase in overall numbers—its \$1,000 “mini-grants” to faculty, librarians, and staff for the implementation of various community engagement projects.</p>
<p>Create an overall campus culture of civic engagement that prioritizes both a student-focus (e.g., diversity and accessibility of programming) and a campus-focus (e.g., personnel, funding, and physical resources available).</p>	<p>Equity & Engagement Consortium (EEC): Awarded a \$100,000 Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) Grant in 2019, the EEC partners (Worcester State, Salem State, and Fitchburg State) launched last fall an initiative whose primary goal is to create a campus environment that allows younger, more diverse faculty members who increasingly identify as community engaged scholars to thrive as scholars, teachers, and leaders. The initiative continues to build an Equity & Engagement Consortium of faculty leaders and administrators 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 created will be provided to various evaluation stakeholders, including members of PECS, T & P committees, chairs, deans, etc.</p>

Harness the capacity of our institutions to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities; create conversational Spanish language and conversational competency courses on campus; inclusive excellence.

Conduct orientations and professional development for faculty each semester.

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Heritage Language & Culture Program (HLCP): The Crocker Center's Heritage Language & Culture Program is planning a substantive project for the upcoming academic year wherein Fitchburg State hosts the "Young Falcons Academy" of two week-long kids' academies to coincide with the public schools' two week-long spring breaks—one in February (5th & 6th graders) and another in April (7th & 8th graders) of 2021. The goal of these academies is to get our local students, neighbors, parents, and residents comfortable coming onto Fitchburg State's campus, with the broader goal of having these young students begin to think about attending college and/or Fitchburg State University.

Mass. DHE's Statewide Annual Civic Engagement Conference: In 2018 and 2019, Fitchburg State University hosted the MA Department of Higher Education's Statewide Annual Civic Engagement Conference for approximately 120 to 130 attendees. (The May 2020 conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.) DHE leadership (John Reiff) has requested, once again, to have Fitchburg State tentatively host the 2021 conference.

Campus Compact's Regional Conference: At least one faculty member will be supported by the Crocker Center to present her/his civic engagement work at Campus Compact's Regional Conference to be held in St. Louis, MO, in May of 2021.

Crocker Center's Summertime Civic Engagement Institute: For three prior years (2017, '18, '19; COVID-cancelled in 2020), Crocker Center has hosted its one-day summertime civic engagement institute for university faculty, librarians, and staff. The CE institute will, once again, be held in 2021.

Develop and implement a systematic long-term plan for institutionalizing service learning and civic engagement across Fitchburg State University; develop functioning faculty and community advisory council for service learning/civic engagement.

Creation of an entrepreneurship center; enhance existing community partnerships with faculty, staff, and administrators.

As a place-based institution, review and verify existing opportunities for civic engagement.

Carnegie Classification Working Group: The Crocker Center’s Carnegie Classification Working Group—consisting of various 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.

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 center would address the needs of our community partners in the areas of marketing, content development, social media presence, graphic arts, etc.

Crocker Center’s Community Research & Consulting Group: Originally rolled out to local community partners as the “Community Scholarship Group” a few years back, the title was misunderstood by community members (with “scholarship” being mistaken as dollars rather than research) and was not well-implemented. As such, the Crocker Center Advisory Board recommended a name change to “Community Research & Consulting Group,” whose clarified 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.” Substantive marketing of the Group and its members is anticipated for the upcoming academic year.