

**2023-2024**  
**Unit Annual Report**  
**Division of Academic Affairs**  
**Unit: Provost's Office**

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

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

Provides strategic leadership and organizational support for the educational mission of the university, including oversight of the quality and practices associated with the student academic experience (undergraduate, graduate and professional) and faculty development and support.

**II Personnel:**

*List all staff and note all personnel changes that occurred during 22-23.*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Patricia A. Marshall	Provost/VPAA
Franca Barricelli	AVPAA
Joanne Rivard	Staff Assistant to the Provost
Deresa Webb	Staff Assistant to the AVPAA

**III Facilities/Equipment:**

*List any new facilities/equipment/software etc. acquired during 22-23.*

Moved Library website to Druple  
Math IXL software (to support MTEL preparation courses)  
Teaching Channel Pro  
OPTIC software (through DESE)

**IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:**

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

Budget was expended as planned.

**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.*

Faculty Development activities included three in-person Faculty Development Days (September, January, and May), a two-day Chairs' Workshop (August) and a two-day New Faculty Orientation (August) on the cusp of the new academic year. Collaborated with others to organize and execute the Undergraduate Research Conference and monthly CTL faculty development events.

Recruitment activities included our support and participation in Admissions Open Houses, first-year and international Student Orientations, and Future Falcon Day (increasingly a yield event).

In addition, we successfully hired a new Dean of Education (beginning summer 2024) and conducted ten full (5) and part-time faculty searches (5).

Curriculum: Received final BHE approval for two new interdisciplinary B.A. programs: Creative Arts Enterprise and Creative Arts Therapies, for fall 2024 launch. The new MS in Construction Management, approved in summer 2023, launched in AY2023-24. In addition, the new minor in Data Analytics was launched in 2023-24 and a new interdisciplinary minor in Sustainability Studies was approved through governance, for a fall 2024 launch.

Advancement: Secured renewal of \$125,000 anonymous grant to support students on unpaid internships.

Student Success:

Piloted and implemented significant changes to new student orientation events, to enhance student agency in registration and improve student success. Grant-funded Batista Consulting conducted evaluation of student success initiatives, including advising protocol, First Year Experience program, tutoring services, and organizational culture, with report due in summer 2024. Report will form basis of September Development Day programming to discuss implementation action plan.

University-wide operations: Collaborated and oversaw the execution of three successful commencement ceremonies during a time of ongoing transition with the university’s Events Management office, after the unexpected departure of the former director of Events in April. Developed, presented and successfully defended proposals through governance for the AY2024-2025 and AY2025-2026 academic calendars. Provided updates and presentations on new academic programming, student success and retention initiatives, and the new OPT fee for international graduate students to the Board of Trustees and the Academic Affairs sub-committee of the Board of Trustees.

COMMITTEES	
Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs	AVPAA
Statewide Chief Academic Officer Group	Executive Committee (EC)
Statewide Collective Bargaining Committee/COP rep.	Provost’s Council
FSU Vice Presidents’ Leadership Group	All University Committee (secretary)
Executive Committee (EC)	MSCA Professional Development & Retraining Committee (chair)
Provost’s Council	Academic Innovation Fund Advisory Committee ( <i>ex-officio</i> )
All University Committee	Commencement Committee (co-chair)
Honorary Degree Committee	Undergraduate Research Conference Committee
Leading for Change (co-chair)	CTL Advisory Board
North Central MA Early College Academy Partnership Board	Honors Program Advisory Board
	International Education Advisory Board
	General Education Program Area
	Scholarship Selection Committee: AVGC and Global Ambassadors
	Academic Partnership Leadership Group (with SGOCE)
	Center for Italian Culture Executive Committee and Advisory Board

**VI Action Plan for 2023-24:**

(Insert your 22-23 Action Plan from last year’s report)

Planned Initiatives for 2024-25	Associated Strat. Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # (ex: 3.2)	Indicate if DEI
Institutional Learning Priorities review	5.2	
Examining Academic Program Array, including BA/BS, course numbering, and size of programs to allow for electives and facilitate completion in 120 credits	1.4	
Gathering data on retention efficacy of FYE	2.1, 2.3	X
Continue with Year Two of General Education program assessment	1.1	
Evaluate pre-registration and orientation for first-year students	2.1, 2.2	
Finalize and operationalize internationalization plan	2.6	
English language support/multilingualism	2.1	X

## VII Assessment Report for 2023-24

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

Institutional Learning Priorities review	Ongoing
Examining Academic Program Array, including BA/BS, course numbering, and size of programs to allow for electives and facilitate completion in 120 credits	Conversations in departments regarding BA/BS degrees is ongoing. Three programs (Political Science, History, BSAD) put revised program course numbers successfully through governance, with remaining programs slated to do so in the coming academic year. Size of programs still TBD
Gathering data on retention efficacy of FYE	Batista report due summer 2024; will dedicate September 2024 Development Day to sharing findings and making an action plan
Continue with Year Two of General Education program assessment	Held (virtual) Assessment Day on May 20 with the rubrics developed last year for the following learning outcomes: Historical Inquiry and Analysis; Literary Inquiry and Analysis, Integrative Learning, and Information Literacy.
Evaluate pre-registration and orientation for first-year students	Piloted new pre-orientation process in December 2023 and repeated new format at Summer 2024 orientation
Finalize and operationalize internationalization plan	In progress, with major accomplishment in software programming (SEVIS-to-Banner) to track international students and operationalize newly-approved OPT fee
English language support/multilingualism	Still TBD

## VIII Other Accomplishments:

*List accomplishments not already captured above.*

### Recruitment

- Finalized numerous articulation agreements to facilitate the seamless transfer of students to Fitchburg State, including:
  - Husson University (PharmD)
  - Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School (A&P)
  - Bunker Hill CC (Engineering Technology)
  - Bristol CC (Engineering Technology, Computer Information Systems, Game Development)
  - Springfield Technical CC (Engineering Technology)
  - Nashoba Valley Technical High School Design and Visual Communication Program (Communications Media)
  - Middlesex Community College (Associate Degree in Visual Design/Communications Media and Digital Media Innovation)
  - Revised agreement with The Washington Center to streamline transfer of TWC credits for FSU students

### Retention

- Fully launched Embedded Tutoring Program in ten Health/Natural Sciences and Business/Technology Courses.
- Implemented Meta Advising and Mentoring Program for the health professions
- Increased number of Academic Integrity Initiatives, including regular library workshops for international students, online tutorials embedded in FYE courses, and professional development sessions for faculty

- Increased the number of faculty participating in and converting their course materials to Open Educational Resources and Open Pedagogy
- Successfully conducted Falcons Helping Falcons and other Individualized communication campaigns for non-registered students

### Assessment

- Received full seven-year reaccreditation by the Association for Advancing Quality in Education Preparation (AAQEP) self-study for all initial licensure programs in the School of Education
- Completed a self-study and site visit by the external review team from CASCE (National Strength and Conditioning Association in Spring 2024
- Completed third five-year assessment of the General Education program for Learning Outcomes in Quantitative Reasoning (QR), Procedural and Logical Thinking (PLT), and Integrative Learning (NECHE commitment)
- Concluded Program Reviews with Action Plans for five departmental programs.

### Curricular Innovation

- Received unanimous BOT approval for two new interdisciplinary degree programs in Creative Arts Enterprise, with concentrations in Music, Theater, and Visual Art and Creative Arts Therapies, with concentrations in Music, Drama and Visual Art
- Developed and successfully passed through governance innovative interdisciplinary minor in Sustainability Studies that re-packages existing courses to align campus expertise with workforce development.
- Promoted campus dialogue about generative AI and Chat GPT through Development Day, the CTL and its Summer Institute

### Expanding/Enhancing External Partnerships

- Expanded the number of industry/agency partnerships for student internships and other high-impact practices. Select partnerships include
  - Bristol-Meyer Squibb
  - Charles River Lab
  - AbbVie
  - Health Alliance
  - Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School
  - North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra

### Building a Sense of Community within Academic Affairs

- Instituted regular meetings of and presented at the Academic Affairs Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees
- Strengthened internal Academic Affairs processes and accountability regarding sources of institutional funding, including faculty development (Special Projects Grants), Alternate Professional Responsibilities (APRs) and stipends.

## IX Action Plan 2024-2025:

Planned Initiatives for 2023-24	Associated Strat. Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # (ex: 3.2)	Indicate if DEI
Leverage Library, CTL and other resources to support pedagogical innovation and foster critical AI literacy	1.4, 4.7	
Continue efforts to examine academic program array.	4.3, 4.5, 5.2, 6.2	
Continue work on NECHE projections (size of majors, BA/BS, course numbering, and application of assessment practices across all programs, including those in SGOCE).	4.5	
Finalize Institutional Learning Priorities by better integrating graduate programs.	5.2	

Continue reviewing/auditing academic policies and procedures, including grade appeals, with an eye to DEIB, consistency, and best practices.	2.1	X
Advance development of new Academic Integrity policy.	2.2	
Implement new billing process in SGOCE, in partnership with Financial Services.	6.1	
Continue to measure the efficacy of interventions and initiatives related to student success to prioritize resources.	2.1	
Finalize internationalization plan.	1.3, 1.4	
Create, staff, and launch the campus Reading Clinic.	1.4	
Socialize and act on recommendations generated in grant-funded Batista Consulting project regarding campus student success efforts, FYE, organizational culture, and advising.	2.1	
Expand creation and use of OER in the classroom.	1.7	
In partnership with the Fitchburg Public Schools, begin accepting students into our MAICEI program in the fall of 2024.	2.4, 4.4, 5.1	X
Continue momentum in identifying grants/funding sources to support faculty/librarian research and creative practice; building internal structures and processes to support the administration of academic grants within Academic Affairs and in collaboration with A&F.	6.1	
Continue review of committees and make recommendations for potential changes.	4.2	
Make full transition to BlackBoard Ultra.	2.2	
Identify a funding source and write an RFP to procure curriculum and potentially new catalog software.	2.2	
Develop University guidelines for decision-making and governance structure to support campus/community volunteer organizations such as ALFA and CIC to ensure positive sustainability for the future.	4.5	

*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 24-25 academic year that you did not already capture above.*

In addition to the goals of advancing our strategic and academic plans, we continue to work strategically to address a number of long-term, high-priority/high-impact issues, including the NECHE projection to ensure adequate room for electives for students (reduce the overall size of certain majors), better integration of the Day school with the School of Graduate, Online, and Continuing Education, academic integrity (including but not limited to the impact of generative AI), the question of instructional modality.

2.) *Anything else not captured in this report that you would like to share.*