



# Fitchburg State University

## Board of Trustees Meeting

### Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees Meeting

Published on November 7, 2023 at 2:03 PM EST

---

#### Date and Time

Tuesday November 14, 2023 at 8:15 AM EST

#### Location

Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

---

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 8:15 a.m.

The meeting will take place in Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

---

#### Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
<b>I. Opening Items</b>			<b>8:15 AM</b>
Opening Items			
<b>A.</b> Record Attendance and Guests			1 m
<b>B.</b> Call the Meeting to Order		Deborah Phillips	1 m
<b>C.</b> Public Comments			3 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
<b>D.</b> Approve Minutes from the October 17, 2023 meeting - VOTE (15-23/24)	Approve Minutes		1 m
<b>II. Sabbatical Requests</b>			<b>8:21 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Act on President's recommendation for faculty sabbatical requests - VOTE (16-23/24)	Vote		5 m
<b>III. Academic Affairs Committee- Jennifer Flanagan, Committee Chair, will provide the report.</b>			<b>8:26 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> New Academic Program: Creative Arts Enterprise - VOTE (17-23/24)	Vote		5 m
<b>B.</b> New Academic Program: Expressive Arts Therapies - VOTE (18-23/24)	Vote		5 m
<b>IV. Budget, Finance and Facilities Committee - Karen Spinelli, Committee Chair, will provide the report</b>			<b>8:36 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Presidential Search Budget - VOTE (19-23/24)	Vote		9 m
<b>V. Presidential Search Firms</b>			<b>8:45 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Witt/Kieffer			20 m
<b>B.</b> Discussion			5 m
<b>C.</b> Spelman Johnson			20 m
<b>D.</b> Discussion			5 m
<b>E.</b> Academic Search			20 m
<b>F.</b> Discussion			5 m
<b>G.</b> Diversified Search Group			20 m
<b>H.</b> Discussion			5 m
<b>I.</b> Isaacson Miller			20 m
<b>J.</b> Discussion			5 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
<b>K.</b> Break			15 m
<b>L.</b> Discussion and VOTE (20-23/24)	Vote		20 m
<b>VI. Notifications</b>			<b>11:25 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Personnel Actions (N03-23/24)	FYI		1 m
<b>VII. Student Trustee Report</b>			<b>11:26 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Allison Turner will provide the Student Trustee report.	FYI		5 m
<b>VIII. Chair's Report</b>			<b>11:31 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Debbie Phillips will provide the Chair's report.	FYI		5 m
<b>IX. President's Report</b>			<b>11:36 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Enrollment Update			5 m
<b>B.</b> Commencement Ceremony	FYI		5 m
<b>C.</b> News Articles	FYI		1 m
<b>X. Closing Items</b>			<b>11:47 AM</b>
<b>A.</b> Adjourn Meeting	Vote		1 m

## Coversheet

### Approve Minutes from the October 17, 2023 meeting - VOTE (15-23/24)

**Section:** I. Opening Items  
**Item:** D. Approve Minutes from the October 17, 2023 meeting - VOTE (15-23/24)  
**Purpose:** Approve Minutes  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Minutes for Board of Trustees Meeting on October 17, 2023  
VOTE Minutes.pdf

DRAFT



# Fitchburg State University

## Minutes

### Board of Trustees Meeting

Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees Meeting

---

#### Date and Time

Tuesday October 17, 2023 at 10:00 AM

#### Location

Presidents' Hall, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

---

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees on Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting will take place in Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

---

#### Trustees Present

A. Turner, C. Stimpson, D. Phillips, D. Tiernan, E. Gregoire (remote), J. Flanagan (remote), K. Spinelli, L. Barrieau, M. Fiorentino, Jr.

#### Trustees Absent

S. King-Goodwin

#### Guests Present

A. Tourigny, C. Estrella, F. Barricelli, G. Doiron, G. Doiron, G. Peterson, J. Bourgeois, J. Hanselman, J. Johnston, J. Murdoch, J. Wolfman, L. Moulton, L. Bayless, L. Lee, L. Pizzimenti, M. McKenzie, P. Marshall, P. McCafferty, P. Snouffer, P. Weizer, R. Diakite, R. Lapidus, R. Toomey, S. Dodd, S. Levine, Y. Malcolm

## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance and Guests

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Phillips called a meeting of the board of trustees of Fitchburg State University to order on Tuesday Oct 17, 2023 at 10:02 AM.

### C. Public Comments

There were none.

### D. Approve Minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting - VOTE (06-23/24)

D. Tiernan made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 09-12-23.

E. Gregoire seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

J. Flanagan	Aye
S. King-Goodwin	Absent
D. Tiernan	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
C. Stimpson	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
A. Turner	Aye

## II. Budget, Finance & Facilities Report

### A. Presentation by the auditors

D. Phillips reported that the Budget, Finance and Facilities Committee voted to accept the FY2023 audit.

The auditors from Bollus Lynch were introduced:

Jim Johnston, Partner

Laura Pizzimenti, Partner

J. Johnston reported the high points of the audits and the conclusion is that all three audits are being presented with a clean unmodified opinion. Over the years, the university has received clean audits which he stated reflects positively on the institution. He reported on a new pronouncement on subscription-based technology agreements, GASB

96, which is very similar to the last year's leasing licenses, which was completed. There will also be a requirement for supplementary information related to pensions. There is still a component of federal funds reporting and a financial aid report that are not yet complete, but the audit firm does not anticipate any problems. The statement of net position, statement of changes in net position and statement of cash flows were discussed. The footnotes and disclosures were presented. There is nothing new in the footnotes and disclosures.

He next talked about the Foundation and Supporting Organization audits. The revenue has increased as the result of a bequest and donations, along with significant grant increases. He discussed the Foundation and Supporting Organization footnotes and disclosures. All is similar information and has been presented in the past.

A discussion ensued.

E. Gregoire commented that the debt portfolio is taking on expenses, and with the reduction of cash and state programs, the debt, even if it's not growing, creates pressure and eliminates an opportunity to focus on other things that may be important. The Board needs to pay attention to the continuation of using reserves to fill in the budget gap.

D. Phillips asked what the fiscal health is of the institution. J. Johnston responded that with these combined financials, it is very difficult to see what is happening with all the rules. He stated that if you look at day-to-day operations, there is \$60 million in current assets and plenty of reserves to cover what is coming with anticipated expenses. He stated that finances are relatively healthy and the institution is moving toward the performance it was experiencing in 2019 and 2020. He could not specifically say that the institution is financially healthy, but it appears that the institution is in a good place.

M. Fiorentino noted that returning back to 2019/2020 finances, with the continued declining enrollment, and the impact on the reserves, we are not returning, but we are making progress.

## **B. FY2023 Audit - VOTE (7-23/24)**

D. Tiernan made a motion to accept the FY2023 audit.

C. Stimpson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

### **Roll Call**

J. Flanagan	Aye
S. King-Goodwin	Absent
L. Barrieau	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Abstain
D. Tiernan	Aye
K. Spinelli	Absent

### **Roll Call**

C. Stimpson Aye

D. Phillips Aye

E. Gregoire Aye

A. Turner Aye

The President thanked the auditors for their work and he also thanked the university finance team and acknowledged that the exercise represents a stressful time for them. D. Phillips assumed that the auditors received cooperation from the finance team. J. Johnston responded that there were no disagreements, the team was cooperative and he had no concerns regarding financial performance. He did state that there is a big learning curve and anticipates next year things will go a lot smoother.

J. Bry thanked the finance team and introduced them by name:

Yvonne Malcolm, Comptroller

Patricia Snouffer, Accountant III

Lisa Moulton, Assistant Comptroller

Joseph Bourgeois, Accountant V

Gene Peterson, Accountant

Lucy Lee, Accountant

## **III. Budget Update**

### **A. Jay Bry will provide the Budget Update**

J. Bry discussed the budget summary in detail. He noted several changes since the last presentation. The process of collective bargaining is ongoing in regards to funding the negotiated raises. The Board of Higher Education was going to approve performance funding but their meeting was cancelled. He discussed the fair share money. He anticipates our budget shortfall at \$1.3 million.

There was a discussion regarding the anticipated decline in students around 2026 and the impact on employment.

E. Gregoire asked outside of the personnel adjustment savings and hiring freeze, what other plans are in place to reduce or help with the shortfall. J. Bry responded that in FY2025 we are looking at ways that we can take other operational cuts. He said we have a good amount of reserves, but in 2025 and 2026 we will need to make some hard decisions.

E. Gregoire suggested starting the process sooner rather than later, and as a Board, what are the next steps and how ideas are being developed and what is the process when the Board has to make these decisions. He suggested the need for more robust conversations with the task forces already in place.



There was a discussion.

#### **IV. Student Life Committee Update**

##### **A. Sheila King Goodwin will provide an update.**

Dr. Laura Bayless, Vice President for Student Affairs, provided the Student Life report in the absence of Trustee Goodwin. The presentation at the committee meeting focused on the student residential life survey via Skyfactor, a reputable company that other institutions utilize. At the meeting, they talked about the “good, the bad and the ugly.” Overall, the students feel safe, and reflect a positive sense of community. They had concerns with the cleanliness of the residence halls and the food quality in the dining hall. She indicated that we need to work on customer service and be more visible. The status of activity in the work order-process needs to be more clearly communicated. The dissatisfaction with the dining hall came out clearly in the survey. The university continues to collect data and gather more information with commuter students regarding the dining hall and is putting together more clearly defined financials involving a possible renovation of the dining hall.

#### **V. Academic Planning Update**

##### **A. Pat Marshall will provide an update**

P. Marshall thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide an update regarding the Academic Plan. She provided a PowerPoint that she discussed in detail (attached). The established priorities for the year have been started. She discussed the short, medium and long-term goals for the next few years. She reported on the makeup of the Provost’s Council. They are as follows:

Franca Barricelli, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs  
Becky Copper-Glenz, Dean, School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education  
Barbara Cormier, Registrar  
Jennifer Hanselman, Dean of Health and Natural Sciences  
Jacalyn Kremer, Dean, Library  
Sara Levine, Dean of Arts and Sciences  
Pamela McCafferty, Associate Vice President, Institutional Research and Planning  
Nancy Murray, Dean, Center for Excellence in Education  
Jason Smith, Assistant Dean, Academic Affairs

P. Marshall stated she went on a listening tour during her first year. She took the feedback she learned and used it to work on a variety of initiatives. She discussed the various priorities. She recognized the members of the Leading for Change team that she is a member of:

Laura Bayless, Vice President, Student Affairs

Pamela McCafferty, Associate Vice President, Institutional Research and Planning  
Jessica Murdoch, Vice President, Vice President, Human Resources and Payroll  
Services

P. Marshall next discussed the three-year faculty hiring plan that was put together after meeting with the Department Chairs. Every request needs to be weighed carefully and we need to be cautious on how the decisions are made. She talked about faculty specializations and the diversity that is needed when hiring faculty and that includes tenure track, adjunct, and one-year temps. One of the questions added to the hiring plan were the department goals. She discussed the faculty positions that are requested from the Chairs, then reviewed by the Deans, the Provost then reviews and discusses with the President. Then they are discussed and approved at the Vice President level. She talked about how one-year temps provide flexibility. She discussed trends in enrollment. We need to be mindful on how we reduce our faculty numbers. We need to look at both the day school and the School of Graduate Online and Continuing Education and the sustainability as an institution.

There was a discussion on the replacing and hiring of faculty.

P. Marshall next informed the Board that the Dean of Education is stepping down at the end of the academic year, and the police academy director has resigned. We are hoping for an interim police academy director to be appointed soon until a thorough search can be conducted. The M.S. in Construction Management has been officially approved. In November, at the Academic Affairs Committee meeting, there will be two new programs presented for consideration, Creative Arts Enterprise and Expressive Arts Enterprise.

There was a discussion on one-years temps and adjunct faculty.

The President commented that the Nov. 7 committee meeting has a robust agenda. If there are additional topics to discuss, please let him know so that if information needs to be gathered there is ample time to do so. He noted that also applies for the main Board meetings as well.

## **VI. Strategic Planning Update**

### **A. Pam McCafferty will provide the Strategic Planning Update**

P. McCafferty provided the strategic plan update. She circulated brochures with the main content which is also posted on the website. The university plan covers the 2020-2025 academic years. She noted that Chair Phillips represented the Trustees on the committee. The plan was approved by the Board of Higher Education. The plan has goals which drives the strategic plan. The campus measures progress by the metrics that are specified in the back of the document and tracked annually. We capture a great deal of

information in our annual reporting process. The activities in the annual plans are linked to the strategic plan and future plans need to be reported back. There is an electronic system to collect data that allows people to go into the system and record updates. This is also used for our NECHE self-study projections. The system will send reminders and alerts to keep us on track. She noted that next year, we go back to another 5-year new strategic planning process. The assessment webpage has all the reports and our accomplishments related to the strategic plan.

## **VII. Notifications**

### **A. Personnel Actions (N02-23/24)**

The personnel actions were submitted for informational purposes.

## **VIII. Student Trustee Report**

### **A. Allison Turner will provide the Student Trustee report.**

A. Turner provided the student trustee report. She talked about the recent sexual assault reported in the library and the other recent off-campus assault. She expressed concerns that students do not feel safe on campus. She did meet with the Chief and understands there was limited information that could be shared. Increased police visibly has been noted on campus. She talked about the student vigil that took place the following week after the assault. The Student Government Association will be putting together a safety committee.

The President responded that he did not want to minimize the situation but this incident was an anomaly. The Clery Report demonstrates that this campus has historically been safe with relatively little crime of all types. He stated that we all need to be vigilant when it comes to safety and noted the challenges of a public campus. He talked about the student forums he held on campus regarding safety and that he is more than willing to talk about additional ideas to enhance safety. He concluded that police practices need to remain confidential during investigations.

There was a discussion.

## **IX. Chair's Report**

### **A. Debbie Phillips will provide the Chair's report.**

D. Phillips reminded the Board that President Lapidus received the 2023 Distinguished Citizen Award at a dinner on September 28. She noted that past Board chairs had attended and thanked the Fitchburg State staff that was also present. It was a great night she said. She reminded the Board to submit their availability for the trustee retreat in

June. The date will be selected by the next Board meeting. Please send in any topics that you would like to be addressed.

## **X. President's Report**

### **A. Enrollment Management Update**

The President reported that he would get the final results on fall enrollment to the Board. It was an interesting year, students that are enrolled accepted later than usual. He sensed that students have turned the corner on COVID and that there is an increased sense of normalcy on campus. This year, in his opinion, students are operating as they had prior to COVID. We have started our new season of recruiting.

### **B. Open House update**

The President discussed the first Open House held last Saturday. It was a nice day and the good weather might have worked against us in regards to attendance. There were also at least two other state universities that held their Open House events on the same day. There will be another Open House later in the month (10/28). Faculty and staff were active participants and parents were particularly interested in student support services (Disability Services and Mental Health Services.) The admissions staff are out on the road for travel season with 450 visits scheduled. He next talked about the changes in the FAFSA filing procedures which will cause a delay in the admissions process. Normally, we would be having students starting the process in October, now it will most likely be pushed out to January or February.

### **C. Homecoming**

The President talked about Homecoming that will be held on November 3-5 with a variety of activities that includes a carnival and casino night. There will be some alumni events including Gold Key that will be held earlier this fall due to the lateness of homecoming and the need for many to migrate to Florida for the winter.

### **D. News Articles**

The news articles were presented for informational purposes.

## **XI. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
D. Tiernan

---

### **Documents used during the meeting**

- VOTE Minutes.pdf
- Attachment C FSU No Material Weakness Letter 2023 Draft.pdf
- Attachment F FSU Foundation No Material Weakness Letter 2023 Draft.pdf
- Attachment B FSU Governance Letter - Final 2023 Draft.pdf
- Attachment J FSU Executive Summary 2023.pdf
- Attachment E FSU Foundation Governance Letter - Final 2023 Draft.pdf
- Attachment L Executive Summary Foundation Supporting Org June 2023.pdf
- Attachment I FSU Supporting Org No Material Weakness Letter 2023 Draft.pdf
- Attachment K Executive Summary Foundation 2023.pdf
- Attachment H FSU Supporting Org Governance Letter - Final 2023 Draft.pdf
- Attachment G FSU Foundation Supporting Org Draft 10.13.23.pdf
- Attachment D Fitchburg State Foundation Draft.pdf
- Attachment A Fitchburg State University 2023 - DRAFT.pdf
- FSU FY 2023 Board Presentation 2 (1).pptx
- VOTE FY2023 Audit 10-17-23.pdf
- FY24 BOT Budget Summary - FY24 Board Summary (1).pdf
- BOT Academic Affairs Update Oct 2023.pptx
- Report 10172023 Notifications.pdf
- Oct 2023 News Clips.pdf

**Fitchburg State University  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

TO: Board of Trustees	DATE: November 14, 2023
FROM: The President	REQUEST NUMBER: 15-23/24
SUBJECT: October 17, 2023 Board Meeting minutes	

It is requested that the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees vote to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2023 Board Meeting.

## Coversheet

### Act on President's recommendation for faculty sabbatical requests - VOTE (16-23/24)

**Section:** II. Sabbatical Requests  
**Item:** A. Act on President's recommendation for faculty sabbatical requests -  
VOTE (16-23/24)  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** VOTE Sabbaticals 2023.pdf  
Memo to Board sabbatical recommendations 24-25.pdf  
Sabbatical brief write ups.pdf

Fitchburg State University  
**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

TO: <b>Board of Trustees</b>	DATE: November 14, 2023
FROM: The President	REQUEST NUMBER: 16-23/24
SUBJECT: Sabbatical Requests	

It is requested that the Board of Trustees of Fitchburg State University grant the following faculty sabbatical leaves for the academic year 2024-2025.

**Fall Semester 2024 —09/01/24-01/13/25**

Eric Williams (*pre-approved deferral*)  
Samuel Tobin  
Brady Chen  
Robert Shapiro  
Nirajan Mani  
Timothy Hilliard

Biology/Chemistry  
Communications Media  
Computer Science  
Education  
Engineering Technology  
Exercise and Sports Science

**Spring Semester 2025 —01/14/25-05/31/25**

Megan Krell  
John Ludlam  
Kay Kim  
Kelly Morgan  
Elyse Clark  
Eric Budd  
Hong Yu  
Steve Edwards  
Michael Hoberman  
Wafa Unus  
Karen Keenan  
Jonathan Harvey  
Andrea Olmstead  
Yasser Derwiche Djazaerly  
Karina Bautista  
Amy McGlothlin  
Sara Wright

Behavioral Sciences  
Biology/Chemistry  
Business Administration  
Communications Media  
Earth, Geographic, and Public Health Sciences  
Economics, History, and Political Science  
Engineering Technology  
English Studies  
English Studies  
English Studies  
Exercise and Sports Science  
Humanities  
Humanities  
Humanities  
Humanities  
Humanities  
Mathematics

**Full Year—09/01/24-05/31/25**

N/A





160 Pearl Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420-2697

Tel 978.665.3101 ▪ Fax 978.665.3699

rlapidus@fitchburgstate.edu

www.fitchburgstate.edu

**Richard S. Lapidus, Ph.D.**

PRESIDENT

**MEMO**

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Richard S. Lapidus, President

RE: Sabbatical Leave Requests AY2024-2025

DATE: November 14, 2023

In accordance with the agreement between the Board of Higher Education and the Massachusetts State College Association, I am recommending approval of sabbatical leaves for the 2024-2025 academic year. Such leaves are granted on the basis of academic quality of the proposal, as well as other criteria. Prior to my review, requests were initially reviewed by department chairs and Dr. Pat Marshall, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Fall Semester 2024 —09/01/24-01/13/25**

Eric Williams (*pre-approved deferral*)  
 Samuel Tobin  
 Brady Chen  
 Robert Shapiro  
 Nirajan Mani  
 Timothy Hilliard

Biology/Chemistry  
 Communications Media  
 Computer Science  
 Education  
 Engineering Technology  
 Exercise and Sports Science

**Spring Semester 2025—01/14/25-05/31/25**

Megan Krell  
 John Ludlam  
 Kay Kim  
 Kelly Morgan  
 Elyse Clark  
 Eric Budd  
 Hong Yu  
 Steve Edwards  
 Michael Hoberman  
 Wafa Unus  
 Karen Keenan  
 Jonathan Harvey  
 Andrea Olmstead  
 Yasser Derwiche Djazaerly  
 Karina Bautista  
 Amy McGlothlin  
 Sara Wright

Behavioral Sciences  
 Biology/Chemistry  
 Business Administration  
 Communications Media  
 Earth, Geographic, and Public Health Sciences  
 Economics, History, and Political Science  
 Engineering Technology  
 English Studies  
 English Studies  
 English Studies  
 Exercise and Sports Science  
 Humanities  
 Humanities  
 Humanities  
 Humanities  
 Humanities  
 Mathematics

**Full Year—09/01/24-05/31/25**

N/A

Please find a brief description of each proposal below:

### Fall 2024

#### Eric Williams

#### Biology/Chemistry

Pre-approved Deferral

#### Sam Tobin

#### Communications Media

Dr. Tobin's sabbatical is a plan for a study of tabletop miniature wargame culture and practices. It will use ethnographic online methods combined with textual analysis to develop a critical understanding of this culture to put it into a larger context by addressing issues of militarism, simulation, craft, and commodities. If this sabbatical is approved, he would spend the semester developing a new scholarly book project. The book would focus primarily on the UK-based Games Workshop's games (*Warhammer* and related properties) as they are the market leader. Despite this popularity, these games and analog games in general remain understudied. This book would be the first of its kind. Dr. Tobin's proposed program of study would be evenly divided between research, analysis, and writing. Research would take the form of a discourse analysis drawn from online player and hobbyist communities and his output would take the form of a book prospectus, literature review, and several chapters of a new manuscript. Dr. Tobin's hope is that by the end of his sabbatical, he is in a good position to secure a new book contract.

#### Brady Chen

#### Computer Science

Dr. Chen plans to work on several projects in MS CS program: create online course materials for CSC 8025 Computer and Network Security; and create a Cybersecurity Concentration for MS CS program. The concentration will include the following courses: CSC 8025 Computer and Networking Security; Ethical Hacking (new course proposal will be submitted in Fall 2023); Digital Forensic (new course proposal will be submitted in Fall 2024); Cyber Security Management (new course proposal will be submitted in Fall 2024). Dr. Chen will submit the following new course proposals for MS CS Program: Digital Forensic and Cyber Security Management.

#### Robert Shapiro

#### Education

Dr. Shapiro will develop a comprehensive Open Education Resource (OER) video library and training aid to allow students looking to become Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) to acquire the requisite knowledge and fluency to be able to sit for and pass the 5th Edition Task List BCBA exam offered by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). By offering these materials in an OER format, more of our students will be able to access them, and gain the benefit of this exam preparation. This will improve the average student's career trajectory. It will also likely improve our university pass rates, which will improve the already-solid reputation of our ABA programs. Finally, because students outside of Fitchburg State will also be able to access these materials, it will help establish Fitchburg State as a national leader in exam preparation, as well as in equity of access to learning materials.

#### Nirajan Mani

#### Engineering Technology

In the fall of 2024, Dr. Mani plans to attend guest lectures at various universities in Nepal, India, and Germany. Research collaboration with colleagues in Nepal on projects related to "Resilient Infrastructure and Urban Planning" and "smart city." Dr. Mani plans to establish connections with multiple universities in Nepal, India, and Germany, and promote our graduate and undergraduate programs, including M.S. in Construction Management program.

#### Timothy Hilliard

#### Exercise and Sports Science

The purpose of Dr. Hilliard's sabbatical research is threefold: 1) to assess body composition across the lifespan in Massachusetts and other states; 2) to compare the body composition measurements of two simultaneous methods (Body Mass Index & Body Fat Percentage); and 3) to compare self-reported Body Mass Index with actual measured Body Mass Index. There are several direct benefits to the university in undertaking this research. As the primary instructor for the "Introduction to Research in Exercise Science" class, it is important for Dr. Hilliard to stay abreast of current research content and techniques via direct involvement. This includes the entire research process from start to finish, as he intends eventually to submit the data for publication and enlist students via research assistantships with subsequent follow-up research.

**SPRING 2025****Megan Krell****Behavioral Sciences**

Dr. Krell serves as the fieldwork coordinator for the undergraduate Human Services Program and graduate Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Programs. Currently, logging of internship hours by students is done by hand or using a simple spreadsheet. This can negatively impact data integrity, accountability, and transparency among the student, internship site, and university. The Human Services Program and Counseling Programs have expressed interest in evaluating online fieldwork documentation management systems to mitigate these concerns. Therefore, Dr. Krell proposes a one-semester sabbatical project to prepare and present a recommendation of software solutions for the Human Services Program and Counseling Programs. To arrive at this recommendation, she will: define program, licensure, and accreditation requirements that need to be met by internship hour-logging software; conduct focus groups to assess student and supervisor fieldwork documentation barriers, needs, and desires; identify potential internship tracking management systems based on the results of this assessment; conduct interviews with current online internship tracking management system users; evaluate internship tracking management system options based on available features, ability to address identified requirements, ease of implementation, user feedback, and costs; and create a workplan for implementation.

**John Ludlam****Biology/Chemistry**

Widespread application of winter road salt has led to elevated salinity levels in many urban freshwaters. However, little is known about how salinization (increasing salinity) affects freshwater stream health, especially on the microbial community that dominates stream ecosystem functioning. Dr. Ludlam proposes to experimentally manipulate salinity levels in recirculating stream mesocosm chambers to determine the effect of salinization on two components of microbial stream metabolism, primary productivity and respiration. Experiments will be conducted in both urban and rural streams to see if stream metabolism responds differently between habitats exposed to salinization and habitats not experiencing salinization. This project will contribute to scientific understanding of influences of salinization on critically important stream ecosystem functions like energy flow and nutrient cycling.

**Kay Kim****Business Administration**

Dr. Kim's plan for his sabbatical will start with the research title: "A Research of Global Supply Chain Management" (Draft). This research will aim to enable global supply chain companies (MNCs) interested in global logistics and transportation, generally "Fortune 500 Global companies," but lacking the experience, to make more-informed decisions related to global transportation channel outsourcing. This research will contribute to help Fitchburg State community, including scholars and students, to understand transportation and logistics approaches further enhancing curriculum development and providing benefits to the Business students who are interested in the area of international Supply Chain Management course development and the best business practices applications.

**Kelly Morgan****Communications Media**

Professor Morgan will engage in detailed research, pre-production interviews, and editing of undiscovered original reel-to-reel tape recordings that he secured of the Acting Technique of Mikhail Aleksandrovich Chekhov, known as Michael Chekhov—famed Russian-American actor, director, author, theatre practitioner and teacher—and nephew of the renowned playwright Anton Chekhov and a student of Konstantin Stanislavski, known as the Father of Modern Acting referred to as "The Method." Dr. Morgan will conduct research at the National Michael Chekov Association in Fort Worth, TX, The Chekov Studio International in Los Angeles, and the Leddy Library Special Collections at the University of Windsor in Windsor, Ontario, to research the official archives for specifics that will inform the development of a series of educational/training recordings carefully edited from these originals, supported by interviews with current-established union artists who advocate this technique for eventual production and publication.

**Elyse Clark****Earth, Geographic, and Public Health Sciences**

During Dr. Clark's leave, she will develop new laboratory activities for the new course *Soils and the Environment*, which will be designed as high-impact practice lab exercises that provide opportunities for students to gain field- and lab-based experience that will make them more marketable for careers in the environmental field. Secondly, Dr. Clark will use this leave time to write a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. This manuscript will be the result of three projects completed by FSU undergraduates related to the impacts of road salt applications on water, soil, aquatic organisms, and plants. This manuscript will enhance the reputation of the university and may provide opportunities for collaborations with other universities and/or opportunities for obtaining external grants to continue the research.

**Eric Budd****Economics, History, and Political Science**

A sabbatical in Spring 2025 would enable Dr. Budd to accomplish a number of tasks that will greatly benefit the university. First, a sabbatical will provide Dr. Budd with the time to finalize his current manuscript and get it published. Second, he will be able to develop an OER textbook that can be used at the university and elsewhere for courses in Peace Studies. If possible, he'd also like to incorporate some of the experiential learning activities he uses in both Dilemmas of Peace and War and Intro to Peace Studies into the textbook, so that other educators, or whoever inherits those classes after he retires, can use them with their students. An OER is a natural fit with our Strategic Plan's commitment to educational justice, so this textbook would help Fitchburg State further that commitment. Finally, a Harrod Lecture as part of our mission to promote intellectual discourse on campus and throughout the community.

**Hong Yu****Engineering Technology**

During this leave time, Dr. Yu will develop the lectures with laboratory activities for the new course Robotic & Automation, which will be designed as high-impact practice lab exercises that provide opportunities for students to gain lab-based experience that will make them more marketable for careers in the industry field. Secondly, Dr. Yu will use this leave time to write a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal or IEEE Xplore. FSU undergraduates will complete this manuscript as co-authors and help their career paths. This manuscript will enhance the reputation of the university and may provide opportunities for collaborations with other universities and/or opportunities for obtaining external funds to continue the research. Lastly, Dr. Yu will use this leave time to write a chapter of textbook for publication. This chapter will focus on the vector analysis and fundamentals of Electromagnetic field theory, which is a vector field, distributed in three-dimensional space.

**Steven Edwards****English Studies**

Dr. Edwards plans on using sabbatical leave to work on his next book, a memoir-in-essays built around his experiences of nature, fatherhood, and neurodivergence. These essays push the boundaries of creative nonfiction by blending the modes of memoir, personal and lyrical essays, and literary and art criticism. They search for and draw forward encounters--with images and scenes. Dr. Edward's creative process is quite simple: it involves wide reading across his discipline, note taking, personal reflection, and hours of sitting, thinking, and writing. Dr. Edward's aim is to complete three to five 20-page essays that will serve as the basis for a book proposal he can then send to literary agents and/or publishers.

**Michael Hoberman****English Studies**

Dr. Hoberman wishes to conduct on-site research in the vicinity of North America's oldest Jewish congregations, each of which was formed during the colonial era. While the stories of these communities have been thoroughly documented, casual visitors and history enthusiasts who travel to these cities have comparatively little information to go on if they wish to follow in the literal footsteps of America's earliest Jewish settlers. Dr. Hoberman's project is intended as a first step toward developing walking tours. The work he intends to complete during the sabbatical period will include visiting and photographing the synagogues and their environs, as well as other sites of colonial era Jewish interest, including cemeteries, houses (and house sites), and public spaces where Jews conducted business and socialized, both with one another and the wider community. Dr. Hoberman plans to view sites in New York, Newport, Montreal, Savannah, and Charleston.

**Wafa Unus****English Studies**

Dr. Unus's sabbatical will be used for a book manuscript focusing on her research on college newspapers and how they can and are filling news gaps for local newspapers, as well as the evolution of collaborative journalism projects to alleviate local news deserts. Research on the history of minority-run local newspapers and their impact on securing the histories of people often left out of mainstream narratives to be submitted for publication in *American Journalism*, the journal of the American Journalism Historians Association.

**Karen Keenan****Exercise and Sports Science**

Dr. Keenan will analyze the data from three research projects (data collection through December 2024), prepare abstracts for submission to regional and national conferences, and begin writing manuscripts for submission for publication in peer-reviewed journals. Across all three studies, Dr. Keenan will have data from more than 250 participants. In Study #3, she also will have data at multiple timepoints (pre-season, in-season, post-season). The sabbatical will provide her the time to analyze and explore these large datasets, and to determine which results potentially have the greatest impact in the exercise and sports science field so that she can prioritize dissemination of the findings. All three studies have Fitchburg State students involved in the research, and two (Study #1, Study #2) also have students and faculty from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Keenan anticipates that the students will want to continue to be involved with the research projects for data

analyses and dissemination. This would be a great experience for them and help build their resumes as they begin their careers in fields related to exercise and sports science.

### **Jonathan Harvey**

### **Humanities**

Dr. Harvey will work on the creation of performing sheet music editions of eight pieces of music by 16th century Venetian composer Adrian Willaert for distribution via global public domain sheet music repositories. Five of these pieces are within the genre of “civic motets,” which are works written specifically for important military or political functions. The central output of this project will be to post these performing editions on two highly-trafficked public domain sheet music repositories. The repositories are high-impact sources. Dr. Harvey’s potential secondary sabbatical project would be to expand and reshape his Harrod Lecture on the civic motets into a publishable article. This article will by necessity include extensive musical examples, which will be drawn largely from the performance edition, which are his primary sabbatical project.

### **Andrea Olmstead**

### **Humanities**

Dr. Olmstead’s sabbatical leave will give her the opportunity to focus her efforts fully and uninterrupted on her art and craft as a ceramic sculptor. Dr. Olmstead plans to create three to four sculptures that embody the knowledge she gained from her travels to Italy. Dr. Olmstead wants to incorporate some of the dynamic elements such as movement, expression, and emotion, while experimenting with different clay bodies. She plans to apply to several art shows and/or competitions with the new work. Dr. Olmstead also hopes to continue the education and inspiration she receives from the master sculptors of the past, by visiting more important museums in the Eastern US, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., where she will study Auguste Rodin, Jean Antoine Houdon, and Bernini.

### **Yasser Derwiche Djazaerly**

### **Humanities**

Dr. Derwiche Djazaerly’s sabbatical will be used to continue a book project with the title *Art and Populism: On American and European Gothic*. This work uses the literature about populism that has been appearing since 2016 to reinterpret the nineteenth-century literary and artistic movement known as the Gothic Revival. Dr. Derwiche Djazaerly argues that populism originated in the late Enlightenment and was manifested in the literary and artistic movement of the Gothic Revival. This revival led to a reevaluation of artistic standards and brought about an opposition aesthetics, a system that opposed not only classicism, but also the culture of the elite. After examining Romanticism in light of the current research on populism, the book situates Grant Wood’s *American Gothic* within the modern European discourse on Gothic architecture.

### **Karina Bautista**

### **Humanities**

The purpose of Dr. Bautista’s sabbatical request is to continue her research on the politics and legacy of colonialism and the approaches of decolonial theories. Dr. Bautista is currently examining the contributions and limitations of Critical Race Theory on Latino/a/x Studies and culture by analyzing the discourse and practices of colonial legacy on Latinidad, especially on Latino hybrid identity and education. During Dr. Bautista’s sabbatical, her objectives are to: conduct a comprehensive search for new reference materials; read and thoroughly analyze the collected literature; create an annotated bibliography to organize sources for a book proposal on Latino hybrid culture and its effect on the humanities; participate in seminars and other informative events; and prepare a paper to present at a local or international conference. Research, reading, and analysis are the core activities of Dr. Bautista’s work as a literary investigator and humanist; they require time and attention to evaluate thoroughly the sources that informed and transformed her field of study. The research and the reading process in her sabbatical will give Dr. Bautista the time and opportunity to access the latest information and debates in her area. The knowledge acquired will also help best support and guide the Latino/a/x Major curriculum we are creating at Fitchburg State University through the Academic Innovation Fund (AIF) grant she and two of her colleagues received in the Spring of 2023.

### **Amy McGlothlin**

### **Humanities**

Dr. McGlothlin will use her sabbatical for travel for guest-conducting opportunities throughout the United States; scheduling of chamber performances, which increases her own profile as a conductor as well as the profile of Fitchburg State amongst secondary school and higher education music directors and works to improve the school’s recruiting efforts; recordings, and masterclasses. Recording projects serve as a permanent record of these efforts and will improve her skills as a recording engineer. She will also be seeking additional certification opportunities in music technology software applications. Staying up to date in current technologies is important to be able to offer our students coursework that takes advantage of the current industry standard software. It is vitally important for artists in music to remain active and serve as artist mentors for our students through example.

**Sarah Wright**

**Mathematics**

Dr. Wright will update the textbook and related course materials for MATH-1100—Mathematics and Society. The text needs predictable updating to reflect changes in societal issues and new data sets. Additionally, Dr. Wright will make some edits to reflect the needs of the students taking the course: more user-friendly formatting, clearer review of foundational math topics, options for practice problems with hints and solutions, updates to content to reflect the programs students are enrolled in, and full rewrites of some content to focus on students' interests and needs.

**FULL 2024/2025**

N/A

## Coversheet

### New Academic Program: Creative Arts Enterprise - VOTE (17-23/24)

**Section:** III. Academic Affairs Committee- Jennifer Flanagan, Committee Chair, will provide the report.  
**Item:** A. New Academic Program: Creative Arts Enterprise - VOTE (17-23/24)  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** VOTE New Program Creative Arts Enterprise.pdf  
Creative Arts Enterprise Phase I LOI (1).pdf

**Fitchburg State University  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

TO: Board of Trustees	DATE: November 14, 2023
FROM: The President	REQUEST NUMBER:  17-23/24
SUBJECT: New Program: Creative Arts Enterprise	

It is requested that the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees vote to approve the Creative Arts Enterprise new program.



**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise**PHASE I: LETTER OF INTENT TEMPLATE  
FOR BOARD VOTE ON APPROVAL PROCESS****Proposed Degree Title and Intent and Mission of the Program (200 words):**

The Creative Arts Enterprise (CAE) program equips individuals to be active and engaged artist entrepreneurs and practitioners across a variety of contexts. The courses in this Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) major allow students to develop a personalized and flexible set of skills, preparing them to meet the diverse demands of arts organizations and audiences in a shifting global economy.

The CAE program has a dual focus: students expand their knowledge of administration, publicity, and entrepreneurship through coursework in business, professional writing, and marketing communications while simultaneously honing their artistic skills as musicians, visual artists, or theatrical artists. This twofold approach prepares students for careers as active artists who are equipped to meet the administrative, promotional, and business needs of various types of arts organizations (theaters, orchestras, choirs, galleries, museums, studios, churches, etc.).

**Proposed CIP Code:**

50.9999: Visual and Performing Arts, Other

**Chief Academic Officer (CAO) Name and Title:**

Patricia A. Marshall, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**CAO Phone Number:**

978.665.3653

**CAO Email:**

pmarsh5@fitchburgstate.edu

**Has the Chief Academic Officer reviewed this LOI?**

Yes

**Date LOI was approved by governing authority:****A. Alignment with Massachusetts Goals for Public Higher Education****1. How does the program address institutional gaps in opportunity and achievement? How does the program align with campus goals?**

The CAE program addresses one of Fitchburg State's primary institutional goals: progress toward education justice. Examination of fields of study within the humanities reveal continued underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students in the visual and performing arts as compared to their White peers (Libassi, C.J. (2018). *The Neglected College Race Gap: Racial Disparities Among College Completers*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/neglected-college-race-gap-racial-disparities-among-college-completers>). These lower numbers may be due, at least in part, to concerns by students and their families about how an arts degree will be used post-graduation. Higher education requires a significant investment of time and funds, and the question of how a student's program of study will position them for success is a legitimate one. The goal of the CAE program is to teach flexible and marketable skills to all of our students, including those students who have previously been marginalized, to allow them to pursue clearly recognizable and remunerative careers in the arts.

This program also aims to fill an even more direct institutional gap: at present, no art or music majors exist on our campus, which leaves us at a disadvantage when potential students interested in the arts are

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

exploring their options. (Currently, only minors or a concentration in theater exist.) The proposed program will create a meaningful option in the arts disciplines while also distinguishing that option through an innovative and interdisciplinary dual focus on arts training and administrative/entrepreneurial skills.

In 2016 Fitchburg State purchased a long-closed theater on Fitchburg's Main Street and has begun a major project to create a performing arts center at the site. The next phase of the project will be the construction of a new black box theater adjacent to the main building, designed to serve as both a teaching facility and a performance space. The project's final phase will be the renovation of the historic theater itself into a large modern performance venue. This major institutional/community initiative presents an incredible opportunity for CAE students to engage in professional learning, to work on actual performances and arts projects in the community, and to experience arts entrepreneurship from the inside. This opportunity will build upon our existing strong connection with the Fitchburg Art Museum (the *de facto* art museum of Fitchburg State University), where students already apply their learning through internships and coursework.

The CAE program is a particularly attractive way for Fitchburg State to address these goals and gaps, because it takes existing coursework and resources and packages them within an intentionally collaborative and cross-disciplinary framework. With minimal financial investment from the university, students will be able to draw on the expertise and experience of faculty from across the institution in a program designed to help them translate their love of the arts into a clear professional path.

## **2. What program or department supports and practices are in place to ensure that students persist and complete the certifications and degrees offered by the program?**

All students in the major will be required to meet regularly with a faculty advisor from within their concentration. Advising sessions will focus on career development and selection of appropriate elective options within the major's curriculum, building schedules with College Scheduler. EAB Navigate will provide advisors with predicted risk factors for their advisees and data related to attendance, midterm grades, and non-registration status that can also be disaggregated by race and ethnicity. The departmental curriculum committee will regularly analyze such data to help identify and eliminate potential barriers to student retention and graduation for specific identity groups. This platform can also be used to create alerts that facilitate timely interventions for students who may need assistance. Finally, physical and digital resources will be developed to enumerate additional student success assets and offices available to students. These resources will be shared during advising, and with the university's Career Services and Advising Center. The Career Services and Advising Center will also be an important resource for our students, in connection with the career competency mapping work done by majors across the university as part of a Davis Educational Foundation grant.

All incoming first-year students have access to peer mentors as part of the First Year Experience seminar at FSU. These peer mentors attend FYE classes with new students and offer academic success workshops. All CAE students who enter as first-year students will participate in this FYE experience. Transfer students will receive individual advising from the transfer office and the CAE coordinator to ensure smooth transition into the program and awareness of campus support services. We will also collaborate with our campus TRiO support services, which offer targeted assistance to first-generation students, students with disabilities, low-income students, and others who show academic need. Services include pre-advising, academic counseling, and multiple peer mentoring and tutoring opportunities, in addition to those offered by the university's Academic Coaching and Tutoring Center. Last year our TRiO office boasted the extraordinary retention rate of 96%.

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

**3. Please describe relevant alliances and partnerships with PK-12, other institutions of higher education, and the employer community. If you have or plan to convene an advisory group for this proposed program, please explain. Describe how information from an advisory will be used to develop and refine the program.**

Faculty teaching in this program have extensive and longstanding relationships with area school districts, primarily through arts-based collaborative performances and projects, hosted both at the PK-12 schools and on the Fitchburg State campus. These collaborations have included student artists and performers from high schools in the nearby communities of Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner, Harvard, Templeton, Princeton, and Winchendon.

Regular faculty collaborations also exist with community cultural organizations, including the North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra, Brattleboro (VT) Music Center, Pioneer Valley Symphony, Fitchburg Art Museum, Forge Theater Lab, and Christ Church Fitchburg, as well as extensive existing partnerships between area businesses and faculty within the program. For instance, faculty in Communications Media incorporate local companies as clients in project-based courses such as *Communicating Project Design* and *Client Project Production* (required for all CAE students), and journalism courses in English Studies (elective options for CAE students) often collaborate with the *Sentinel & Enterprise*, our local newspaper. These existing partnerships and collaborations can be leveraged immediately to create experiential learning opportunities for CAE students. For example, the program's required introductory course, *Arts in Community*, is specifically designed to connect students with creative artists, government officials, and community members working with the arts in a variety of capacities, examining how the arts are intertwined with community life in our immediate region. The capstone options will draw heavily on these partnerships, allowing students to engage in professional learning through internships or create original research or creative projects that culminate with public presentations.

Finally, faculty will be encouraged to explore additional relationships through the FSU Crocker Center for Civic Engagement, a center whose mission is to foster partnerships between the university and local organizations through the creation of civic-learning and community-based research and internships. Faculty will continue to connect with local artists and performers, community arts organizations, and other institutions using the arts as a means of community advancement, economic revitalization, creative placemaking, and education. An Advisory Board will be formed for the major, consisting of representatives from local stakeholders (including NewVue Communities, the Fitchburg Cultural Alliance, the Fitchburg Cultural Council, and the Fitchburg Art Museum, among others).

Faculty in the program already participate regularly in the Future Falcon Academy program run through the School of Education, wherein local middle school students are brought to campus for a week of activities and simulated coursework. As the program grows, we intend to partner with PK-12 schools through the Early College Pathways program, offering students the opportunity to earn 12 college credits at Fitchburg State while still in high school. We also intend to work with local community colleges, especially those with strong arts programs, to establish transfer agreements to facilitate students' transitions to our program, especially given the intentional flexibility and transfer-friendliness of the major's design.

**4. If the proposed program is designed for students to enter an employment area of demonstrated need in the regional and/or statewide labor market, provide evidence including references to workforce development plans showing market need and employer engagement. If it is not directly labor market aligned, identify the career options related to the proposed program and explain how students will be made aware of them.**

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

The creative economy, a sector positioned at the crossroads of business, arts, culture, and technology, is a thriving area of the economy at the local, national, and international levels, leading to demand for artists and arts administrators of exactly the kind trained by this major – professionally trained arts practitioners and administrators with theaters, galleries, museums, orchestras, and other arts institutions. At the global level, in its *Creative Economy Outlook Report 2022*, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development identified the creative economy as “one of the world’s fastest-growing sectors” (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2022). *Creative Economy Outlook 2022*.

<https://unctad.org/publication/creative-economy-outlook-2022>). According to the National Endowment of the Arts, in 2017 ~10% of U.S. adults engaged in visual arts learning, and ~14% engaged in music learning (from a 2022 market analysis by Webb Management Services, *Fitchburg Theater Block Market Update: Assessment & Opportunities: October 31st, 2022*). In addition, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis noted that arts and culture economic activity nationwide increased by 13.7% in 2021, faster than real GDP, which increased by 5.9%. The same report also noted that arts and cultural employment nationwide increased 5% in 2021, including increases in 49 states (Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2023). *Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, U.S. and States*. [https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323\\_0.pdf](https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323_0.pdf)).

Statewide data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis finds that “arts and cultural production accounts for \$23,749,350,000 and 4.1% of the Massachusetts economy, contributing 125,091 jobs” (National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. (2022). *Creative Economy State Profiles 2022*. [https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa\\_research/cesp-2022](https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa_research/cesp-2022)). Even more locally, the North Central Massachusetts/Montachusett regional economy is home to a strong and growing arts sector. A 2019 ESRI Business Analysis Online study found that the region is home to 149 businesses in the “Arts, Entertainment and Recreation” sector that employ 1,237 individuals. Just a year later, the same sector in the same region supported 155 businesses with 1,290 employees. In addition, from 2000–2017 the “Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services” sector was cited as the fastest growing in the region in terms of workforce percentage, surging by 37.3% in that period (Montachusett Regional Planning Commission. (2019). *Montachusett Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: July 2019-July 2024*. [https://www.mrpc.org/sites/g/files/vyhli3491/f/uploads/2019\\_ceds.pdf](https://www.mrpc.org/sites/g/files/vyhli3491/f/uploads/2019_ceds.pdf)).

The aforementioned 2022 market analysis by Webb Management Services also contains an ESRI Market Index Analysis finding that “residents within a 30-mile radius of Fitchburg are much more likely to support and attend all arts disciplines than the national average,” a measurement that includes concerts, museums, galleries, and live theater. The report summary noted that “the market for the arts in and around Fitchburg is strong and broad-based in terms of age, income, and race and ethnicity.”

The North Central Massachusetts Regional Economic Development Plan from 2021 indicates that wage growth in the “Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation” sector was 14% since 2010, and 19% since 2014. In addition, this report divides North Central Massachusetts into six sub-regions and found that the “Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation” sector was the highest percentage growth sector in five of those six sub-regions (North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce and North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation. (2021). *One North Central: A Roadmap for Regional Prosperity: June 2021*. <https://www.northcentralmass.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/One-North-Central-A-Roadmap-for-Regional-Prosperity-Final.pdf>).

Into the future, the prospects for the arts sector in the region are even stronger. The aforementioned 2021 Regional Economic Development Plan specifically highlights being “recognized as a top destination for recreation and outdoor activity, family entertainment, and tourism” as a central goal. The plan singles out four industry sectors to be focused on over the next decade, and, as part of the above goal, “tourism

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

and small business”—including arts and culture offerings—is one of the four privileged sectors. Recent campus work identifying career competencies as part of a Davis Educational Foundation grant will promote student awareness of these trends and career options.

**5. Are there existing programs at other institutions (public and independent) in your region that offer a similar degree? If so, compare and contrast them with the proposed program.**

There are a limited number of undergraduate arts entrepreneurship- and management-related programs in existence in Massachusetts, but none with the options and focus of our proposed CAE program. Our program is the only one in the region that offers students the option of specializing in music, visual art, or theater, combined with multidisciplinary and integrated coursework in business, management, and professional communication, preparing flexible arts professionals of the future.

With regard to differentiation of curriculum, some programs restrict the arts component, focusing solely on music (Music Business major at UMass Lowell, Music Management concentration within the Music major at Westfield State, majors at Berklee College of Music in Music Industry Leadership and Innovation and in Music Business/Management), or in the case of Simmons College, only music and visual art. Other programs focus solely on preparing students as management professionals within a creative industry, providing minimal artistic training (Creative Arts Management concentration within the Business and Management major at Wheaton College, Business of Creative Enterprises major at Emerson College, Arts Management major at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts).

Our proposed CAE major would be the only broad-based interdisciplinary program in the region with specialization options across the disciplines of music, visual arts, and theater, allowing students to benefit from interdisciplinary cross-pollination of exactly the kind that is demanded by the creative economy.

**6. Has the proposed program been planned to include any significant digital, experiential, competency-based or other innovative approaches? Please explain and provide examples.**

The CAE program is explicitly designed in alignment with a nascent and innovative arts education approach, which incorporates both arts training and entrepreneurial skills meant to help students translate that training into a professional path. The program’s concentrations in music, visual art, and theater are all inherently experiential: students engage with the arts not just through analysis, but primarily through embodied expressive practice involving public audiences. This experiential focus is also highlighted through student engagement with the many educational, non-profit, and corporate partnerships outlined in A.3 above, community partnerships that will also be incorporated into the internship capstone option.

Students will be encouraged to think of their work in the context of the wider community beginning with the very first requirement in the major, the innovative, newly-developed introductory course titled *Arts in Community*. The main focus of the course is an investigation into how the arts are intertwined with economic and civic life in our region. Students will hear from creative artists, government officials, business leaders, and community members who are working with the arts in many different capacities, including arts in urban planning and creative placemaking, arts in social justice and community advancement, arts in healing and care settings, and arts in community education. Beyond preparing for a professional path, this community focus will prepare our students for a life as engaged citizens and active participants in civic life.

**B. Alignment with Campus Strategic Plan and Mission**

**1. Describe why the proposed program is a priority, and how it supports the campus’s approved strategic plan, in the context of the institution’s mission.**

The CAE major resonates strongly with Fitchburg State’s mission to “blend liberal arts and sciences and professional programs within a small college environment.” The blending in this case is direct, as this

**Institution: Fitchburg State University****Proposed Degree: Creative Arts Enterprise**

program allows students to bring the professional skills of entrepreneurship, administration, marketing, and management into conversation with the visual and performing arts. In addition, our mission to “provide leadership and support for the economic, environmental, social, and cultural needs of North Central Massachusetts and the Commonwealth” finds a new expression in this program, preparing students to fill key cultural roles within the community.

Fitchburg State’s vision to be “nationally recognized for its excellence in teaching and learning in current and emergent fields” is also manifested in this program, which is at the forefront of arts training in higher education. Degree programs in the fine and performing arts have only recently begun to pivot to emphasize not only training in artistic practice, but also how to professionally leverage that training. The first related professional organization, the Society for Arts Entrepreneurship Education, was founded in 2014, and the only two peer-reviewed academic journals dedicated to arts entrepreneurship (*Artivate* and *Journal of Arts Entrepreneurship Education*) were established even more recently. In 2017, the National Association of Schools of Music added standards for “Preparation for the Professions” to their handbook for certification of music programs in higher education, a standard that includes leadership and entrepreneurial training. CAE clearly fits the definition of an emergent field.

In the FSU Strategic Plan 2020-25, Goal 3 is to “[b]e an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region.” The city of Fitchburg is actively working to leverage the arts as a tool for downtown revitalization, both social and economic, and recently received 2-year funding through MassDevelopment’s Transformative Development Initiative Creative Cities program, which supports arts and culture partnerships in TDI districts. At Fitchburg State we have highlighted our institutional role as “stewards of place” by assigning a high value to the relevance of our academic work for the real lives of the people in our surrounding communities, two of which (Fitchburg and Leominster) are designated by the state legislature as “Gateway Cities.” The CAE major will enhance our institutional ties to the city, with mutual benefit to our students and arts initiatives in Fitchburg. The city’s focus on the arts as a means of renewal involves a growing number of arts projects and organizations, which create opportunities for our students and program graduates alike. Examples of projects that represent this growing focus include:

- The Fitchburg Arts Stewards Training program run by NewVue Communities, which has resulted in an active and growing Arts Stewards community group.
- The BF Brown/Fitchburg Arts Community project, currently underway, will create a large number of live-work artist studio spaces across the street from the Fitchburg Art Museum.
- The Community Mural Institute, which has installed three large-scale murals in Fitchburg’s downtown neighborhood, developed in collaboration with community groups to honor their work and history.
- The City of Fitchburg’s recent NEA-funded Main Street Arts Project, commissioning public art pieces for four key intersections downtown.

The university’s recent receipt of a \$500,000 Infrastructure and Capacity Building Grant by the National Endowment of the Humanities, to support the black box theater construction project and associated academic programs in the arts, will meaningfully foster this point of connection between the university and the city. With anticipated groundbreaking on the black box theater in 2024, there will be particularly compelling opportunities for student applied experiences, as well as full-time positions for our graduates, in both the administrative and artistic elements of the space.

Finally, in the FSU Strategic Plan 2020-25, Goal 1 is to “[f]orge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning.” Two specific strategies for achieving that goal are to “[p]romote greater interdisciplinary teaching and develop innovative combinations across academic departments,” and to “[l]everage existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs.” The CAE major,

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

as well as a new Expressive Arts Therapies major being developed simultaneously, both reach across disciplinary boundaries (connecting the arts to business administration, professional writing and communications, psychology, and human services) and combine existing offerings to create innovative new programs in areas of demonstrable need for the community.

**2. List the overall goals and learning objectives of the program and describe the strategy for achieving each goal.**

See Form B *LOI Program Goals and Objectives* table, particularly noting the program’s emphasis on educational justice through recruiting diverse students, and the emphasis on continuous reflection and improvement through creating annual summary reports of program growth and impact.

**C. Alignment with Operational and Financial Objectives of the Institution**

**1. Provide enrollment projections for the first five years of the program using the Program Enrollment form (Form C), Describe below any anticipated impact that the program may have on enrollment in other programs.**

There is the potential for impact by the CAE major on the B.S. Communications Media concentrations in Theater and Technical Theater, but Communications Media and Theater faculty have been crucial collaborative partners in the development of this program and have no concerns regarding negative impacts on enrollments on their concentrations. Rather, they anticipate mutual benefit.

Courses from across the university (Humanities Department, Communications Media Department, Business Administration Department, English Studies Department) are included in this major. All departments have approved the program and report no concerns about the impact of CAE student enrollments on their courses or majors.

**2. Describe the resources that the program will require (additional faculty and/or staff, space and equipment, on-line infrastructure, startup and maintenance of the program). Please include a narrative or financial statement outlining the anticipated net impact of the program on the overall financial resources of the institution. Include five years of future projections of revenue and expense using the LOI Budget form (Form D).**

The CAE program is designed to take advantage of existing courses, resources and expertise at the university and, as such, the net impact of the program on the overall financial resources of the institution will be minimal. The modest costs related to program launch and coordination are outlined in the Form D *LOI Program Budget* table. Specific costs include a modest marketing budget to launch the program, a program coordinator stipend (shifting to a course release once the program is established), and \$1000 additional annual funding to the home department budget to support miscellaneous project costs.

**3. Complete the LOI Curriculum Outline form (Form A) with course titles and credits.**

**4. Complete the LOI Program Goals and Objective form (Form B).**

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Form A</b>	<b>LOI Curriculum Outline</b>
<b>Form B</b>	<b>LOI Goals and Objectives</b>
<b>Form C</b>	<b>LOI Enrollment Projections</b>
<b>Form D</b>	<b>LOI Budget</b>



**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise**Form A: LOI Undergraduate Program Curriculum Outline**

<i>Required (Core) Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 5)</i>		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
IDIS 1XXX	Arts in Community	[3]*
BSAD 2100	Introduction to Entrepreneurship	[3]
COMM 3304	Communicating Project Design	[3]
COMM 3470	Client Project Production	[3]
THEA 3002	Artist as Business	[3]
<b>Capstone options (choose one of the two below)</b>		
IDIS 3004	Interdisciplinary Studies Research Seminar	[3]*
IDIS 4004	Capstone Seminar	[3]*
<b>OR</b>		
IDIS 4XXX	Internship	[6]*
	<i>Sub Total Required Credits</i>	[21]
* Fulfills General Education requirements as well as major requirements		
<i>Elective Courses (Total # courses required = 16-24, depending on arts concentration)</i>		
<b>Communications elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
COMM 3460	Public Relations	[3]
COMM 3810	Introduction to Graphic Design	[3]
COMM 4010	Information Design	[3]
COMM 4212	Marketing Communication	[3]
<b>Professional Writing elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ENGL 2030	News Reporting and Writing	[3]
ENGL 3830	College Newspaper Production	[3]
ENGL 3840	Freelance Writing for Magazine	[3]
ENGL/COMM 3860	Writing for Organizations	[3]
ENGL/COMM 3870	Feature and Magazine Writing	[3]
COMM 3430	Writing for Advertising	[3]
<b>Business elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
BSAD 2030	Principles of Management	[3]
BSAD 2040	Fundamentals of Marketing	[3]
BSAD 3310	Consumer Behavior	[3]
BSAD 3320	Market Research	[3]
BSAD 3500	Business Law I	[3]
BSAD 3800	Digital Commerce	[3]

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

BSAD 4600	Writing the Business Plan	[3]
<b>Combined elective (choose 3 credits) (a course selected for another category above cannot be counted again here)</b>		
BSAD 1700	Intro to Computer Information Systems for Business	[3]
BSAD 2030	Principles of Management	[3]
BSAD 2040	Fundamentals of Marketing	[3]
BSAD 3310	Consumer Behavior	[3]
BSAD 3320	Market Research	[3]
BSAD 3500	Business Law I	[3]
BSAD 3800	Digital Commerce	[3]
BSAD 4300	Sales Management	[3]
BSAD 4330	International Marketing	[3]
BSAD 4340	Developing Marketing Strategies	[3]
BSAD 4600	Writing the Business Plan	[3]
COMM 2005	Introduction to Social Media	[3]
COMM 3025	Social Media Advertising and Public Relations	[3]
COMM 3430	Writing for Advertising	[3]
COMM 3460	Public Relations	[3]
COMM 3810	Introduction to Graphic Design	[3]
COMM 4010	Information Design	[3]
COMM 4212	Marketing Communication	[3]
ENGL 2030	News Reporting and Writing	[3]
ENGL 3830	College Newspaper Production	[3]
ENGL 3840	Freelance Writing for Magazine	[3]
ENGL/COMM 3860	Writing for Organizations	[3]
ENGL/COMM 3870	Feature and Magazine Writing	[3]
<b>Complete one Arts Concentration (Theater, Visual Art, or Music)</b>		
<b>Theater Concentration (24 credits)</b>		
<b>Required courses (18 credits)</b>		
THEA 1700	Stage Movement	[3]
THEA 1720	Voice and Articulation	[3]
THEA 2100	Children's Theater	[3]
THEA 2700	Acting I	[3]

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

THEA 3003	Dramaturgy	[3]
THEA 3550	Page to Stage Analysis	[3]
<b>Electives (choose 6 credits)</b>		
MUSC 2320	Concert Choir	[1]
MUSC 2330	Chamber Choir	[1]
MUSC 2600	Class Voice	[1]
THEA 2730	History of the Theater I	[3]
THEA 2740	History of the Theater II	[3]
THEA 2800	Acting II	[3]
THEA 2850	Applied Acting	[3]
THEA 3010	Acting for the Camera	[3]
THEA 3035	Playwriting	[3]
THEA 3400	Advanced Stage Movement	[3]
THEA 3500	Voice II	[3]
THEA 3600	Auditioning	[3]
THEA 3700	Directing the Play	[3]
<b>Visual Art Concentration (24 credits)</b>		
<b>Required courses (6 credits)</b>		
ART 1100	Art Appreciation	[3]
ART 1400	Drawing	[3]
<b>History elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ART 2050	Public Art	[3]
ART 3000	Contemporary Art	[3]
ART 3150	Modern Art	[3]
<b>3-D elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ART 1650	Three-Dimensional Design	[3]
ART 2004	Ceramics	[3]
ART 2030	Sculpture I	[3]
<b>Painting elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ART 2102	Introductory Painting	[3]
ART 2450	Water-Based Media	[3]
<b>Intermediate / Advanced elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ART 2250	Intermediate Drawing	[3]
ART 3002	Ceramics II	[3]

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

ART 3020	Intermediate Painting	[3]
ART 3200	Advanced Open-Media Studio Art	[3]
<b>Combined electives (choose 6 credits) (a course selected for another category above cannot be counted again here)</b>		
ART 1650	Three-Dimensional Design	[3]
ART 2004	Ceramics	[3]
ART 2030	Sculpture I	[3]
ART 2102	Introductory Painting	[3]
ART 2150	The Art of Puppetry	[3]
ART 2200	Life Drawing	[3]
ART 2250	Intermediate Drawing	[3]
ART 2450	Water-Based Media	[3]
ART 3002	Ceramics II	[3]
ART 3020	Intermediate Painting	[3]
ART 3200	Advanced Open-Media Studio Art	[3]
<b>Music Concentration (24-26 credits)</b>		
<b>Required courses (9 credits)</b>		
MUSC 1000	Art of Music	[3]
MUSC 1400	Introduction to Music Technology	[3]
MUSC 1500	World Music	[3]
<b>Piano Proficiency (choose one of the two below) (0-1 credits)</b>		
MUSC 2500	Class Piano	[1]
MUSC 4800	Piano Proficiency Exam	[0]
<b>Dictation / Sight Singing Proficiency (choose one of the two below) (0-1 credits)</b>		
MUSC 1001	Ear Training	[1]
MUSC 4801	Dictation / Sight Singing Proficiency Exam	[0]
<b>Theory elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
MUSC 2200	Basic Music Theory	[3]
MUSC 2240	Harmony I	[3]
<b>History elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
MUSC 3100	Symphony	[3]
MUSC 3150	Music of the Stage	[3]
MUSC 3200	Opera	[3]
MUSC 3400	Twentieth-Century Music	[3]

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

MUSC 3450	Appreciating the American Musical	[3]
MUSC 3500	American Music	[3]
MUSC 3600	Bach to Beethoven	[3]
MUSC 3650	Romanticism to Rock	[3]
MUSC 3700	19th Century Music	[3]
MUSC 3750	Music in Film	[3]
MUSC 3800	History of Jazz	[3]
MUSC 3900	Women, Music, and Society	[3]
<b>Group lessons elective (choose 1 credit)</b>		
MUSC 2600	Class Voice	[1]
MUSC 2700	Class Guitar	[1]
<b>Individual lessons electives (choose 4 credits) (these may be repeated)</b>		
MUSC 13XX	Level 1 Private Musical Instruction	[1]
MUSC 23XX	Level 2 Private Musical Instruction	[1]
MUSC 33XX	Level 3 Private Musical Instruction	[1]
MUSC 43XX	Level 4 Private Musical Instruction	[1]
<b>Ensemble performance electives (choose 4 credits) (these may be repeated)</b>		
MUSC 2320	Concert Choir	[1]
MUSC 2330	Chamber Choir	[1]
MUSC 2400	Jazz Band	[1]
MUSC 2401	Concert Band	[1]
MUSC 2402	Community Orchestra	[1]
	<b><i>Sub Total Elective Credits</i></b>	[36-38]
<b><i>Distribution of General Education Requirements</i></b>		<b># of Gen Ed Credits</b>
Arts and Humanities, including Literature and Foreign Languages		[24]*
Mathematics and the Natural and Physical Sciences		[12]
Social Sciences		[6]
Integrative Learning		[9]*
<b><i>Sub Total General Education Credits</i></b>		[51]*
* As indicated above, a total of 9 credits of these General Education requirements may be met by the major: 3cr of Fine Arts Expression and Analysis and 6 credits of Advancing and Applying Liberal Arts and Science Learning/Integrative High Impact Practice.		
<b><i>Curriculum Summary</i></b>		
Total number of courses required for the degree	18-27 courses, depending on concentration and capstone	

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

Total credit hours required for degree	120 credit hours
<p><b><i>Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:</i></b>                  As a B.A. degree, students are also required to demonstrate intermediate foreign language proficiency (potentially requiring up to 12 credits, although these fulfill General Education requirements).</p>	

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

**Form B: LOI Goals and Objectives**

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
Perform a program review of the CAE major after 7 years (AY32) and every 7 years thereafter	We will use existing comprehensive program review criteria to complete a self-study of the program, followed by an external review. This program review process requires a specific action plan. In order to support DEI-related analysis, data on student success will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.	Work with Dean of School of Arts and Sciences to add CAE to the program review rotation.  Work with Director of Assessment to adapt existing assessment methods.	Initial program review in AY32, and every 7 years thereafter
Perform an annual summary report of CAE program growth and impact	The department will work with University administrative offices to create an annual internal summary report of program growth and impact, including student and faculty surveys, faculty and community partner interviews, and enrollment data, starting in 2026 (second year of program's existence).	Work with Dean of School of Arts and Sciences, Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning, and Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management to develop an information gathering procedure and timeline.	Initial summary report in AY26, and annually thereafter
Identify, attract, retain, and graduate a diverse student body	Retention rate: 75% Six-year graduation rate: 60% BIPOC enrollment: 40%	Work with Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management to target outreach and recruitment efforts, including admissions visits to underserved areas with high percentages of minoritized students, targeted communications campaigns aimed at prospective students identified as underserved who express interest in the arts, connecting directly with school counselors in underserved areas, and working with counselors at community-based organizations such as	AY32, which will allow rates based on three years of graduating students.

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

		<p>OneGoal, GEAR UP, and others.</p> <p>Work with the Director of Student Diversity, Equity, and Belonging Programs to build support systems into the major and the advising process in order to better retain and support students.</p>	
<p>Become a destination program that draws students from across the region</p>	<p>Reach and maintain 40 active majors</p>	<p>Work with Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management to create and reinforce transfer pathways for community college students, taking advantage of the major’s inherently flexible and transfer-friendly design, focusing particularly on community colleges with strong arts programs.</p> <p>Work with Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management to develop marketing and outreach plans for the major that highlight the program’s value proposition in comparison to other more expensive options, and that bring attention to the internship and professional learning opportunities within the major.</p> <p>Leverage existing partnerships with area schools and arts organizations to create public showcases of the program’s outward-facing curricular performances and exhibitions.</p>	<p>AY29, based on recruiting and retaining 5-15 students per year.</p>



**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

**Form C: LOI Program Enrollment**

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
New Full-Time	5	5	10	10	15
Continuing Full-Time	0	5	10	20	25
New Part-Time	0	0	0	0	0
Continuing Part-Time	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Creative Arts Enterprise

**Form D: LOI Program Budget**

<i>One Time/ Start Up Costs</i>		<b>Annual Enrollment</b>				
	<i>Cost Categories</i>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
\$0	Full Time Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	General Administrative Costs	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000
\$0	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Facilities/Space/Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Field & Clinical Resources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$5000	Marketing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Other (stipend for coordinator)	\$1000	\$1000	\$5900*	\$5900*	\$5900*
* 3-credit APR (reassign teaching time) for coordinator assuming sufficient enrollment						
<i>One Time/Start-Up Support</i>		<i>Annual Income</i>				
	<i>Revenue Sources</i>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
\$0	Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Tuition	\$10,930	\$21,860	\$43,720	\$65,580	\$87,740
\$0	Fees	\$51,620	\$103,240	\$206,480	\$309,720	\$412,960
\$0	Departmental	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Reallocated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Other (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTALS</b>		\$62,550	\$125,100	\$250,200	\$375,300	\$500,400

## Coversheet

### New Academic Program: Expressive Arts Therapies - VOTE (18-23/24)

**Section:** III. Academic Affairs Committee- Jennifer Flanagan, Committee Chair, will provide the report.  
**Item:** B. New Academic Program: Expressive Arts Therapies - VOTE (18-23/24)  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** VOTE New Program Expressive Arts Therapies.pdf  
Proposed Degree Expressive Arts Therapies.pdf

**Fitchburg State University  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

TO: Board of Trustees	DATE: November 14, 2023
FROM: The President	REQUEST NUMBER:
SUBJECT: New Program: Expressive Arts Therapies	18-23/24

It is requested that the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees vote to approve the Expressive Arts Therapies new program.

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

**PHASE I: LETTER OF INTENT TEMPLATE  
FOR BOARD VOTE ON APPROVAL PROCESS**

**Proposed Degree Title and Intent and Mission of the Program (200 words):**

B.A. Expressive Arts Therapies with concentrations in Music, Visual Art, and Drama

The professional major in Expressive Arts Therapies (EAT) is designed for students interested in learning about expressive arts therapies and how modalities of drama, music, and visual art are utilized in working with children and adults in a variety of settings. This major combines the student's chosen arts modality with pre-professional coursework in Human Services and Psychological Science. This program prepares students for graduate study in expressive therapies as well as entry-level positions as recreational therapists, activities directors, and assistant/technician roles in education and mental health counseling.

**Proposed CIP Code:** CIP 51.3206 Arts in Medicine/Health**Chief Academic Officer (CAO) Name and Title:** Patricia Marshall, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**CAO Phone Number:** 978.665.3653**CAO Email:** [pmarsh5@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:pmarsh5@fitchburgstate.edu)**Has the Chief Academic Officer reviewed this LOI?** Yes**Date LOI was approved by governing authority:****A. Alignment with Massachusetts Goals for Public Higher Education****1. How does the program address institutional gaps in opportunity and achievement? How does the program align with campus goals?**

Fitchburg State's vision, outlined in our strategic plan, states that "Fitchburg State University will strive for education justice" by "creating a student-ready university that provides equitable access to high-quality education [and] offering all students the opportunity to apply their learning so that they are career-ready." Examination of fields of study within the humanities, however, reveals continued underrepresentation of Hispanic and Black students in the visual and performing arts as compared to their White peers (Libassi, C.J. (2018). *The Neglected College Race Gap: Racial Disparities Among College Completers*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/neglected-college-race-gap-racial-disparities-among-college-completers>). These lower numbers may be due, at least in part, to concerns by students and their families about how an arts degree will be used post-graduation. Higher education requires a significant investment of time and funds, and the question of how a student's program of study will position them for success is a legitimate one. Across institutions, students are tending increasingly to favor degree programs with clear professional paths, and this new program applies that framework to the arts. The EAT program is an interdisciplinary program that incorporates a student's choice of arts concentration with rigorous coursework in Human Services and Psychology. The curriculum provides a pathway for students to meaningful jobs in the arts and medical professions in positions such as art coaches, mental health workers, grief counselors, and recreation specialists as well preparing students for licensure programs in counseling and mental health fields. This partnership across disciplines, building upon the strength of our Human Services program (one of the only accredited Human Services programs at a public four-year institution in the Commonwealth), directly addresses regional workforce needs. Specifically, the Central Massachusetts Regional Workforce Blueprint 2018-

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

2022 identifies health occupations as the top occupational group in terms of regional employee shortages, with the Healthcare and Social Assistance Industries serving as the largest employment sector (20.3%) (Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Retrieved August 25, 2023, retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/doc/central-regional-workforce-skills-planning-initiative-regional-blueprint/download>). Graduates from the Expressive Arts Therapies program will help to fill positions in these critical areas.

A component of Fitchburg State University's vision is "creating a student-ready university that provides equitable access to high-quality education." Students entering the EAT program may do so regardless of their previous level of experience in the arts and without the need for a portfolio review or audition; there are no barriers to admission to this program. This new major will also allow for a smooth transition for students transferring from community colleges or other institutions with any number of degrees (e.g., Music, Art, Theater, Psychology, Social Work, Human Services). Even for those students transferring from more disparate degree programs, typical general education courses such as introductory music courses (e.g., MUSC 1000 Art of Music, required for music concentration), art (e.g., ART 1400 Drawing, required for visual art concentration), theater (e.g., THEA 2700 Acting I, required for the theater concentration), and Psychology (e.g., PSY 1100 Introduction to Psychological Science) would transfer into the EAT major, allowing access to this major for a broad range of students.

Finally, on our campus, at present there are no art or music majors and only a theater concentration in the Communications Media major, which makes us an outlier in the higher education landscape and leaves a significant curricular hole for our institution. Fitchburg, in the heart of the Wachusett Valley, serves as a Gateway City to the citizens of North Central Massachusetts and, as such, it is critical that our students, and the surrounding communities, have access to both programs and programming in the arts, a goal that is aligned with the University's commitment to expanding the arts in this region. In 2016, Fitchburg State purchased a long-closed theater on Fitchburg's Main Street and has begun a major project to create a performing arts center at the site. Last year the University was awarded a \$500,000 National Endowment for the Humanities award of their Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant project for the construction of a new black box theater adjacent to the main building, designed to serve as both a teaching facility and a performance space. The project's final phase will be the renovation of the historic theater itself into a large modern performance venue. These spaces will allow for greater opportunities for both instruction and performance related to students' chosen concentrations as well as increased exposure to the arts for the surrounding community.

## **2. What program or department supports and practices are in place to ensure that students persist and complete the certifications and degrees offered by the program?**

All students in the major will be assigned a faculty advisor in the Humanities department with whom they will be required to meet one-on-one at least once per semester. These advising sessions will focus on career development and helping students select and complete the course requirements that are part of the major's curriculum, drawing on data from EAB Navigate to do so. EAB Navigate provides advisors with predicted risk for their advisees and facilitates the collection of data related to attendance, midterm grades, and non-registration status that can also be disaggregated by race and ethnicity. The curriculum committee will regularly analyze such data to help identify and eliminate potential barriers to student retention and graduation. Faculty and staff can also use this platform to create alerts that facilitate quick interventions for students who may need assistance. Additionally, each department involved in the program has its own requirements for progression through their area of the curriculum, providing multiple checks and balances for determining student readiness for progression through the degree, regardless of area of concentration.

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

All incoming first-year students have access to peer mentors as part of the First Year Experience (FYE) at Fitchburg State. These peer mentors attend FYE classes with new students, are available via office hours, and offer academic success workshops. TRIO support services on our campus also offer first-generation students, students with disabilities, low-income students, and other students who show academic need services that include pre-advising, academic counseling, as well as peer mentor and tutoring opportunities, supplementing those offered by the Academic Coaching and Tutoring Center.

**3. Please describe relevant alliances and partnerships with PK-12, other institutions of higher education, and the employer community. If you have or plan to convene an advisory group for this proposed program, please explain. Describe how information from an advisory will be used to develop and refine the program.**

The admissions and recruitment offices will publicize this major to students based on their existing relationships with high school counselors in underserved areas, working with counselors at community-based organizations, and utilizing their connections with programs such as TRiO, One Goal, Bottomline, Boston University Advising Corps., Gear Up, Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, MassEd Co, and Gateway to College.

The University is also part of the Early College program established with Mount Wachusett Community College, Fitchburg High School, Leominster High School, Sizer School, and Gardner High School, which allow students to take up to 12 college credits. Through this program, students have the opportunity to explore an arts-based major at Fitchburg State before applying to college. Finally, the Young Falcons program, which brings 5<sup>th</sup>- and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students from local public schools to campus for tours and classroom experiences with our faculty, will be harnessed to recruit students looking for arts-based majors when they enter college, ideally at Fitchburg State.

Once at our institution, building on the existing structure of our Human Services program, students will gain practicable skills through experiential and hands-on learning in their courses that will culminate in a required 6-credit internship in an expressive arts field in students' final semester. Students may pursue further experiences applying their learning in the expressive arts through the Falcon Internship Program, a program through Career Services that offers students access to additional paid and un-paid internships. For internships that are unpaid, students can apply for Inclusive Pathways funding or access the newly-establish Internship Opportunity Fund for Undergraduate Students (funded by an anonymous grant), so that a student's financial situation does not stand in the way of their gaining valuable, hands-on experience and exploring their areas of interest.

An advisory board consisting of current expressive therapies practitioners and social service program supervisors from local organizations such as Making Opportunity Count and LUK, Inc., will be created within the first year of program approval to ensure that the EAT major continues to meet the needs of the expressive therapies market in Massachusetts.

**4. If the proposed program is designed for students to enter an employment area of demonstrated need in the regional and/or statewide labor market, provide evidence including references to workforce development plans showing market need and employer engagement. If it is not directly labor market aligned, identify the career options related to the proposed program and explain how students will be made aware of them.**

The attached EAB study on the proposed expressive arts therapies states: "Growing employer demand indicates a favorable market for program graduates. Employer demand growth for bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy professionals outpaced employer demand growth for all bachelor's-level professionals across February 2020 to January 2023 statewide (i.e., average 3.77% vs. 0.08% per month, respectively)." This same study also states "Employment is projected to increase faster than average in all

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

of the five top relevant occupations statewide. This indicates employment opportunities for graduates will likely increase across the next 10 years.” While the report does cite a declining student demand, it does not take into account general declines in student enrollment across higher education. Also, while the report identifies strong competition in the region, all of the programs it examines, based on their CIP codes, are at private colleges and universities. We are well-placed to offer students an affordable and quality public university option.

The Central Massachusetts Regional Workforce Blueprint identifies healthcare and social assistance as one of the top-growing occupational fields in our area. Specifically, an aging population will require increased medical care and other social services as the population moves into the post-retirement stage of life. Additionally, “there continues to be a rising need for health care workers at most levels of clinical services and at a variety of health care providers, including community health centers and patient triage clinics, long-term care facilities, and hospitals.” Overall, the fields of healthcare and social assistance present “a wide spectrum of entry-level jobs and wage-earning potential” (*The Central MA Regional Workforce Blueprint 2018-2022*. (2018, March). Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Retrieved August 25, 2023, retrieved from <https://www.mass.gov/doc/central-regional-workforce-skills-planning-initiative-regional-blueprint/download>). For students wishing to enter directly into the job market following graduation, a recent search of LinkedIn job listings in the various modalities of expressive therapies in the Boston metropolitan area reveals entry-level opportunities for graduates such as Expressive Arts Coordinator (Seven Hills Foundation), Therapeutic Mentor (Bay State Community Services), and Behavior Technician (Connections ABA of MA). Following completion of a more advanced degree, students will be prepared to move into positions such as Expressive Therapist (Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital Plymouth), Activity/Group Therapist (Fuller Hospital), and Clinical Therapist (The Artful Life Counseling Center and Studio).

Students will receive career advising and guidance throughout the EAT program. Supported by a Davis Educational Foundation Grant, most programs at Fitchburg State University have developed Career Action Plans, which help students connect their academic studies to career skills and identify additional experiences that help prepare them for entry into the workforce, and the EAT program has already begun to draft these materials as well. These materials provide students with a list of the specific career competencies they can expect to build in the program as well as providing a timeline for exploring potential career paths as a means to educate and guide students on how to prepare for their career prior to graduation.

**5. Are there existing programs at other institutions (public and independent) in your region that offer a similar degree? If so, compare and contrast them with the proposed program.**

There are currently no undergraduate expressive art therapies programs in New Hampshire, Vermont, or Maine, and the proposed EAT major at Fitchburg State would be the only program for expressive arts therapies in central Massachusetts. Additionally, most programs in the state are offered at private institutions, which may not be financially viable for all students. These private institutions also differ in their focus from our proposed program. Specifically, the program at Berklee College of Music is in music therapy only; Lesley University offers expressive art therapy (B.S.) and art therapy (B.S.); and Endicott College offers art therapy (B.F.A) and expressive arts therapy (B.S.) without a concentration. Only one other public institution offers majors related to our EAT program: art therapy prep (B.A.) and music therapy (B.M.) at Westfield State. Our program is unique, as it proposes offering our students a rigorous background in psychological science and an experiential curriculum in human services as well as competency building in their chosen arts area. The majors at the other institutions also have audition or



**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

portfolio entry requirements, and as such may not be accessible to students who have not been able to access training in their concentration area prior to attending college.

Our program provides a significant and rigorous background in human services and psychology as well as the student's chosen expressive arts concentration and is the only program that offers the choice of all three art modalities. Students in our program will have introductory classes together regardless of their chosen concentration, building a strong cohort. Our B.A. also requires a demonstration of intermediate foreign language proficiency, which will make students more marketable in human services and clinical settings. A recent feature in the American Psychological Association Monitor noted that "language barriers can limit access to quality care" and a nationwide APA survey found that "only 5.5 percent of psychologists who may be Hispanic or another race or ethnicity, said they can provide services in Spanish" (Smith, B.L. (2018). *Spanish-speaking psychologists in demand*. Monitor on Psychology: American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2018/06/spanish-speaking>). With approximately 55% of the student population in primary and secondary schools in Fitchburg identifying as Latinx students, the language requirement in the EAT program may be used as a recruitment tool for bringing students with a passion for arts and human services into the major while, at the same time, ultimately assisting our students with employment and allowing our students to better serve our community.

**6. Has the proposed program been planned to include any significant digital, experiential, competency-based or other innovative approaches? Please explain and provide examples.**

All students will complete a 6-credit internship in an expressive-therapies setting as well as engage in additional experiential learning in their coursework in Human Services. In their chosen arts field, students will not only learn about the arts, but they will explore how to engage others in the arts, participate in the creation or art, and publicly present their art. In one of their required foundational courses titled "Arts in Community," they will examine the intricate play between the arts, economic dynamics, and civic involvement in our region. They will benefit from diverse perspectives, including those of creative artists, government officials, business leaders, and engaged community members active in various facets of the arts. They will explore topics such as the role of the arts in urban planning, creative placemaking, social justice, community advancement, healing and caring environments, and community education. This course, with its emphasis on community engagement, will seek to instill a sense of civic responsibility in our students.

**B. Alignment with Campus Strategic Plan and Mission**

**1. Describe why the proposed program is a priority, and how it supports the campus' approved strategic plan, in the context of the institution's mission.**

Fitchburg State University's mission states that we are "committed to excellence in teaching and learning and blend[ing] liberal arts and sciences and professional programs within a small college environment." The proposed EAT major does exactly that in its thoughtful integration of arts education with professional skills and experiences. Additionally, the University's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan identified six main strategic goals oriented around the concept of education justice. The creation of the EAT major directly relates to these goals in the following ways:

**Goal One:** *Forge Innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility and lifelong learning.* Two specific strategies for achieving Goal 1 are to "[p]romote greater interdisciplinary teaching and develop innovative combinations across academic departments," and to "[l]everage existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs." The EAT major, as well as a new Creative Arts Enterprise major being developed

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

simultaneously, both reach across disciplinary boundaries (connecting the arts to psychology, human services, business administration, professional writing, and communication) and combine existing offerings to create innovative new programs in areas of demonstrable community need. Upon graduation, students will be prepared to work directly in expressive therapy-related areas as well as for admittance into master’s level programs.

**Goal Three:** *Be an engine of social, economic, civic and cultural development in our city and region.* The creation of an expressive arts therapies program at Fitchburg State University will allow the institution to build and expand a wide variety of cultural and economic partnerships. Our regional economic blueprint has identified healthcare and social services as an area with rising needs for workers. Our graduates will provide needed employable workers in this sector at a local level, helping to drive social and economic development.

**Goal Five:** *Assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely.* With the creation of this program at Fitchburg State, we would be the only public program in expressive arts therapies that offers concentrations in all three areas of the arts. Our ability to offer this program at a reduced cost in comparison to private institutions makes it a value proposition. Additionally, creating a program that highlights our university’s interdisciplinary strengths across several departments aligns with the University’s strategic plan of creating graduates with a broad set of skills and knowledge, increasing their opportunities for success after graduation.

**Goal Six:** *Steward physical and financial resources responsibly and navigate a path to long-term organizational sustainability.* This program is built primarily with courses already present in our curriculum, leveraging the skills of existing faculty across campus.

**2. List the overall goals and learning objectives of the program and describe the strategy for achieving each goal.**

See Form B *LOI Program Goals and Objectives* table, particularly noting the program’s emphasis on educational justice through recruiting diverse students, and the emphasis on continuous reflection and improvement through creating annual summary reports of program growth and impact.

**C. Alignment with Operational and Financial Objectives of the Institution**

**1. Provide enrollment projections for the first five years of the program using the Program Enrollment form (Form C), Describe below any anticipated impact that the program may have on enrollment in other programs.**

With the exception of a concentration in theater offered through a Communications Media major, Fitchburg State does not currently offer majors in the arts. This new program would at once create a meaningful curricular option in the arts, while also distinguishing itself through its focus on arts training and on preparation for a master’s degree in the arts therapies field. Development of this program has included the departments of Humanities (Visual Art and Music), Psychological Science, Behavioral Sciences (Human Services), and Communications Media (Theater). All programs have indicated that they can accommodate the projected increases in enrollments in their courses.

**2. Describe the resources that the program will require (additional faculty and/or staff, space and equipment, on-line infrastructure, startup and maintenance of the program). Please include a narrative or financial statement outlining the anticipated net impact of the program on the overall financial resources of the institution. Include five years of future projections of revenue and expense using the LOI Budget form (Form D).**

EAT would be a low-cost addition to our program offerings as much of the program it is built primarily from existing courses and uses existing resources. Currently we can staff the new major with

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

existing faculty but as the major grows, there may be interest in expanding the program by hiring additional full-time faculty. For the first two years, we propose compensation for a program coordinator (faculty member) of a \$1000 annual stipend. As the program expands, we envision needing a faculty program coordinator with a 3-credit course release, in order to effectively cover the coordination of course offerings across departments and advising majors in the program. The current library holdings and departmental liaisons will support the major as outlined here. As demand grows in the major, additional musical instruments, art supplies and equipment may need to be purchased

**3. Complete the LOI Curriculum Outline form (Form A) with course titles and credits.**

**4. Complete the LOI Program Goals and Objective form (Form B).**

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Form A</b>	<b>LOI Curriculum Outline</b>
<b>Form B</b>	<b>LOI Goals and Objectives</b>
<b>Form C</b>	<b>LOI Enrollment Projections</b>
<b>Form D</b>	<b>LOI Budget</b>

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

**Form A: LOI Undergraduate Program Curriculum Outline**

<b><i>Required (Core) Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 11)</i></b>		
<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
IDIS 1XXX	Arts in Community	[3]*
IDIS 2XXX	Fundamentals of Expressive Arts Therapies	[3]
PSY 1100	Introduction to Psychological Science	[3]
PSY 1200	Lifespan Development	[3]
PSY 2350	Abnormal Psychology	[3]
HMSV 1100	Introduction to Human Services	[3]
HMSV 2400	Crisis Intervention	[3]
HMSV 2500	Interviewing Techniques	[3]
HMSV 3700	Professional Issues	[3]
PSY or HMSV elective	Take one of the following: HMSV 2900 Group Work, HMSV 3410 Building Community Supports for Persons with Disabilities, HMSV 3500 Abuse and Neglect within the Family, PSY 2001 Memory, PSY 2110 Intro to Research Methods, PSY 2010 Child Development, PSY 2030 Biological Psychology, PSY 2220 Adult Development, PSY 2230 Adolescent Development, PSY 2300 Psychology of Personality, PSY 2500 Social Psychology, PSY 3020 Cultural Psychology, PSY 3200 Developmental Psychopathology, PSY 3430 Sensation and Perception, PSY 3500 Psychology of Learning, PSY 3550 Cognition	[3]
IDIS 4XXX	Internship	[6]*
<b><i>Sub Total Required Credits</i></b>		<b>[36]</b>
* Fulfills General Education requirements as well as major requirements		
<b><i>Complete one Concentration in Music, Visual Art, or Drama (24 credits)</i></b>		
<b>Music Concentration (24 credits)</b>		
<b>Required Courses (12 courses)</b>		
MUSC 1001	Ear Training	[1]
MUSC 1351	2 Semesters of Studio Applied Piano	[2]
MUSC 2240	Harmony 1	[3]
MUSC 2700	Class Guitar	[1]
MUSC 2500	Class Piano	[1]
MUSC 2XXX	Instrumental Skills	[3]
MUSC 3XXX	Conducting	[3]

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

MUSC 1000 or MUSC 1500	Art of Music or World Music	[3]
MUSC 2320 or MUSC 2330	1 Semesters of Vocal Ensembles (Concert Choir and/or Chamber Choir)	[1]
<b>Music Electives (choose 6 credits) any additional MUSC courses</b>		
<b>Visual Art Concentration (24 credits)</b>		
<b>Required courses (2 courses)</b>		
ART 1400	Drawing	[3]
ART 1650	Three-Dimensional Design	[3]
<b>History elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ART 1100	Art Appreciation	[3]
ART 2050	Public Art	[3]
ART 3000	Contemporary Art	[3]
ART 3150	Modern Art	[3]
<b>Painting elective (choose 3 credits)</b>		
ART 2102	Introductory Painting	[3]
ART 2450	Water-Based Media	[3]
<b>Art electives (choose 12 credits) Choose from the following list: (a course selected for another category above cannot be counted again here)</b>		
ART 1300	Intro to Studio Art: Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture	[3]
ART 1600	Design	[3]
ART 2004	Ceramics	[3]
ART 2030	Sculpture I	[3]
ART 2102	Introductory Painting	[3]
ART 2150	The Art of Puppetry	[3]
ART 2200	Life Drawing	[3]
ART 2250	Intermediate Drawing	[3]
ART 2450	Water-Based Media	[3]
ART 3002	Ceramics II	[3]
ART 3020	Intermediate Painting	[3]
ART 3200	Advanced Open-Media Studio Art	[3]
<b>Drama Concentration (24 credits)</b>		
<b>Required Courses (8 courses)</b>		
THEA 1700	Stage Movement	[3]
THEA 1720	Voice and Articulation	[3]

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

THEA 2100	Children’s Theater	[3]
THEA 2700	Acting I	[3]
THEA 2850	Applied Acting	[3]
THEA 3003	Dramaturgy	[3]
THEA 3400	Advanced Stage Movement	[3]
THEA 3350	Page to Stage Analysis	[3]
<b><i>Distribution of General Education Requirements</i></b>		<b># of Gen Ed Credits</b>
Arts and Humanities, including Literature and Foreign Languages		[24]*
Mathematics and the Natural and Physical Sciences		[12]
Social Sciences		[6]
Integrative Learning		[9]*
<b><i>Sub Total General Education Credits</i></b>		<b>[51]*</b>
* As indicated above, a total of 9 credits of these General Education requirements may be met by the major: 3cr of Fine Arts Expression and Analysis and 6 credits of Advancing and Applying Liberal Arts and Science Learning/Integrative High Impact Practice.		
<b><i>Curriculum Summary</i></b>		
Total number of courses required for the degree	19-25 courses, depending on concentration	
Total credit hours required for degree	120 credit hours	
<b><i>Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:</i></b> As a B.A. degree, students are also required to demonstrate intermediate foreign language proficiency (potentially requiring up to 12 credits, although these fulfill General Education requirements).		

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

**Form B: LOI Goals and Objectives**

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
Work-Ready Students	All students will complete an internship in an expressive therapies setting during their undergraduate studies	Building on existing partnerships through Behavioral Sciences and establishing new partnerships with expressive therapies services.	AY 29 The first students are scheduled to graduate from the program.
Identify, attract, retain and graduate diverse student body	Retention rate: 78%; Six-year graduation rate 62%; BIPOC enrollment 35%	Working with Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management to target outreach and recruitment efforts, including admissions visits to underserved areas with high percentages of minoritized students, targeted communications campaigns aimed at prospective students identified as underserved who express interest in the arts, connecting directly with school counselors in underserved areas, working with counselors at community-based organizations, and building on relationships with programs such as OneGoal, GEAR UP, and others. Working with the Director of Student Diversity, Equity, and Belonging Programs to build support systems into the major and the advising process in order to better retain and support students.	AY 32 Will allow three years of graduation in the program to establish retention and completion rates.
Become a destination program for central Massachusetts	Reach 40 active majors	Using established transfer pathways for community college students; Working with AVP of Enrollment Management to develop marketing and outreach plans for the major.	AY 20 Based on recruiting 5-15 students per year.



**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

**Form C: LOI Program Enrollment**

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
New Full-Time	5	5	10	10	15
Continuing Full-Time	0	5	10	20	25
New Part-Time	0	0	0	0	0
Continuing Part-Time	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>

**Institution:** Fitchburg State University

**Proposed Degree:** Expressive Arts Therapies

**Form D: LOI Program Budget**

<i>One Time/ Start Up Costs</i>		<b>Annual Enrollment</b>				
	<i>Cost Categories</i>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
\$0	Full Time Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	General Administrative Costs	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000
\$0	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Facilities/Space/Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Field & Clinical Resources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$5000	Marketing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Other (stipend for coordinator)	\$1000	\$1000	\$6250*	\$6250*	\$6250*
* 3-credit APR (reassign teaching time) for coordinator assuming sufficient enrollment						
<i>One Time/Start-Up Support</i>		<b>Annual Income</b>				
	<i>Revenue Sources</i>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
\$0	Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Tuition	\$10,930	\$21,860	\$43,720	\$65,580	\$87,740
\$0	Fees	\$51,620	\$103,240	\$206,480	\$309,720	\$412,960
\$0	Departmental	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Reallocated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$0	Other (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTALS</b>		\$62,550	\$125,100	\$250,200	\$375,300	\$500,400



# Market Pulsecheck



1



# Market Pulsecheck Overview

An evaluation of employer demand for graduates from the proposed bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy program in the statewide market, and student demand for similar programs.

Analysis Includes:

- Job Posting Trends
- Top Occupations
- Top Titles
- Top Skills
- Top Employers
- Top Industries
- Top Cities
- Education and Experience Levels
- Degree Completion Trends

This analysis considered demand:

- Statewide (i.e., Massachusetts)

## Declining Student Demand and Strong Regional Competition May Challenge Program Launch, Despite Growing Employer Demand

### *Preliminary Program Outlook*

**Growing employer demand indicates a favorable market for program graduates.** Employer demand growth for bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy professionals outpaced employer demand growth for all bachelor's-level professionals across February 2020 to January 2023 statewide (i.e., average 3.77% vs. 0.08% per month, respectively). Further, employers advertised a limited number job postings over the past year (i.e., 694 job postings). Additionally, all of the five top relevant occupations are-projected to grow faster than average across the next 10 years. These trends signal program graduates may face a limited but growing labor market.

**Declining statewide student demand and intense competition indicate an unfavorable outlook for program launch.** Between the 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 academic years, statewide relevant degree completions declined by an average 0.46% annually. Further, the top two institutions reporting the most completions-collectively held the majority of the market (i.e., 80.00%). Notably, all the profiled institutions are private indicating the market lacks a public offering. Fitchburg State University may struggle to capture student interest amidst declining student demand and strong market leaders.

### *Research Limitations*

Additional bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy programs may exist in the profiled geographic regions but are not captured in this analysis as institutions may report completions under other, less relevant CIP codes.

# Labor Market Intelligence

## Statewide Analysis of Job Postings for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

Local employer demand trends suggest a limited but growing need for bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy program graduates. Relevant employer demand grew an average 3.77% per month from February 2020 to January 2023, outpacing employer demand growth for all bachelor's-level professionals (i.e., an average 0.08% growth per month). However, employers posted a low number of relevant job postings in the last 12 months (i.e., 694). These trends suggest a growing labor market with limited employment opportunities for program graduates.

**+3.77%**

### Average Monthly Demand Growth

February 2020-January 2023, Statewide Data

- Average monthly growth of 2 job postings.
- During the same period, demand for all bachelor's-level professionals declined 0.08%.

**99 job postings**

### Average Monthly Demand

February 2020-January 2023, Statewide Data

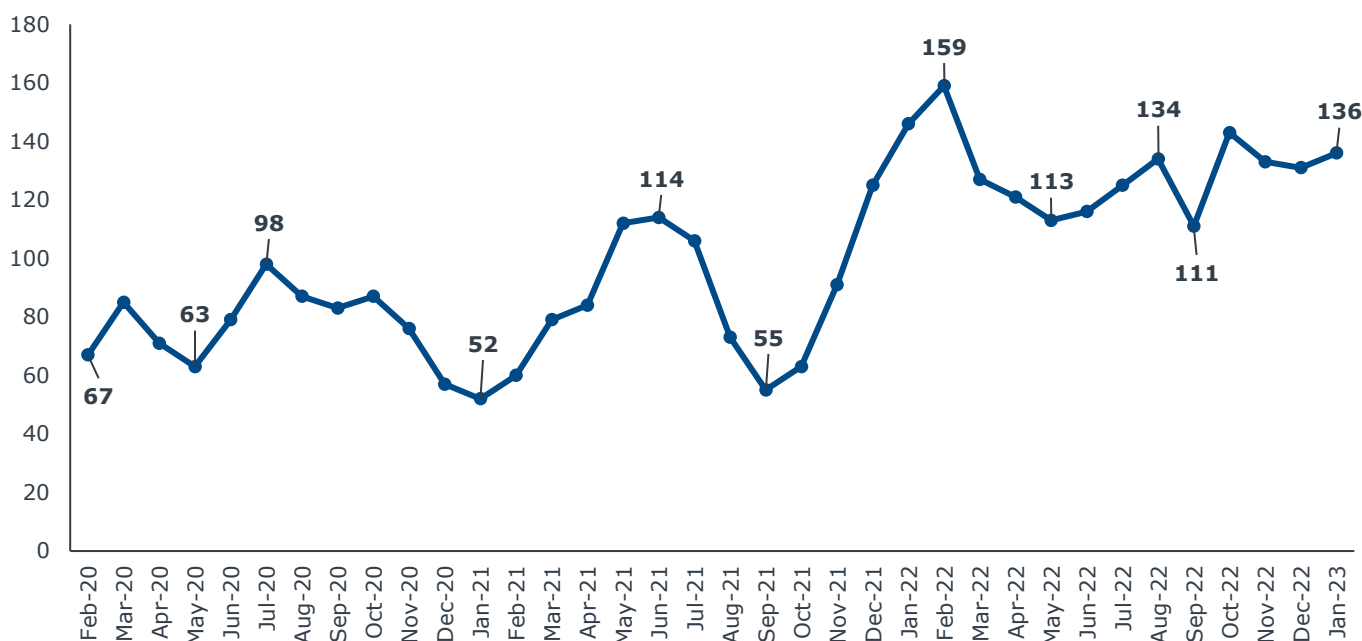
**694 job postings**

### Relevant Jobs Posted in the Past Year

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide Data

## Job Postings for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

February 2020-January 2023, Statewide Data



Source: EAB analysis. Lightcast.

## Statewide Analysis of Job Postings and Future Employment for Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

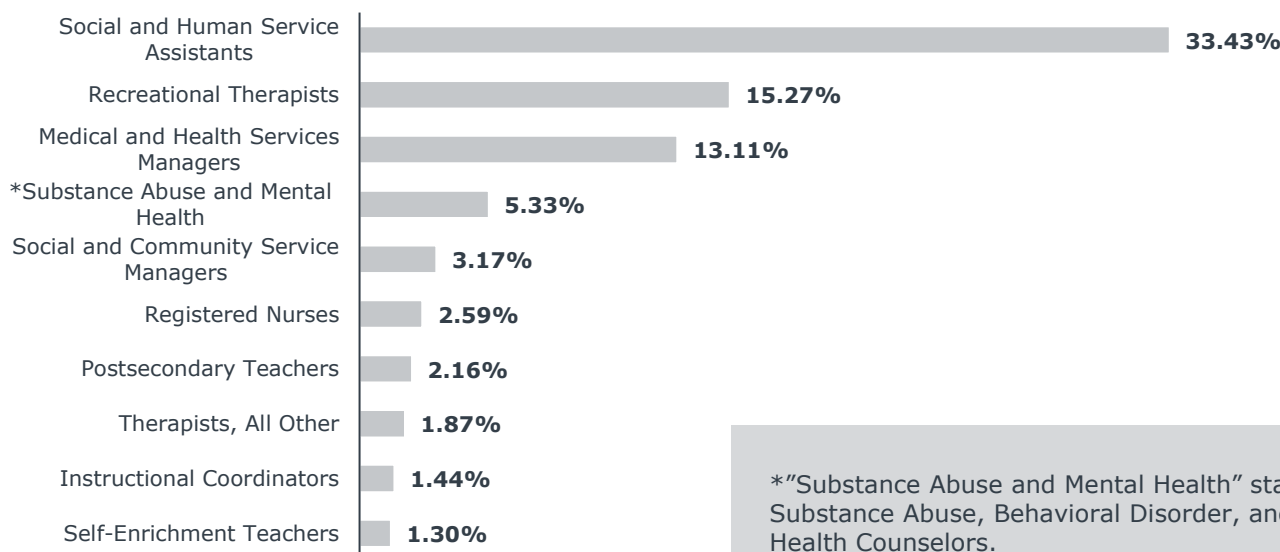
Employment is projected to increase faster than average in all of the five top relevant occupations statewide. This indicates employment opportunities for graduates will likely increase across the next 10 years.

While these occupations represent the most common occupations appearing in job postings for bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy Professionals, the projected employment data considers all jobs within an occupation at all degree levels.

### Top Occupations Across Job Postings for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide Data

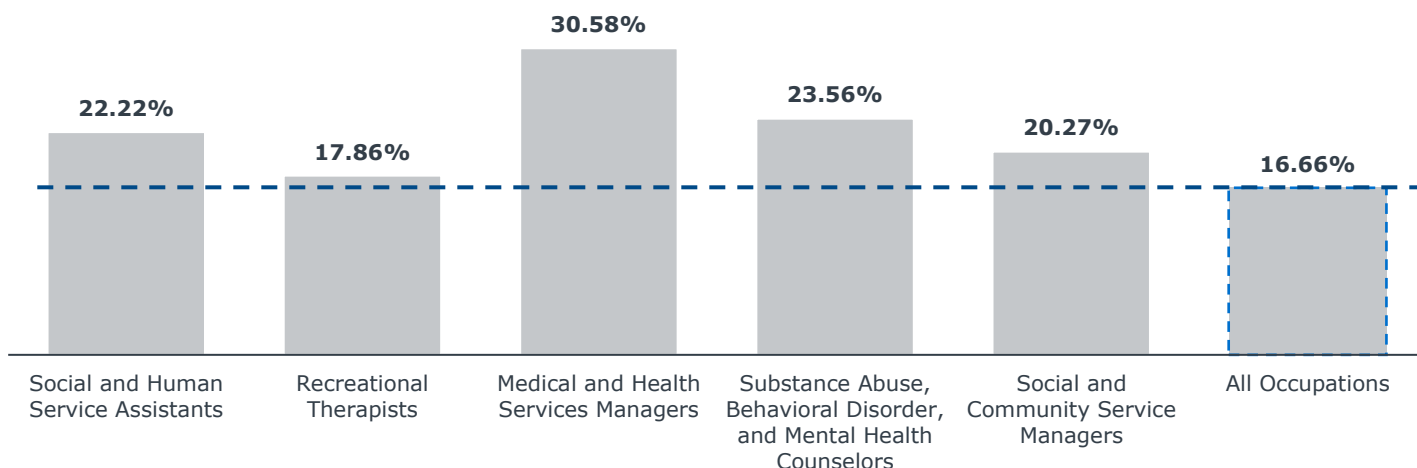
694 job postings



\*"Substance Abuse and Mental Health" stands for Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors.

### Projected Employment in Top Occupations<sup>1</sup>

2022-2032, Statewide Data



--- The dashed blue line represents the projected employment growth across all occupations from 2022 to 2032.

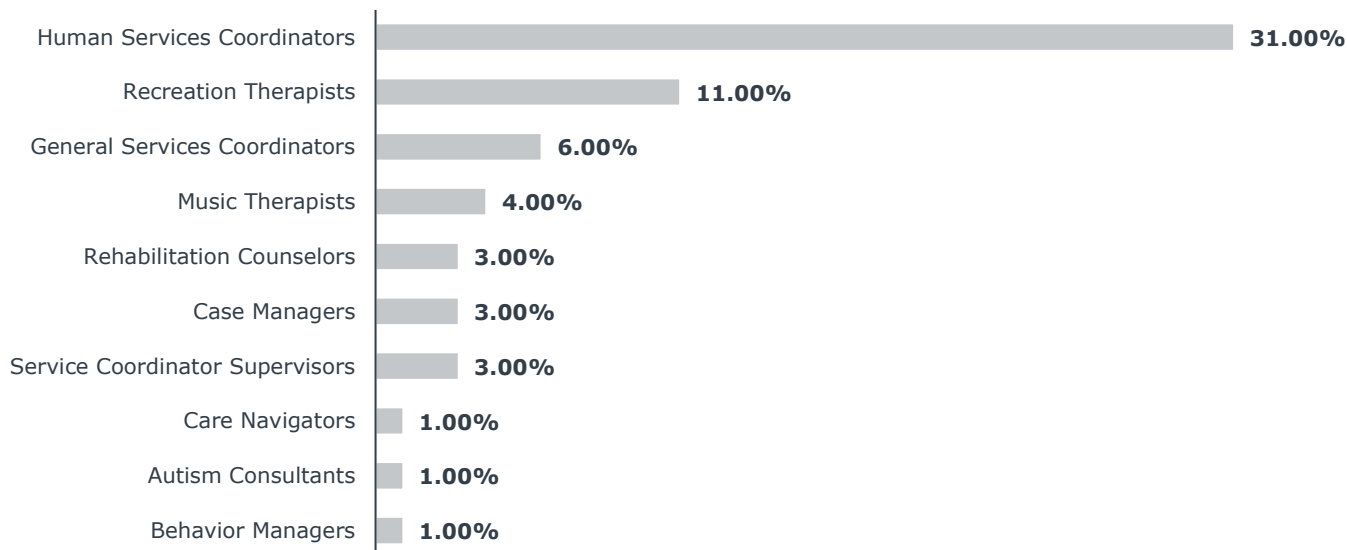
1) Top occupations refer to the occupations in which employers most often seek relevant professionals.

Source: EAB analysis. Lightcast.

### Top Titles in Job Postings for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide

694 job postings



### Top Skills in Job Postings for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide

694 job postings

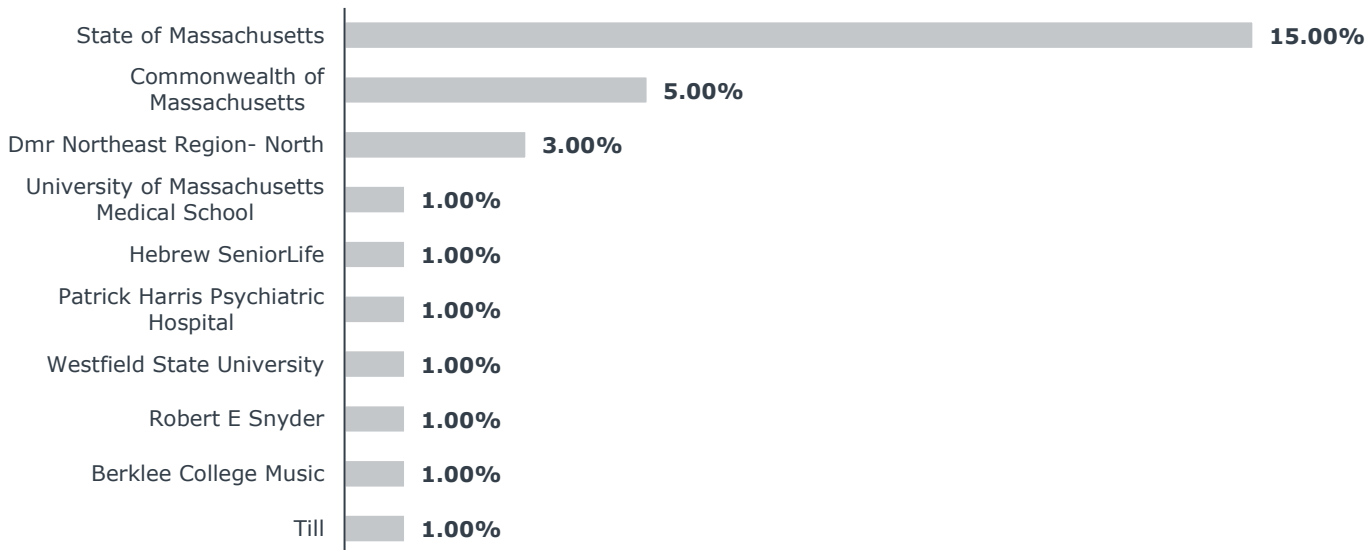


Source: EAB analysis. Lightcast Analyst.

### Top Employers in Job Postings for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Professionals

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide

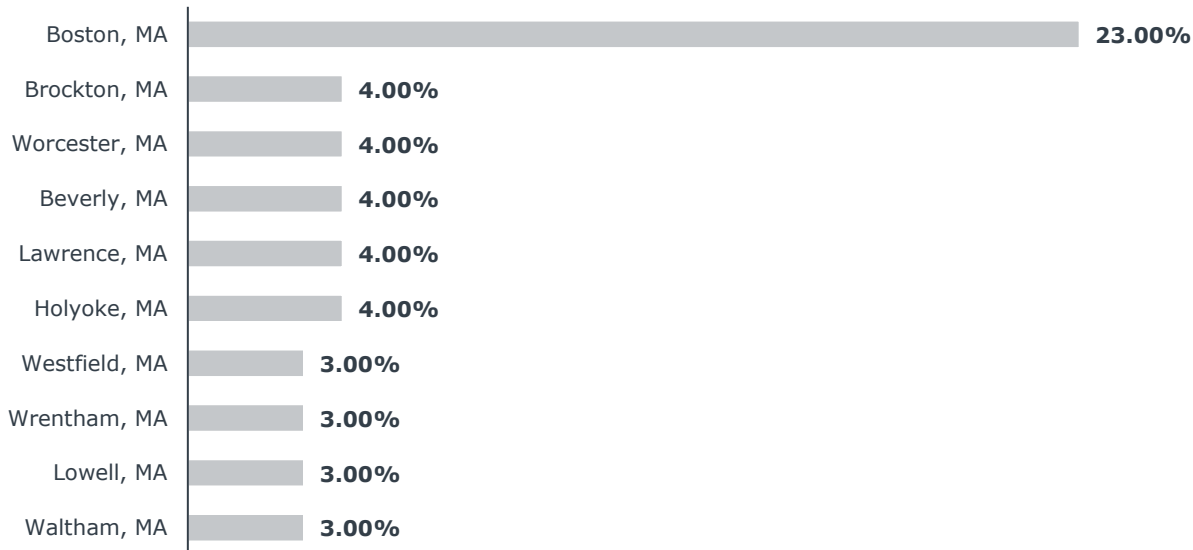
694 job postings



### Top Cities Seeking for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Applicants

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide

694 job postings



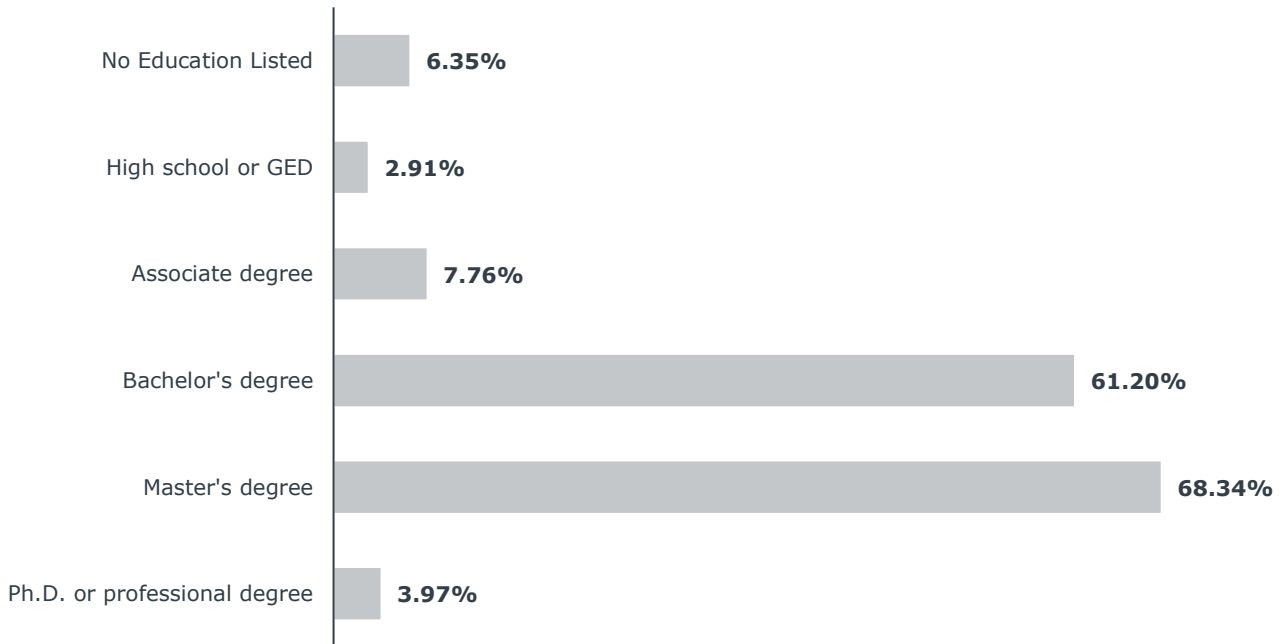
Source: EAB analysis. Lightcast Analyst.



## Education Levels Requested of Expressive Arts Therapy Applicants<sup>1</sup>

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide

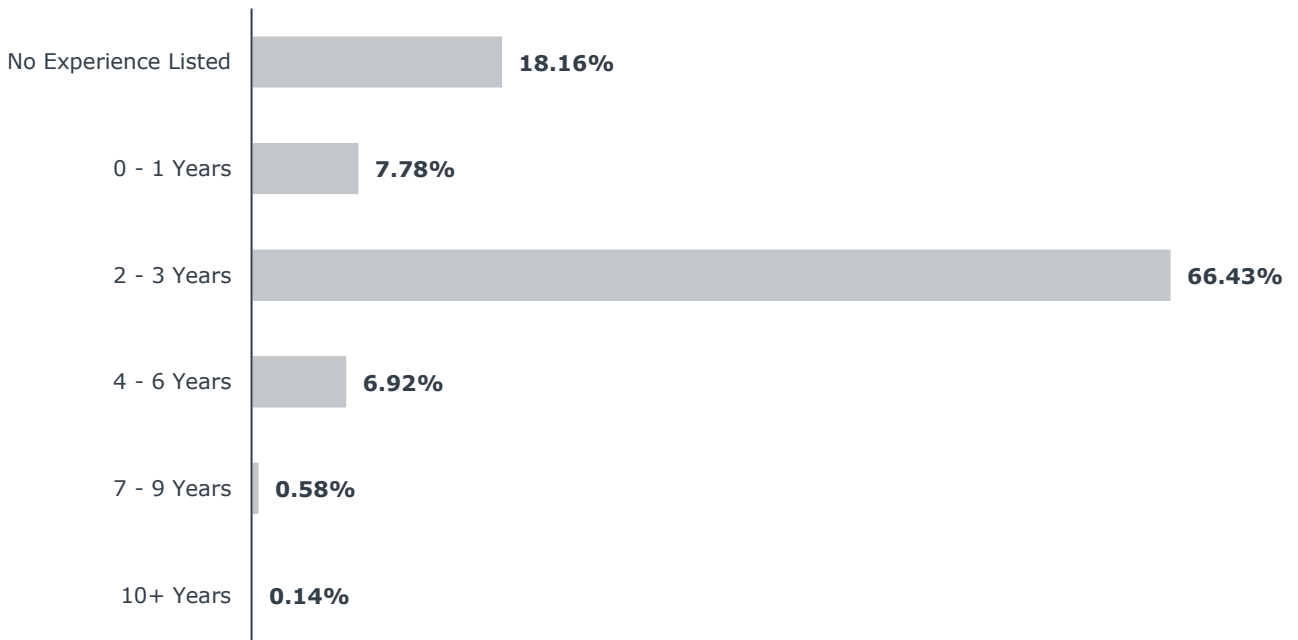
1,134 job postings



## Experience Levels Requested of for Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Applicants

February 2022-January 2023, Statewide

694 job postings



1) The n-value reflects the number of job postings requesting any degree level expressive arts therapy applicants rather than the number of postings requesting only those at the focus degree level.

Source: EAB analysis. Lightcast.

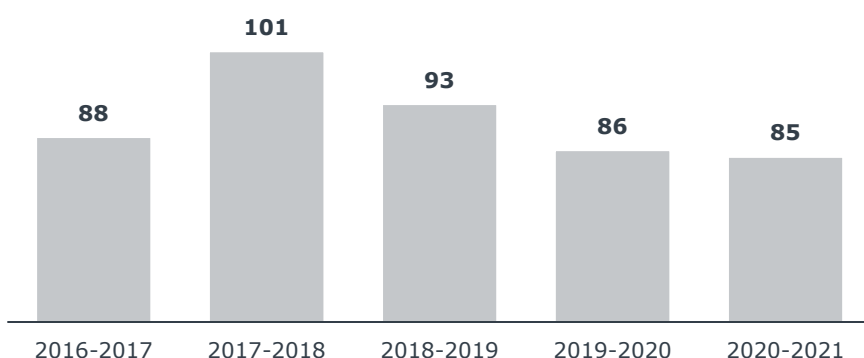
# Competitive Intelligence

## Statewide Analysis of Expressive Art Therapy-Related CIP Codes<sup>1</sup> Bachelor's-Level Expressive Arts Therapy Completions

Relevant completions for bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy programs decreased by an average 0.46% annually between the 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 academic years (i.e., net decline of three completions). In the same period, the number of institutions reporting relevant completions increased by one institution. Overall, decreasing student demand amid competition growth suggests a challenging outlook for program launch in the state.

### Completions Reported Over Time

2016-2017 to 2020-2021 Academic Years, Statewide



**-0.46%**

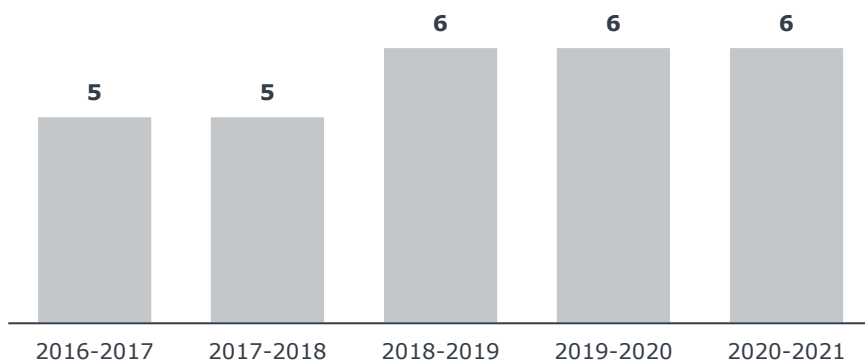
#### Average Annual Completions Decline

2016-2017 to 2020-2021 Academic Years, Statewide

- Net growth of one institution in the same period.

### Institutions Reporting Completions Over Time

2016-2017 to 2020-2021 Academic Years, Statewide



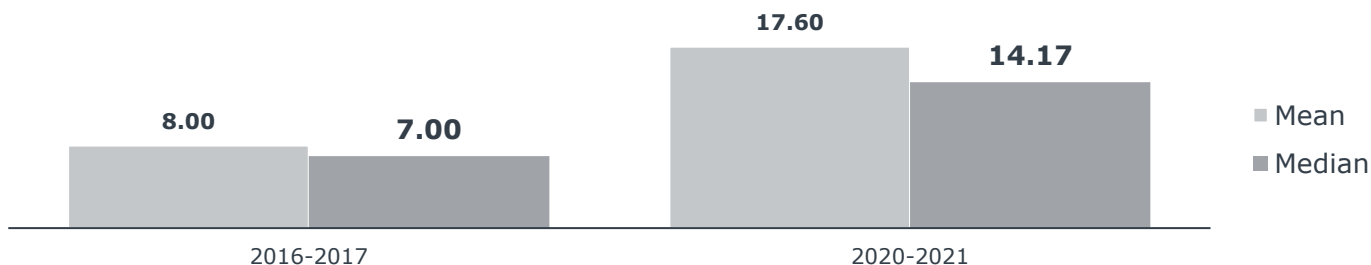
**0.00%**

#### Institutions Reporting Completions with a 100% Distance-Delivery Option

2020-2021 Academic Year, Statewide

### Completions per Institution Reporting

2016-2017 to 2020-2021 Academic Years, Statewide



1) CIP Codes "Music Therapy/Therapist" (51.2305), "Art Therapy/Therapist" (51.2301), "Drama Therapy/Therapist" (51.2315), and "Arts in Medicine/Health" (51.3206)<sup>1</sup> bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy Completions

Source: EAB analysis. National Center for Education Statistics.

## Statewide Analysis of Expressive Art Therapy-Related CIP Codes<sup>1</sup> Bachelor's-level Expressive Arts Therapy Completions

Between the 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 academic years, three of the six institutions reporting completions increased their market share and two of the six institutions increased the number of completions reported, indicating a limited number of programs managed to grow amid declining demand. Notably, all the profiled institutions are private indicating the market lacks a public offering. The top two market leaders in the region, Lesley University and Berklee College of Music, held 80.00% market share in the 2020-2021 academic year, signaling strong competition. Combined with the dwindling pool of students, this signifies an unfavorable market for program launch. Fitchburg State University may struggle to capture student interest amidst declining student demand and strong market leaders.

### Institutions with Most Reported Completions

2016-2017 to 2020-2021 Academic Years, Statewide

Institution	Reported Completions, 2016-2017	Market Share, 2016-2017	Reported Completions, 2020-2021	Market Share, 2020-2021	Completions Reported via Distance-Delivery, 2020-2021
Lesley University	26	29.55%	37	43.53%	No
Berklee College of Music	42	47.73%	31	36.47%	No
Anna Maria College	8	9.09%	10	11.76%	No
Emmanuel College	4	4.55%	4	4.71%	No
Springfield College	8	9.09%	3	3.53%	No
Assumption University	Not Offered	0.00%	0	0.00%	No

80.00%

### Conferrals by top 20% of institutions

2020-2021 Academic Year, Statewide

1) CIP Codes "Music Therapy/Therapist" (51.2305), "Art Therapy/Therapist" (51.2301), "Drama Therapy/Therapist" (51.2315), and "Arts in Medicine/Health" (51.3206)<sup>1</sup> bachelor's-level expressive arts therapy Completions

Source: EAB analysis. National Center for Education Statistics.



# Appendix

- 
- Sample Curricula
  - Research Process and Sources

---

## Research Questions

The requesting partner asked:

- **How has demand for graduates of my program evolved over time?**
- **In what positions do employers demonstrate the greatest need for graduates?**
- **What skills should the program teach to prepare students to meet employer demand?**
- **Which employers demonstrate the greatest demand for graduates?**
- **In which cities do employers demonstrate the greatest demand for potential graduates?**
- **What education level do employers most frequently request from relevant professionals?**
- **What experience level do employers most frequently request from program graduates?**
- How many students graduate from similar programs regionally, and how has this changed over time?
- How are similar programs structured?
- How are similar programs delivered?
- What experiential or practical learning do similar programs offer?
- What accreditation do similar programs hold?

**Bolded** questions were answered in this analysis. Remaining questions will be answered if the partner requests additional research.

## Research Limitations

EAB's market insights research guides strategic programmatic decisions at partner institutions. The Market Insights Service combines qualitative and quantitative data to help administrators identify opportunities for new program development, assess job market trends, and align curriculum with employer and student demand. Unless stated otherwise, this report includes data from online job postings from February 2022 to January 2023. To best estimate employer demand for master's-level student affairs and higher education professionals, the Forum analyzed job postings for master's-level professionals with relevant skills (e.g., "art therapy," "music therapy").

## Definitions

"CIP" code refers to the Classification of Instructional Programming code.

"Statewide" refer to the following states: Massachusetts

---

## Project Sources

The Forum consulted the following sources for this report:

- EAB's internal and online research libraries
- Lightcast Analyst, described below
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

## Labor Market Intelligence Partner: Lightcast

This report includes data made available through EAB's partnership with Lightcast (formerly Economic Modeling Specialists International), a labor market analytics firm serving higher education, economic development, and industry leaders in the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom.

Lightcast curates and maintains the most comprehensive labor market data sets available for academic program planning, providing real-time job posting data, workforce and alumni outcomes data, and traditional government sources of data. Under this partnership, EAB may use Lightcast's proprietary Analyst™ and Alumni Insight™ tools to answer partner questions about employer demand, the competitive landscape, in-demand skills, postings versus actual hires, and skills gaps between job postings and professionals in the workforce. The Lightcast tools also provide EAB with in-depth access to unsuppressed, zip-code-level government data for occupations, industries, programs, and demographics. For more complete descriptions of the Lightcast tools, visit:

- <http://www.economicmodeling.com/analyst/>
- <https://www.economicmodeling.com/alumni-insight/>

To learn more about Lightcast and its software and services, please contact Bob Hieronymus, Vice President of Business Development at [bob.hieronymus@economicmodeling.com](mailto:bob.hieronymus@economicmodeling.com) or (208) 883-3500.

# Experiential Learning

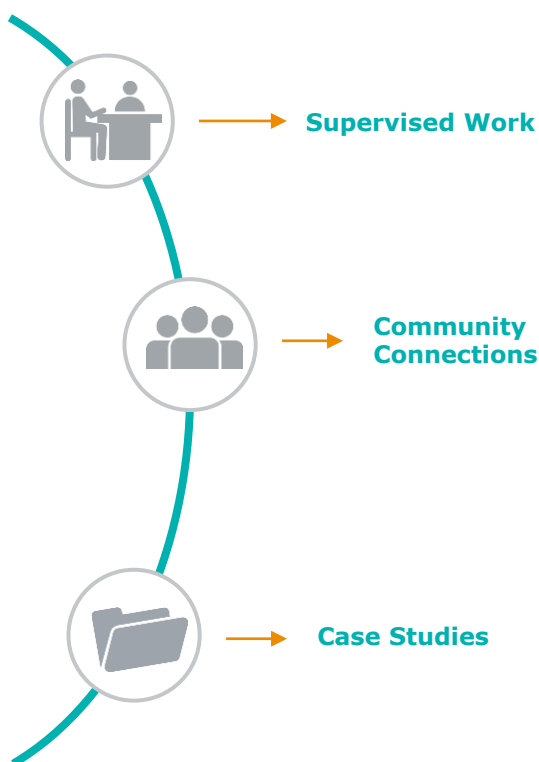
## Profiled Programs' Experiential Learning Opportunities

All profiled programs have an experiential learning requirement in the form of an internship, practicum, or fieldwork.

Internship	Practicum	Fieldwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesley University students are required to work under the supervision of an experienced professional in an approved clinical site with an expressive arts therapy focus for 180 hours throughout the semester or summer term.</li> <li>Similarly, Anna Maria College students are required to engage in a supervised clinical experience in community settings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Berklee College of Music requires a music therapy practicum in which students are assigned to a different clinical setting. Students advance their knowledge of and ability to implement the stages of the music therapy treatment process.</li> <li>Carlow University requires an art therapy practicum. The practicum allows students to engage in therapeutic clinical art experiences under the supervision of a registered art therapist.</li> </ul>	<p>Temple University requires bachelor's in art therapy majors to engage in fieldwork experience as art facilitators with individuals and groups at pre-approved fieldwork sites. During student's time in the field, a variety of in-depth concepts are explored, such as philosophies of therapeutic art making and understanding resources for diverse individuals.</p>

## Elements of Experiential Learning in Profiled Programs

Based on the profiled programs courses, experiential learning projects can be broken into three elements: supervised work, community connections, and case studies.



- Professors and faculty play a huge role in facilitating and guiding students during their project development.
- All institutions require that students are connected to local industry partners to work under their supervision.
- Institutions encourage students to use their projects to better help the community. For instance, at Lesley University students often work with hospitals, substance abuse centers, community mental health centers, and arts-based community programs.
- Berklee College of Music partners with Mass General Cancer Center and supervises students as they work in a variety of units within the hospital.
- Carlow University offers internships through [UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh's Dream Big Studio](#), a television and radio studio for children that is part of the hospital's Creative and Expressive Arts Therapy program.
- Most of the profiled program's experiential learning courses culminated in students developing a case study based on their experiences.
- Case studies require students to go through the steps of an in-depth analysis of identifying a problem, defining a solution, justifying its benefits, and reporting results.
- Institutions often require students to present their projects at the end of the accompanying course.

## Profiled Institutions

The Forum profiled programs via secondary research at the following institutions. The Forum profiled programs with a similar curricular focus as the proposed program at the Fitchburg State University.

### A Guide to Institutions Profiled in this Brief

#### *Similar Programs in the Northeast*

Institution	Location	Approximate Institutional Enrollment (Undergraduate / Total)	Carnegie Classification
<b>Lesley University</b>	Northeast	1,757 / 4,010	Doctoral/Professional Universities
<b>Anna Maria College</b>	Northeast	1,119 / 1,521	Master's Colleges & Universities: Medium Programs
<b>Berklee College of Music</b>	Northeast	7,177 / 7,943	Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs
<b>Carlow University</b>	Northeast	1,246 / 1,984	Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs
<b>Temple University</b>	Northeast	25,967 / 35,626	Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity





# Education's Trusted Partner to Help Schools and Students Thrive



**Your Imperatives Determine Ours**

**INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY**

**Prepare Your Institution for the Future**

Executive guidance rooted in research to support your strategic priorities

**MARKETING AND ENROLLMENT**

**Achieve Your Enrollment and Growth Goals**

Tailored partnerships powered by a recruitment ecosystem with unrivaled reach to enroll your future classes

**STUDENT SUCCESS**

**Build a Student-Centric Campus**

Technology trusted by 850 schools to retain, graduate, and empower more students

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

**Advance DEI on Campus and in Your Community**

Technology, research, and bold initiatives to strengthen your DEI strategy and eliminate equity gaps

**DATA AND ANALYTICS**

**Embrace Digital Transformation**

Data and analytics solutions built for higher education to guide decisions and accelerate innovation

We partner with **2,500+** institutions to accelerate progress and enable lasting change.

**95%+** of our partners return to us year after year because of results we achieve, together.



202-747-1000 | [eab.com](http://eab.com)

 [@eab](https://twitter.com/eab)  [@eab\\_](https://www.linkedin.com/company/eab_)  [@WeAreEAB](https://www.facebook.com/WeAreEAB)  [@eab.life](https://www.instagram.com/eab.life)

## ABOUT EAB

At EAB, our mission is to make education smarter and our communities stronger. We work with thousands of institutions to drive transformative change through data-driven insights and best-in-class capabilities. From kindergarten to college to career, EAB partners with leaders and practitioners to accelerate progress and drive results across five major areas: enrollment, student success, institutional strategy, data analytics, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). We work with each partner differently, tailoring our portfolio of research, technology, and marketing and enrollment solutions to meet the unique needs of every leadership team, as well as the students and employees they serve. Learn more at [eab.com](http://eab.com).

# Coversheet

## Presidential Search Budget - VOTE (19-23/24)

**Section:** IV. Budget, Finance and Facilities Committee - Karen Spinelli, Committee Chair, will provide the report  
**Item:** A. Presidential Search Budget - VOTE (19-23/24)  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** VOTE Presidential Search Budget.pdf  
Estimated Expenses for BOT Approval 2023.pdf

**Fitchburg State University  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

TO: Board of Trustees Budget, Finance & Facilities Committee	DATE: November 14, 2023
FROM: The President	REQUEST NUMBER:
SUBJECT: Presidential Search Estimated Budget	19-23/24

It is requested that the Board of Trustees vote to approve the Presidential Search estimated budget.



### Estimated Presidential Search Budget 2023/2024

Search Firm	\$93,000.00
Administrative Expenses	\$7,000.00
Estimated expenses, travel, advertisement, education background verification	\$75,800.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$175,800.00</b>

Advertisements	\$14,000.00
<b>Boston Hotel Interviews (first round/based on 10 candidates)</b>	
Air Travel /Travel Expenses \$1,000 round trip	\$10,000.00
Hotel (2-night stay) / (2) night stay for committee	\$20,000.00
Meeting Rooms	\$3,500.00
Catering	\$6,500.00
Parking for Committee Members @ \$55.00 two nights	\$1,400.00
<b>Fitchburg Interviews (5 finalists)</b>	
Air Travel \$1,000 round trip	\$5,000.00
Leominster/Hilton Double Tree (3-night Stay)	\$2,700.00
Car Service	\$2,000.00
Catering	\$3,200.00
Miscellaneous/ additional expenses for travel/Contingency	\$7,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,800.00</b>

11/8/2023

# Coversheet

## Witt/Kieffer

**Section:** V. Presidential Search Firms  
**Item:** A. Witt/Kieffer  
**Purpose:**  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** WittKieffer proposal - Fitchburg State University President Search (1).pdf



**WittKieffer**



**FITCHBURG STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

# **A Partnership to Identify an Impactful President**

---

Ryan Crawford | Greg Duyck

November 3, 2023



# Executive Summary

November 3, 2023

Jessica Murdoch  
Vice President, Human Resources and Payroll Services  
Fitchburg State University  
Fitchburg, MA

Via email: [jmurdoch@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:jmurdoch@fitchburgstate.edu)

Re: Fitchburg State University Presidential Search

Dear Jessica:

Thank you for inviting WittKieffer to submit our credentials as the university's leadership and Board of Trustees prepare to launch the search for the next president of Fitchburg State University. We are excited by the opportunity to partner with you and your colleagues on a presidential search and transition process that considers the needs of the Fitchburg State faculty, staff, students, alumni, and local community. During his tenure, President Lapidus positioned Fitchburg State to provide a lasting impact on the students and communities it serves. We expect this will be an attractive opportunity to many highly qualified leaders.

As the only top-ten search firm in the country that specializes in serving the higher education and broader nonprofit sector, we conduct more than 350 leadership searches in education each year, more than any other firm. More specific to your needs, we bring a strong history of successfully conducting searches for university presidents. WittKieffer has conducted more than 100 searches for presidents and chancellors in the last five years alone. This includes significant experience supporting searches for institutions similar to Fitchburg State. We understand the dynamics facing comprehensive universities in today's higher education environment, as well as the impact such institutions have on students from diverse backgrounds and local communities. We also understand the landscape of Massachusetts public higher education, having conducted recent presidential searches at Framingham State (2022), Massachusetts College of Art and Design (2021), Westfield State (2021), and Salem State (2017). We conducted the last presidential search at Fitchburg State in 2015. We believe these experiences would position us to conduct an efficient and thorough search that would lead to the appointment of an exceptional president.

The success of our efforts can be measured by the strength and diversity of our candidate pools and in the longevity of our placements. Over the last three years, 64% of WittKieffer's presidential searches in higher education resulted in placements of women and/or people of



color. Additionally, the average tenure of the presidents we have placed is eight years, with three- and five-year retention rates of 97% and 94%, respectively. We are proud of these outcomes, and we would work tirelessly to ensure similar success at Fitchburg State.

As a senior partner at WittKieffer, I will lead the search to build a compelling candidate pool and conduct preliminary interviews to determine the most suitable candidates for your full consideration. I have more than 14 years of experience within higher education search and have conducted more than 250 searches over the course of my career, including more than 25 presidential searches. In recent years, I have led presidential searches at institutions that are similar in size and mission, including Ferris State University, Northern Kentucky University, Prairie View A&M University, Saginaw Valley State University, and Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

Greg Duyck, a senior partner serving the firm's Education Market clients, would partner with me closely throughout the engagement. A former university executive based in North Carolina, Greg previously served the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Oregon Health and Science University, and Stony Brook University. His experience as an executive in multiple institutions provides unique insights as to the essential qualities of talented leaders. As a search consultant, he has led or partnered on a number of presidential searches, including those for Columbia College, Lasell University, St. John's University, SUNY College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry, and Talladega College.

We would be happy to answer any questions and speak with you further about this search. It would be a pleasure and privilege to serve Fitchburg State during this important leadership transition.

Sincerely,



Ryan Crawford  
Senior Partner, Education  
(737) 207-0568  
[rcrawford@wittkieffer.com](mailto:rcrawford@wittkieffer.com)

# CONTENTS

		Page Number
<b>01</b>	Experience and Capabilities	5
<b>02</b>	Our Approach to Search	10
<b>03</b>	Search Team	13
<b>04</b>	Fees and Terms	15

# Experience and Capabilities

**Founded in 1969**, our mission remains to deliver outstanding leadership solutions for organizations committed to improving the quality of life. We operate exclusively at the intersection of education, science, and healthcare delivery, and we refer to these convergent sectors as the **Quality of Life Ecosystem**.

Throughout our long history, WittKieffer has cultivated a proven and meaningful approach to executive search services, and we conduct **over 1,550 client engagements per year** on behalf of colleges and universities, related associations and professional societies, health systems and hospitals, academic medical centers, life sciences companies, and community and cultural institutions.

WittKieffer is a 100% employee-owned corporation headquartered in the Chicago metropolitan area, with offices strategically located across the United States and in Europe, serving organizations in North America, Europe, Asia, South America, and the Middle East. The firm employs **150 expert search and advisory consultants** and, in total, **340 exceptional team members** passionately committed to improving quality of life through impactful leadership.

 **54 years**

Serving clients in the Quality of Life Ecosystem

 **340+**

Team members

 **1,550+**

Client engagements in the last twelve months

 **96%**

Client loyalty index

## MARKET EXPERTISE

Education  
Social Impact and Nonprofits  
Healthcare  
Academic Medicine  
Life Sciences  
Investor-Backed  
Healthcare

## SOLUTION CAPABILITIES

Talent assessment, selection, and acquisition  
Interim leadership  
Board advisory  
C-suite succession  
Executive and team development and succession  
Team performance and alignment  
Culture development

# Experience and Capabilities

(continued)

While **educational institutions** share a common core mission, WittKieffer identifies the individualized philosophies, structures, offerings, resources, and imperatives that distinguish one institution from another. Building and developing impactful leadership in education is about understanding these often-nuanced differences. We appreciate that a president’s or other leader’s talents, experiences, personality, and leadership style can effect a substantial shift in tone and substance for a major area of focus – such as academics or student life – or an entire institution.

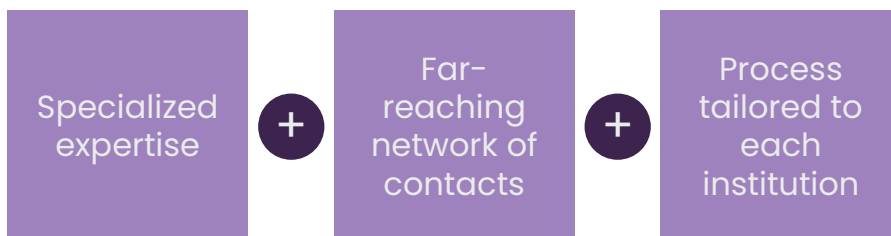
Thus, in **leadership search**, our efforts center on evaluating candidates based on our clients’ individualized needs, supported by the powerful lessons learned through thousands of engagements with institutions of all kinds.

Similarly, our **leadership advisory solutions** leverage that same powerful knowledge base, coupled with expert consultants, to develop teams and align cultures that deliver value to the institution and its community. By partnering with ambitious educational institutions, we not only improve Quality of Life for those they serve, but also foster social, scientific, economic, and artistic growth that benefits the world.

We place visionary leaders who effect positive, transformational change.

**Our Education Market** has a singular focus: identifying leadership for higher education institutions.

Our consultative approach to the education search process includes:



## LEADERSHIP ROLES

- Presidents
- Provosts, deans, and academic leadership
- Development and advancement leaders
- Athletic directors, administrators, and coaches
- Enrollment management executives
- Student affairs executives

# Experience and Capabilities

(continued)

Following is an abridged list of president/chancellor searches that WittKieffer has conducted over the last five years on behalf of colleges, universities, and institutions of higher education across the country.

## President/chancellor searches

---

Adams State University	Langston University (active)
Albany Law School	Lebanon Valley College
Aurora University	Manhattan College
California State University-East Bay	Massachusetts College of Art and Design
California State University-Northridge	Millsaps College (active)
City University of New York Baruch College	Mitchell Hamline School of Law
City University of New York College of Staten Island	Montclair State University
City University of New York Herbert H. Lehman College	Mount Mary University
City University of New York Queens College	New College of Florida
Columbia College	New Mexico State University (active)
Connecticut College (active)	Northern Kentucky University
Connecticut State Colleges and Universities	Northwestern University
Curry College	Old Dominion University
Eastern Connecticut State University (active)	Olin College of Engineering
Eastern Washington University	Oregon State University
Ferris State University	Penn State University Abington College
Fordham University	Penn State University Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies
Framingham State University	Pitzer College
Governors State University	Point Park University
Idaho State University (active)	Prairie View A&M University
Illinois State University	Providence College
Johnson C. Smith University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Kansas State University	Robert Morris University
La Roche University (active)	Saginaw Valley State University
	Saint Mary's College
	Santa Clara University

# Experience and Capabilities

(continued)

## President/chancellor searches (continued)

---

Seattle University	University of Scranton
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	University of St. Thomas
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	University of Tennessee
Southern Illinois University System	University of Tennessee at Martin
Southern Utah University	University of Utah
St. Ambrose University	University of Washington Bothell
St. Bonaventure University	University of Washington Tacoma
St. John's University	University of West Georgia
St. Mary's College of California (active)	University of Wisconsin System Office
State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry	University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Stetson University	University of Wisconsin-Platteville
Stockton University	University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Talladega College	University System of Georgia
Tennessee Wesleyan University	University System of Maryland
Texas A&M University San Antonio	Utah State University
The University of Tampa (active)	Valparaiso University
The University of the South	Virginia Military Institute
University of Akron	Wake Forest University
University of California, Berkeley (active)	Walsh College
University of Hartford (active)	Wartburg College
University of New Haven (active)	Washburn University
University of La Verne	Washington College
University of Louisville	Wayne State University
University of Lynchburg	Western New England University
University of Minnesota System (active)	Westfield State University
University of Nevada, Reno	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
University of New Haven (active)	York College of Pennsylvania
University of North Florida	Youngstown State University (active)

# Experience and Capabilities

(continued)

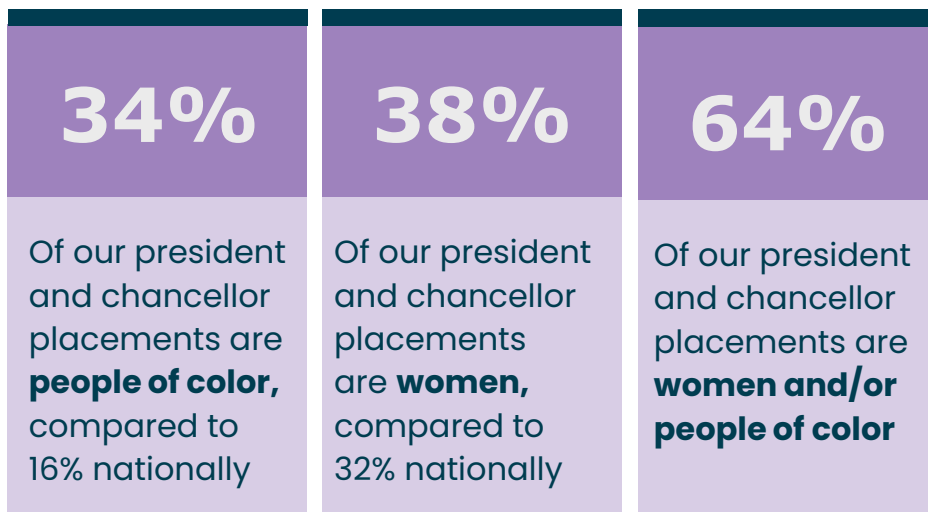
## COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

WittKieffer’s diversity recruiting and client solutions are designed for organizations, teams, and individual executives to strengthen behaviors, practices, and processes.

Our team is made up of experienced consultants who contribute to thought leadership, DEI certification programs, and impactful results in recruiting diverse talent.

Our approach centers around culture, partnership, and development. We maintain long-standing partnerships with multiple affinity groups.

Over the last three years, the diversity of our placements dramatically exceed national statistics in the presidency, according to CUPA-HR’s 2022 survey of higher education



**WittKieffer Chancellor/President Candidate Slates in the Past Three Years**

**97%** of our presented and interviewed candidates included women, **89%** included people of color. Combined, **98%** of our presented and interviewed candidates included women and/or people of color.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS IN DEI



# Our Approach to Search

Working in close partnership with the Board of Trustees, search committee, and other members of the Fitchburg State community, we will identify the most qualified candidates for the presidency using the comprehensive process below developed over five decades.

## Phase 1 – Planning and preparation

We commence each search by meeting with the Board of Trustees, search committee, Fitchburg State leadership, and others, as appropriate. These meetings can be held virtually, and they assist us in gaining an overall perspective of the environment in which the next president will operate and shed light on any sensitive issues that might affect the recruitment strategy. Our findings will also help to benchmark the qualifications essential for the role and serve as the foundation for both the search strategy and the eventual transition for the successful candidate.

We prepare a comprehensive leadership profile that articulates the collective vision, perspectives, and requisite qualifications identified by the board, the search committee, other key leaders, and constituents.

As the search gets underway, we will draw on the leadership profile and upon insights gained during our interactions with the search committee to convey a full and compelling sense of the position to prospective candidates.

### Key deliverables

- Provide institutional needs analysis and general consultation.
- Identify critical leadership competencies according to strategic priorities.
- Develop project communication plan and search timeline.
- Develop leadership profile and facilitate search committee approval.
- Propose recruitment strategy based on Fitchburg State's objectives.
- Recommend and implement broad and targeted advertising strategy.

## Phase 2 – Candidate sourcing, assessment, and stewardship

A combination of broad and targeted personal outreach enables us to identify exceptional, diverse candidates, including those who would likely go unnoticed by firms that largely rely on candidates from prior searches. We conduct original research for each search as well as curate a list of prospective candidates from our networks based on the information gathered during the planning and preparation phase.

We conduct in-depth behavioral interviews with each promising candidate to assess the seriousness of interest and potential for success in the position. We evaluate all candidates in the same thoughtful, comprehensive manner, treating internal candidates with particular sensitivity.

### Key deliverables

- Maintain frequent communication with the search committee chair as desired.
- Engage in proactive outreach to high-quality sources and desirable prospects.
- Acknowledge and process nominations and applications.
- Conduct comprehensive leadership history evaluations prior to presenting candidates.
- Deliver highly qualified candidates and corresponding materials to the search committee.



# Our Approach to Search

(continued)

## Phase 3 – Interview preparation, support, and coordination

We guide the search committee as it narrows the candidate pool to a select group of individuals who merit additional consideration, then help the committee prepare for and conduct first-round candidate interviews.

At the finalist stage, we will help provide guidance to the university and facilitate engagement with candidates to ensure a smooth process for all parties.

### Key deliverables

- Facilitate search committee selection of candidates to interview.
- Support development of rubrics and interview questions.
- Schedule and coordinate logistics of first-round interviews.
- Facilitate committee deliberations and selection of finalist candidates.
- Provide guidance and candidate coordination for campus visits.

## Phase 4 – Candidate due diligence

We take extensive measures to mitigate risks inherent in any search process.

As part of our candidate due diligence process, we conduct sophisticated, FCRA-compliant referencing with multiple contacts; comprehensive media and public record reviews; verification of employment history and education credentials; and screening for prior allegations of harassment or discrimination.

In addition, we strongly encourage Fitchburg State as the hiring agent conduct credit, driver's license, and criminal background checks on the finalist(s). We can assist with this if desired.

### Key deliverables

- Conduct in-depth referencing.
- Verify candidate credentials and employment.
- Conduct media checks and investigate additional public media sources.
- Screen for prior allegations of harassment or discrimination.
- Administer comprehensive assessments for finalist candidates if desired.

## Phase 5 – Decision and appointment

Our team can assist with scheduling for finalist interviews and provide guidance on campus visits and other activities important to candidates and their families.

Fitchburg State maintains complete authority in the selection of semi-finalists, finalists, and the candidate(s) of choice. We can advise on terms, salary, benefits, and relocation based on our experience in negotiating executive compensation packages.

As an element of our partnership, we offer counsel to help clients smoothly transition new leadership.

### Key deliverables

- Advise on terms, salary, benefits, and relocation.
- Transition and onboarding support.
- Counsel to support negotiation.
- Support for closing the process.

# Our Approach to Search

(continued)

## PROSPECTIVE TIMELINE

At the outset of the search, we will develop a detailed timeline and work plan according to your needs and preferences as well as other relevant factors such as the academic calendar, impending holidays and other external factors or constraints. We agree on a search timeline with clearly defined steps. At the same time, we remain nimble and flexible should unexpected institutional or external factors require modulating the schedule or approach. Below is a sample timeline for illustrative purposes, based upon our current understanding of Fitchburg State’s expectations.

Phase	Event/Duration	Description
<b>Planning and Preparation</b>	Start-up Activities <i>Late November-Early December</i>	WittKieffer engages Fitchburg State’s Board of Trustees, search committee, university leadership and others to understand the institution’s leadership needs and inform the leadership profile.
	Development of Leadership Profile and Recruitment Strategy <i>Mid-December</i>	WittKieffer prepares a draft leadership profile and suggested recruitment strategy. The board and search committee provide input and approval.
<b>Candidate Sourcing, Assessment and Stewardship</b>	Recruitment and Candidate Evaluation <i>Mid-December-Early February</i>	WittKieffer engages in strategic national/global recruitment and sourcing; reviews application materials’ and conducts screening to identify qualified and preferred candidates.
	Candidate Review <i>Mid February</i>	WittKieffer meets with search committee to review candidates and identify semi-finalists for interviews.
<b>Interview Preparation, Support and Coordination</b>	Semi-finalist Interviews <i>Late February</i>	WittKieffer prepares search committee for first-round interviews (Zoom or in-person) and assists with the selection of finalists for campus interviews; verifies education, credentials and employment history.
	Finalist Interviews <i>Mid-March to Late March</i>	Finalists meet with university constituents during campus visits. WittKieffer conducts in-depth references. Preferred candidate identified and presented to Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.
	Finalist Selection and Negotiations <i>April</i>	Preferred candidate meets with Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. WittKieffer will support the Board of Higher Education in negotiations, as needed.
<b>Appointment</b>	Search Conclusion <i>April</i>	Final candidate accepts offer. Appointment announced. WittKieffer can assist with and support transition.

## Search Team

Your dedicated search team would be led by **Ryan Crawford**, senior partner, and **Greg Duyck**, senior partner. Additionally, an associate, an executive search coordinator, and a research analyst will be assigned to support this engagement.



**Ryan Crawford**  
Senior Partner,  
Education

(737) 207-0568  
[rcrawford@wittkiewer.com](mailto:rcrawford@wittkiewer.com)

Based in Austin, Texas, **Ryan Crawford** is a seasoned executive search professional who approaches his work proactively and creatively. Ryan believes that, while a successful search is based on a measured, comprehensive process, the consulting team must be responsive and adaptive to identify innovative, compelling candidates. He is adept at working with search committees to align goals and recruiting strategies with the expectations of faculty, students, and campus stakeholders.

Ryan brings to his role more than 14 years of executive recruiting experience. Prior to joining WittKieffer, he served as a partner at an education-focused executive search firm where he served as lead consultant on higher education searches for positions including presidents, deans, and administrators in academic affairs, advancement, enrollment management, and finance and administration. Preceding this, Ryan was a principal at an Atlanta-based executive search firm, where he conducted searches in higher education, academic health sciences, and collegiate athletics.

Ryan is dedicated to his own professional development as well as supporting others in their pursuit of career aspirations. He is a regular speaker and participant in professional organizations, seeking to clarify and demystify the way that executive search consultants work with clients and candidates. Most recently he has participated in executive search and leadership panels at the American Conference of Academic Deans and Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences. He has also completed the eCornell certificate program in Diversity and Inclusion, which focuses on improving employee engagement, counteracting unconscious bias, and fostering an inclusive work climate. Finally, he is a WittKieffer Quality Award winner.

### Education

M.B.A., McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX

B.A., Journalism and B.A., Political Science (Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa), The University of Georgia, Athens, GA

eCornell Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion

# Search Team

(continued)



**Greg Duyck**  
Senior Partner  
Education

(919) 636-3618  
[gduyck@wittkiewer.com](mailto:gduyck@wittkiewer.com)

**Greg Duyck** brings an entrepreneurial approach to his work with client institutions, drawing upon two decades as a distinguished fundraising and executive search professional in higher education, academic medicine, and the broader nonprofit sector. His experience recruiting and managing talent at leading colleges and universities allows Greg to closely identify with his clients' leadership challenges in order to outline successful solutions for them.

Greg's experience includes serving as a senior associate vice president at Stony Brook University, where he led development efforts for 11 schools and colleges, managing a team of 30 people. His team accounted for more than \$70 million in fundraising. As vice president for development at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, Greg helped to close out UNC's \$2.4 billion *Carolina First* campaign. Prior to his 10-year tenure at Carolina, he held fundraising positions at Oregon Health and Sciences University and The Rhode Island Foundation and launched and managed his own consulting firm. Most recently, Greg served as a senior consultant for another national executive search firm, specializing in recruitments in the field of higher education.

Greg is a frequent presenter at conferences ranging from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education to the Council on Foundations and has published several articles and three book chapters related to fundraising. Greg recently completed the eCornell certificate program in Diversity and Inclusion, which focuses on improving employee engagement, counteracting unconscious bias, and fostering an inclusive work climate.

## Education

M.F.A., Fiction Writing, Emerson College, Boston, MA  
B.A., Creative Writing, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA  
eCornell Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion

# Fees and Terms

## FEES FOR PRESIDENT SEARCH

---

- Pursuant to WittKieffer's Master Service Agreement with the University of Massachusetts System (UMASS-2022-0134), the professional fee will be 31% of the president's total cash compensation, inclusive of base salary, target annual incentives, and any guaranteed cash compensation due during or in respect of the president's first full year of employment, with a minimum fee of \$60,000. The final professional fee will abide by the "not to exceed" stipulation set forth in the current Master Service Agreement. Upon finalist's acceptance of offer, we will adjust our fee up or down depending on the compensation arrangement finalized in the accepted offer letter.
- A one-time per project fee of \$5,000 will be billed for data and technology services, WittKieffer's proprietary database of more than 1.2 million leaders, specialized third-party candidate database access, verification and compliance checks, and other search expenses that are not easily segregable for this search assignment.
- Out-of-pocket expenses are charged at cost and generally include staff and candidate travel and accommodations, courier services, advertising, video conferencing, publications, education verification, and outside printing.
- The first billing of 30% of the estimated professional fee and fixed expenses will be submitted at the start of each search engagement. Three additional billings of the professional fee and out-of-pocket expenses will be submitted on the following schedule: 30% at candidate presentation, 20% when finalist candidates are selected, and 20% when the selected candidate accepts the university's offer.
- Separate pricing will be provided for any optional services (e.g., assessment, onboarding support) or additional services scoped following this work.

## OUR QUALITY QUARANTEE

---

If the executive we place with Fitchburg State ceases to be employed by the client in any capacity within one year of the executive's commencement of employment, then WittKieffer will search for a replacement to fill the original position without additional professional fees or fees for data and technology services charged to the client. WittKieffer's guarantee excludes those situations where the placement departs due to organizational realignment, department restructuring, material changes in the position, death, or disability. Additional out-of-pocket expenses associated with the replacement search will be charged in the same manner as the original search.

# Fees and Terms

(continued)

## OPTIONAL EXECUTIVE ASSESSMENT AND ONBOARDING

---

As part of our evidence-based approach to recruitment, WittKieffer offers leading selection assessment and post-hire assimilation and early onboarding services. Our approach includes the following activities and deliverables:

### Assessment

- Competency based interview between each candidate and a leadership advisory consultant;
- A comprehensive set of online psychometric assessments;
- A debrief session between a leadership advisory consultant and the hiring authority to interpret assessments findings;
- Tailored interview questions and strategies based on assessment findings, as desired.

---

### Onboarding support

- 90-minute assessment feedback session with the placement prior to or at the commencement of their employment;
- Alignment session with a leadership advisory consultant, the placement, and hiring authority 30-days post hire to ensure agreement of goals and develop a strong partnership;
- 100-day check-in meeting between the WittKieffer search consultant, leadership advisory consultant, and the placement to provide continued guidance and support.

The fees for these services are: \$5,000 for a single finalist, an additional \$4,000 for a second finalist candidate, and \$3,000 for each additional candidate.



## **FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**

Prepare students to lead, serve, and succeed by fostering lifelong learning and civic and global responsibility.

## ***WittKieffer***

Improve the quality of life through impactful leadership.

# Coversheet

## Spelman Johnson

**Section:** V. Presidential Search Firms  
**Item:** C. Spelman Johnson  
**Purpose:**  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Spelman Johnson Proposal.pdf



# Spelman Johnson's Proposal for Fitchburg State University

President

Prepared By:

Mark Hall  
President  
[mah@spelmanjohnson.com](mailto:mah@spelmanjohnson.com)  
803-348-9948



# spelman johnson

Leadership Search for  
Education and Social Impact

# Get to Know Spelman Johnson

## Our History

Founded in 1991, Spelman Johnson is a woman-owned executive search firm with the singular focus of identifying and recruiting talent for organizations and institutions that impact the social fabric and change lives. From higher education, to secondary schools, to member-based advocacy associations, and mission-driven organizations, we have recruited and placed over 2,000 outstanding leaders. With 32 years of spearheading searches across multiple professional fields, we are connected to a pipeline of talent that allows us to build a broad, deep, and diverse pool on behalf of our clients. Spelman Johnson is committed to supporting the access of diverse professionals at all levels of leadership and respected for our ability to match outstanding leaders with outstanding organizations.

Spelman Johnson provides exemplary search and consulting services to institutions and organizations based on three key principles:

### Ethics

### Communication

### Service

We strive for clear and direct communication with clients and candidates. We endeavor to make the best use of available resources in facilitating the smooth and efficient delivery of services, operations, and processes. We believe that every client and every candidate should expect nothing less than honest and ethical efforts on their behalf, at every juncture of the search process. Our practice focuses on senior leadership roles such as president, provost, vice president, dean, and director in cabinet-level administrative areas, including academic affairs, diversity and inclusion, student affairs, enrollment, finance and administration, marketing and communication, and athletics.

## Clients Call Us:

**collaborative partners**

**expert practitioners**

**proven advocates**

**ethically driven**

**honest and thorough analysts**

**industry influencers**

**innovative firm**

**measured risk-takers**

**thought leaders**

**trusted advisers**

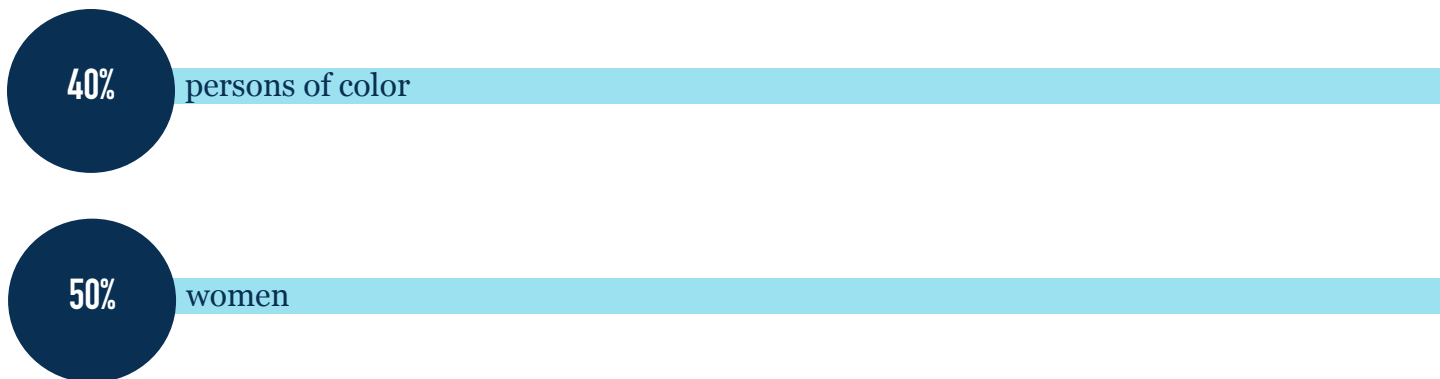
## Our Commitment to Diversity

At Spelman Johnson, our dedication to excellence in executive search is inseparable from our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our team of consultants is diverse and culturally skilled and viewed by clients as trusted advisers, thought leaders, and proven experts in helping institutions and organizations build diverse leadership teams. We work with clients to anticipate, identify, and combat explicit and unconscious bias in the search process and work toward ensuring that no individual or group is discriminated against on the basis of a protected status, such as race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or qualified veteran status. We devote considerable time and resources in partnering with professional groups, associations, and leadership development institutes to expand the pipeline of people of color and women leaders in higher education.

Spelman Johnson's philosophy on recruiting senior leaders includes an effort to create a dynamic in which both our clients and executive-level applicants are involved in the search process in a manner that is attentive, professional, and engaging. Through targeted outreach to our network of over 8,600 diversity, equity, and inclusion professionals in independent schools, higher education, and non-profit organizations—as well as confidential nomination processes—Spelman Johnson encourages professionals who might be interested in exploring a position to contact us directly for detailed information about the context and priorities for the search.

Since its founding, Spelman Johnson has been committed to supporting the development of professionals of under-represented groups and to creating networks that allow us to recruit broad, deep, and diverse pools of applicants that reflect the diversity of our clients' populations. To that end, Spelman Johnson is deeply involved nationally and regionally with organizations and institutes that support and advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion at the highest levels. Our long-standing engagement with these organizations uniquely positions Spelman Johnson with the reputation and network that serve to promote our searches and afford us ready access to individuals eager to nominate and/or recommend qualified candidates.

Our placements are evidence of our success. Across the placements that occurred in 2022:



## Experience

### Recruiting Your Next Leader

Searching for a university president is a complex and challenging endeavor requiring a breadth of understanding of the unique skill sets required of this critical leadership role. Spelman Johnson tailors each presidential search to institutional needs, opportunities, challenges, mission, and vision.

In a highly competitive, socially active, and crisis-laden era, the role of the university president is multifaceted and requires a range of expertise to be successful. Effective leaders possess administrative, financial, advocacy, communication, fundraising, academic, relationship-building, and strategic planning skills. As there is no longer a single path to the college presidency, Spelman Johnson focuses on drawing candidates from various senior leadership positions within education.

# 2,000<sup>+</sup>

The number of successful searches Spelman Johnson has conducted in our 32-year history.

# 200<sup>+</sup>

The number of successful searches Spelman Johnson has conducted for positions that provide a pipeline to presidential appointments, such as provosts, vice presidents, and deans.

# 12,000<sup>+</sup>

The number of senior and executive level administration professionals in our proprietary database.

### Memberships

ACE Executive Roundtable

National Association of Executive Recruiters

Council of Independent Colleges

### Presidential and Chancellor Searches

Metropolitan Community College

Metropolitan Community College, Penn Valley

Montserrat College of Art

Mount Marty University

Naropa University

Oklahoma City University

Prescott College

University of Central Oklahoma

Vermont Law & Graduate School

# Spelman Johnson's Search Process

Spelman Johnson will partner and consult closely with the search committee and hiring authorities to identify, assess, select, and appoint the very best possible candidate for the institution. We manage a comprehensive search that allows our clients to focus their efforts on the evaluation of the most qualified candidates. We develop a search strategy that addresses our client's specific needs and we serve as advisers during all phases of the process, which typically includes five phases: laying the groundwork, building the candidate pool, assessing candidates, selecting and vetting finalists, and appointing the new leader.

## Phase 1 Laying the Groundwork

We begin each search by learning about the institution and the priorities for the new leader. We speak with stakeholders and conduct a thorough analysis of the institution and the position to develop a collaborative relationship with our clients, promote a shared understanding of the role, and lay the groundwork for a successful search. We use all of the information gained in this initial phase to craft informative and compelling documents, including a comprehensive position specification that goes well beyond a standard job description.

## Phase 2 Building the Candidate Pool

Recruiting an outstanding leader requires a broad, deep, and diverse candidate pool. We build strong candidate pools by implementing a customized marketing plan that outlines both passive and active recruitment strategies. During this phase, we advertise the position broadly, activate our professional networks, contact prospects identified through extensive research, and personally respond to all inquiries, nominations, and referrals.

## Phase 3 Assessing and Evaluating Candidates

Spelman Johnson's assessment of candidates goes far beyond screening application materials. We hold in-depth conversations with qualified applicants and advance only the most promising candidates. We gather a significant amount of information through our vetting process and the use of a supplemental questionnaire that Spelman Johnson develops for each search. For each search we conduct, Spelman Johnson sets up password-protected online access to candidate application materials for the exclusive use of the search committee. After the candidate slate is ready for review by the search committee or other representatives, Spelman Johnson releases candidate files to clients via a secure portal.

## Phase 4 **Selecting and Vetting Candidates**

Spelman Johnson consultants meet with the search committee or other representatives to review candidates and identify a short list of semifinalists. We assist our clients with structuring this review and the first round of interviews, which typically includes a set of core questions designed to assess candidates on attributes and qualifications defined by the institution. We also assist clients in planning second-round interviews and in-person and virtual visits. Spelman Johnson conducts due diligence on behalf of our clients, including social media and internet investigations, extensive on- and off-list reference checks, an optional leadership assessment, and a comprehensive background check conducted under the auspices of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Background checks include employment and degree verification, further social media checks, and investigations of criminal records and civil litigation, among other investigations.

## Phase 5 **Appointing the New Leader**

During this final phase, we provide decision support to assist the institution in making the final selection. While we are prohibited by law from asking candidates about their salary, we confirm the institution's target salary range and share with our clients any salary or compensation concerns voluntarily disclosed by candidates. We also provide information on competitive market salaries and compensation packages for the particular sector. After an offer has been made and accepted, we close out the search, notify unsuccessful candidates and other parties of the outcome, and assist with a public announcement of the appointment. We can, upon request, support a well-planned and executed transition and onboarding process.

# Search Timeline

While we will create a customized timeline for the institution that is reflective of the agreed-upon deliverables and desired start date, the following sample timeline is intended to provide a general outline of the process for the purposes of this proposal. Should Spelman Johnson be selected as the preferred search firm, a more comprehensive and personalized timeline will be devised in conjunction with the specific needs of the institution and the search committee.

## Month 1

Spelman Johnson reviews the search strategy, process, and timeline with the hiring authority, search committee, and other key individuals involved in the institution's search process.

Virtual and/or in-person meetings are conducted with the search committee, key individuals, and groups to:

- Discuss the search strategy and process.
- Finalize the search timeline.
- Discuss the challenges, opportunities, and objectives for the role.
- Determine the background, attributes, and qualifications of the ideal candidate.

Spelman Johnson drafts search documents for review and approval by the institution, including the following:

- Summary Report of Constituent Meetings
- Position Announcement
- Marketing Plan
- Position Specification
- Search Timeline

The institution approves all documents listed above, including formal acceptance and sign-off on the Marketing Plan with associated expenses.

## Month 2

With approved documents in hand, Spelman Johnson launches the search and begins actioning the Marketing Plan; direct outreach and cultivation of candidates continues for 30-40 days.

Search committee meets as necessary to conduct anti-bias training and to devise rubric, survey, or other review methods by which candidates will be assessed.

Direct outreach and cultivation of candidates continues.

Initial review of application materials begins.



Month 3

Search consultant conducts introductory interviews with top candidates, collects supplemental questionnaires and additional information from candidates, and shares confidential candidate files with the search committee.

Search committee meets with the consultant to review the slate of candidates and decides on which candidates to advance to the semi-finalist stage.

Search committee conducts confidential virtual interviews, or in-person off-site interviews, with candidates and selects finalists.

The institution arranges on-site or virtual meetings for the finalists with appropriate constituencies and a second round of candidate interviews with the search committee; client collects constituent feedback via survey or other means.

Spelman Johnson facilitates scheduling of the finalists and assists, as needed, in coordinating travel logistics.

Spelman Johnson conducts extensive reference checks for finalists and reports findings to the hiring authority.

Hiring authority reviews all available information on the finalists and selects preferred candidate, extends employment offer, and negotiates start date and other details. Spelman Johnson conducts an extensive background check on the selected candidate and submits results to hiring authority.

Spelman Johnson consultants support transition, as appropriate.



# Pricing and Guarantees

## Search Fee

Salary Range (Based on First Year Compensation)	Fixed Search Fee	Fee For Indirect Expenses
\$200,001-\$300,000	\$75,000	\$4,000
\$300,001 and above	\$90,000	\$4,000

Direct expenses related to the search are not included in the fixed search fee. Direct expenses include advertising undertaken by Spelman Johnson, travel, and background investigations.

## Guarantees & Policies

### Search Conclusion Guarantee

Spelman Johnson will work with the institution until a successful hire is made or the search concludes in another fashion as negotiated by the institution and Spelman Johnson.

### Retention Guarantee

Should the successful candidate voluntarily withdraw or be terminated within 12 months from the date of the contract, Spelman Johnson will redo the search for a replacement. We will waive our fee and bill only for expenses and the one-time administrative charge associated with reopening the search. This guarantee assumes certain conditions that are detailed in the Spelman Johnson contract. The client must notify Spelman Johnson within 60 days of the departure of the hired candidate should they wish to retain Spelman Johnson under the conditions of this guarantee.

### Off-Limits Policy

Spelman Johnson values and appreciates the relationship we have with our clients and will never jeopardize that relationship by recruiting our placements. In accordance with the ethics of the executive search industry, Spelman Johnson makes an agreement with each client that clearly states the period during which we will not recruit professionals from the institution or other internal areas as requested.

## Mission Statement

Spelman Johnson, founded in 1991, provides search and consulting services in partnership with education, advocacy associations, and social impact organizations. Our mission is to provide exceptional, ethical service to our clients in the search and consulting processes—identifying and recruiting talented leaders for our client organizations.

## Highlights of Our Practice

### *Policies to Ensure Personalized, Professional Service*

With an administrative team that includes marketing, logistics, technical support, and research, a Spelman Johnson search consultant with relevant leadership experience will lead your search. We may limit the number of active searches handled by each consultant to ensure that they are available to the client and the candidates from start to finish throughout the search process. We provide advice as needed on search committee composition, interview questions and structure, salary, and on-boarding. The Spelman Johnson search consultant provides anti-bias and equity training and works with the search committee to develop appropriate evaluation rubrics. Through regular communication and personal contact, the consultant listens to client needs and learns its organizational culture, enabling Spelman Johnson to develop a tailored recruitment plan. Our search consultants build relationships with candidates, working hard to understand their motivations, strengths, challenges, and goals while also providing detailed information about the needs and challenges of the position. Spelman Johnson's consultants serve as a bridge between our clients and candidates, enabling us to ensure the alignment of the successful candidate with our client's needs and culture. These policies and practices promise a high degree of personal service and satisfaction for both clients and candidates.

### *Ethics*

In accordance with the ethics of the executive search industry, Spelman Johnson makes an agreement with each client that clearly states the period during which we will not recruit professionals from the client organization or other internal areas as requested. Spelman Johnson is a member of the National Association of Executive Recruiters (NAER) and follows its Code of Ethics (naer.org). Our firm is also a member of the American Council on Education (ACE) Executive Search Roundtable (acenet.edu) and the Network of Nonprofit Search Consultants (nmsc.org).



Leadership Search for  
Education and Social Impact



# Coversheet

## Academic Search

**Section:** V. Presidential Search Firms  
**Item:** E. Academic Search  
**Purpose:**  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Academic Search Fitchburg State University President proposal 2024.pdf

# Academic Search



## Presidential Search

**Dr. Nancy Crimmin**  
Senior Consultant

**Dr. William Kibler**  
Senior Consultant

November 6, 2023



# CONTENTS

Academic Search .....	3
A Long Record of Proven Outcomes .....	4
Our Strategic Advantage .....	5
Your Search Team .....	7
Relevant Experience .....	14
Customized Methodology .....	18
Our Elevated Standards .....	22
References .....	24
Proposed Investment.....	25
Integrated Services.....	26
Strengthening Higher Education.....	27

# ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search was founded in 1976, and was the first organization in the nation committed to meeting the unique recruiting needs of higher education. The firm has remained in continuous and expanding operation for more than 45 years, and currently engages a team of more than 80 highly trained and experienced consultants serving public and private colleges and universities, as well as higher education-related organizations. Academic Search is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the American Academic Leadership Institute.

The mission of the firm remains to provide colleges and universities with highly professional, institutionally focused search services modeled on best recruiting practices across all business sectors.

## ACADEMIC SEARCH EXPERIENCE AND AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

---

Academic Search currently averages 100-200 searches per fiscal year, of which more than 95% are performed on behalf of institutions or systems of higher education. The remaining searches are facilitated for organizations related to higher education such as national associations serving colleges and universities, or institution-based entities such as libraries, museums, performing arts venues, and medical centers.

The highest percentage of searches performed by Academic Search are for president/chancellor or cabinet officers, and for top academic leadership at the dean level. Primary disciplines for which services are engaged are administration and academic administration, business and finance, advancement, student affairs, admissions and enrollment, diversity and inclusion, and general counsel and other professional positions. Within academic leadership, searches for decanal-level personnel in education, business, arts and humanities, and STEM disciplines including nursing and other healthcare areas form the bulk of the firm's services.

## THE ACADEMIC SEARCH GUARANTEE

Our goal is to stay with you through a successful conclusion to the search. If the hiring authority is not satisfied with the candidates recommended or a search is not concluded for other reasons, we will offer to conduct either an extended search or a second search. Typically, we ask that a second search be launched within 12 months of the original contract.

If an appointed candidate is terminated for cause within 12 months of appointment, or the appointee voluntarily leaves within the first 12 months after first reporting to work, we will conduct a second search without any additional professional fee, as long as the search commences within three months after the position is vacated. In each of these scenarios, the only additional charges will be related to discretionary expenses approved by Fitchburg State related to candidate travel, consultant travel, advertising, and background checks, and an administrative fee of \$10,000.

# A LONG RECORD OF PROVEN OUTCOMES

**TOP 40**  
SEARCH FIRMS

Academic Search has been named to Hunt Scanlon's list of the top 40 search firms in the nation serving higher education and top 50 across all industry sectors.

MORE THAN  
**2,400** EXECUTIVE SEARCHES

Since its inception, Academic Search has completed more than 2,400 executive searches.

MORE THAN  
**6 IN 10**

In the past five years, 64% of all searches conducted by Academic Search have resulted in the appointment of women and/or persons of color.

**99%**  
SATISFACTION RATE

Academic Search has a 99% satisfaction rating from its partner institutions, based on post-search feedback. In addition, 59% of our engagements over the last five years have originated from existing or former partner institutions who re-engage our organization after an initial successful experience.

**APPOINTEES WHO STAY**

The remarkably high percentage of appointees who remain in office five years later attests to the ways Academic Search matches institutional needs with qualified applicants.

**92%** PRESIDENTS/  
CHANCELLORS

**82%** VICE PRESIDENTS/  
VICE CHANCELLORS

**87%** DEANS

# OUR STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

Hiring qualified and effective new team members is critical to the life of any institution of higher education. Academic Search is focused on partnering with colleges and universities to attract the best teams possible.

We pledge to advocate enthusiastically for Fitchburg State University (Fitchburg State or the University), to attend to the needs of your search committee, to advise candidates clearly and ethically, and to manage the search process so that you can focus on selecting the top candidate for President (President).

The Academic Search **value proposition** is based on providing service in five ways that you can rely on unequivocally to achieve your goals in this search: expertise, excellence, reach, trust, and equity and inclusion.

## EXPERTISE

---

Academic Search brings a deep understanding of college and university processes emanating from specialization in higher education searches for more than 45 years. Our accomplished consultants understand intimately the qualities that make a successful executive leader. Our team includes thoughtful advisors who have vast professional networks, extensive higher education leadership experience, and decades of recruitment expertise. Fitchburg State will benefit directly from their hands-on involvement in the recruiting, evaluation, and vetting of your candidate pool.

## EXCELLENCE

---

Your search process will be customized to your institutional culture and your particular needs at this time, but it is grounded in the shared experience of best practices. Our consultants will design and manage a search process that not only achieves deliverables in the proposed timeline but promotes a positive impression of the University in the higher education community. At every stage of the search, you can count on expert advisement and counsel from the search consultants as well as the entire Academic Search team and its collective knowledge of excellent practices.

## OUR MISSION

Founded by higher education leaders more than four decades ago, Academic Search is dedicated to the principle that the value we offer to partner institutions is combining best recruitment practices with deep knowledge and experience. By providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive consulting, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute, we continue to fulfill our mission to enhance institutional capacity, increase diversity so that leadership reflects the students being served, and promote excellence in higher education leadership.



## REACH

---

You will benefit from the nationwide connections forged over decades by Academic Search. Our consultants and experts will be the ones who get to know you and recruit on your behalf. The strategies for advertising and promoting the search for a new President will bring awareness of this opportunity to both current and rising leaders in higher education.

## TRUST

---

You can rely on your partners at Academic Search to approach this process with honesty and integrity. You will see this in our regular updates on the progress of the search and careful approach to maintaining confidentiality. You can count on your search consultants to be trustworthy partners, working with discretion and professionalism, not just with Fitchburg State University and your constituents but also in interacting with candidates, with whom we build a deep trust.

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION

---

We are dedicated to making a difference through the vital role we play in serving the cause of higher education. Your search will be exposed to the broadest range of potential candidates through strategic placement of position announcements and direct contact with prospective applicants who represent the entire spectrum of diversity. We will work with the University to mitigate bias and infuse equity and inclusion throughout the search process. Academic Search has come together with other members of the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (AESC) in signing the [AESC Diversity Pledge](#); we have an internal Steering Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; fund fellowships for leadership development programs for persons from underrepresented groups; and make diversity a high priority in our recruitment of internal team members.

# YOUR SEARCH TEAM

In selecting Academic Search, you are choosing an experienced search team who will take the time to get to know you and your needs and priorities. We propose Dr. Nancy Crimmin and Dr. William (Bill) Kibler to partner with you as the lead consultants on your presidential search.

Dr. Crimmin, a Worcester County resident, and Dr. Kibler bring a valuable combination of experiences in higher education administration and executive recruitment. They are well versed in the personalization and opportunities an institution such as Fitchburg State University can offer to its students. Fitchburg State University has a vibrant history of providing a transformational educational experience in a student-ready environment with exceptional preparation and training for an agile workforce to serve the community. Building on the mission, vision, and values with a commitment to creating a thriving and diverse community of learners emphasizing innovation, student success, and overcoming barriers has served the community well. The momentum created by the *2020-2025 Strategic Plan* will certainly influence the search for a new leader of the institution. The new President will join a community dedicated to creating a student-ready university that provides equitable access to high-quality education and offering all students the opportunity to apply their learning so that they are career-ready.

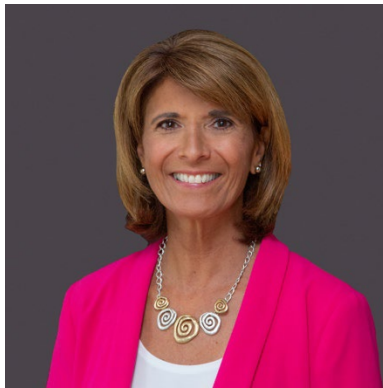
The Fitchburg community embraces the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's Equity Agenda, challenging public higher education to enhance the economic and social mobility for all citizens, but particularly for those that have historically been underserved and underrepresented, especially students of color. In further support of the Equity Agenda, Fitchburg State has embedded the principles of education justice, being a student-ready campus, and inclusive excellence as pillars of the strategic plan.

Your search team is also acutely aware of the challenges state universities across the Commonwealth are facing and the impact of those challenges for the President and their Board of Trustees. Enrollment, affordability, equity, challenges with connectivity and accessibility, hunger and homelessness are examples of some of the challenges facing leadership in the next several years and beyond.

Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler are committed to creating a diverse, highly qualified pool of candidates in the search for a future-focused, innovative, and strategic leader to ensure long-term stability and sustainability for Fitchburg State University.

Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will be the primary contacts and lead recruiters for your search. To assist you and your search committee, they will be responsible for establishing and maintaining close communication with the search committee and search chair; meeting with key campus officials; and providing leadership for all phases of the search. Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will participate in search committee meetings and partner with the search chair to

prepare meeting needs, such as agendas or other handouts. In addition, they will guide the committee through an objective candidate evaluation and selection process, advise the committee and campus on interview best practices, and conduct due diligence on selected candidates. Additional details regarding our search process and methodology are discussed later in this proposal. The following pages introduce you to your search team; full curricula vitae are available upon request.



## DR. NANCY CRIMMIN SENIOR CONSULTANT AND SENIOR EXECUTIVE COACH

Dr. Nancy Crimmin knows first-hand the importance of hiring the best candidates to fill executive staff positions. Her three-decade career in higher education included academic and student affairs director, dean, vice president, and senior vice president roles, and she was president of a private college. With more than 25 years of experience as a hiring manager, Dr. Crimmin is a senior consultant with a deep-rooted commitment to serving student populations by recruiting potential appointees who will excel.

Dr. Crimmin has always loved interacting directly with students. She believes sincere conversations with them are crucial to learning about campus culture and student perceptions. In her various administrative positions, from assistant to the registrar at Curry College to president of Becker College, and everything in between, Dr. Crimmin prioritized the needs of the students, and she was committed to removing barriers and creating opportunities for success.

As a senior consultant, honesty, transparency, and open communication are Dr. Crimmin's driving forces. She joined Academic Search in October 2021 and quickly found success in her ability to assemble diverse candidate pools filled with immense talent and creating positive working relationships with search committees. She's meticulous in her recruiting and researching process, and she presents the search and hiring committees with the critical of information that will help them make their selection. She is timely, thorough, and sincere, and she is devoted to finding the right candidates who have the potential to thrive.

Although Dr. Crimmin spent most of her career at private schools, she finds joy in searching for all sorts of positions at every type of college and university. She enjoys challenges, as she is an excellent problem solver and forward thinker, and Dr. Crimmin is motivated to go the extra mile to ensure she's maintaining the integrity of the search. Dr. Crimmin has a vast professional network, including the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), of which she was a senior fellow, board member, and chair of the 2017 annual conference. She has been widely recognized for her contributions to higher education, and her honors include the NASPA Foundation's highest accolade, the Pillar of the Profession Award.

The Massachusetts native earned her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Stonehill College, a Catholic institution, and a master's degree in counseling and student personnel services from Springfield College. She also earned her doctorate in educational leadership from Johnson & Wales University and has completed her certification in executive coaching. She is a trained facilitator for the Leadership 360 profile, EQi – 2.0 Emotional Intelligence inventory and Gallup Strengths.

## **NANCY P CRIMMIN, ED.D.** **SENIOR CONSULTANT**

### **EDUCATION**

- Johnson & Wales University, Doctorate, Education in Educational Leadership
- Springfield College, Master's Degree, Counseling and Student Personnel Services
- Stonehill College, Baccalaureate Degree

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING APPOINTMENTS**

- Senior Consultant and Senior Executive Coach, Academic Search
- Senior Fellow, NASPA Center for First-generation Student Success
- President, Becker College
- Senior Vice President, Chief Academic and Student Affairs Officer, Becker College
- Vice President for Student Affairs, Becker College
- Dean of Campus Life, Assumption College
- Admissions Counselor and Academic Advisor, Alverno College
- Assistant to the Registrar, Curry College

### **SIGNIFICANT HONORS AND AWARDS**

- Pillar of the Profession Award, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- NASPA Region 1-Continuous Service Award
- Mary Tobin Senior Student Affairs Award, Massachusetts Association for Women in Education

### **SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

- Board Member, Devereaux Advanced Behavioral Health and the Devereaux School
- Board Member, Women's Initiative of Central Massachusetts
- Board Member, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts
- Chair of the Board, Higher Education Consortium of Central Massachusetts (HECCMA)
- Chair, New England Collegiate Conference for Division III Athletics
- Member, Division III NCAA Presidents Council
- Member, The President's Trust of the Association of American Colleges and Universities



## **DR. WILLIAM KIBLER** **SENIOR CONSULTANT** **SENIOR EXECUTIVE COACH**

Dr. William Kibler is a senior consultant driven by his commitment to integrity, clarity, and honesty. He authored the honor codes at two Division I state universities, and while serving as president of a small public university in rural Texas, he maintained an open-door policy to sustain direct communication with students, staff, and faculty. Dr. Kibler even provided his personal home and cell phone numbers to students and parents at orientation, attesting to his commitment to remain in close contact.

Although Dr. Kibler can perform any type of search, based on his experience at public universities, his expertise lies in searches within state systems. He joined Academic Search in 2020 and has discovered a deep sense of satisfaction and pride when he helps an institution hire a candidate who will make a long-lasting positive impact.

After more than four decades in higher education, Dr. Kibler's familiarity with university governance, student issues, and the challenges that arise in an administration is extensive. He spent 37 years in student affairs at the University of Florida, Texas A&M University, and Mississippi State University, giving him first-hand familiarity with the issues students face and the best ways to overcome them. He then spent six years as President of Sul Ross State University, a regional comprehensive university in West Texas.

At Texas A&M and MSU, Dr. Kibler authored the schools' honor codes that are still in effect. He also served as a founding board member and president of both the Association for Student Conduct Administration and the International Center for Academic Integrity. Much of his research work for his doctorate focused on academic integrity, and he has authored, co-authored, and edited books and publications on the subject, as well as on student conduct, discipline, judicial affairs, and student affairs administration.

A first-generation college student, Dr. Kibler earned his associate degree from Pensacola Junior College and completed his bachelor's degree in economics at the University of Florida. He also received master's and specialist's degrees in counselor education from UF and a doctorate in higher education administration from Texas A&M. Additionally, Dr. Kibler is a graduate of the American Association of State Colleges & Universities' Millennium Leadership Institute.

In 2014, Dr. Bill Kibler was named the 12th president of Sul Ross State University. During his six years in Alpine, TX, Dr. Kibler helped implement an ambitious 10-year strategic plan, achieved full re-accreditation with no recommendations, oversaw unprecedented retention rates, improved facilities, and more. Upon his retirement in 2020, he was named president emeritus. He resides in College Station with his wife, Pam, and together they continue a nearly 30-year commitment to foster parenting. The Kiblers recently provided care for their 40th foster child.

## **WILLIAM L. KIBLER, PH.D.** **SENIOR CONSULTANT & SENIOR EXECUTIVE COACH**

### **EDUCATION**

- Texas A & M University, Doctorate, Education Administration
- University of Florida, Specialist in Education, Counselor Education
- University of Florida, Master's Degree, Counselor Education
- University of Florida, Baccalaureate Degree, Economics
- Pensacola Junior College, Associate of Arts, Science

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING APPOINTMENTS**

- Senior Consultant and Senior Executive Coach, Academic Search
- President, Sul Ross State University
- Vice President for Student Affairs, Mississippi State University
- Professor, Counselor Education, Mississippi State University
- Vice President for Student Affairs (Interim), Texas A & M University
- Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Texas A & M University
- Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, Texas A & M University
- Associate Director of Student Affairs, Texas A & M University
- Assistant Director of Student Affairs, Texas A & M University
- Assistant Dean of Students, University of Florida
- Assistant to the Dean of Students, University of Florida

### **SIGNIFICANT HONORS AND AWARDS**

- Awardee, Donald McCabe Award for Lifetime Achievement, International Center for Academic Integrity, Clemson University
- Pillar of the Profession Award, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- Member, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
- Awardee, D. Parker Young Award for Outstanding Contributions, Association for Student Judicial Affairs
- T.M. Stinnett Fellowship Award, Department of Educational Administration, Texas A & M University
- Member, Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society

## SEARCH SUPPORT

---

Your search for the new President will be supported by a trained, specialized, and experienced team of professionals who will assist you in managing all aspects of the search process.

Your team will include an **associate consultant**, who has vast knowledge of and expertise in higher education. The associate will work closely with Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler, your search committee, and a designated campus liaison or the search chair in handling the logistical and administrative matters of the search. At every stage of the search process, the associate is available to reduce the burden on the campus community. The associate will work with the appropriate individuals to coordinate the details of candidate interviews, while ensuring that institutional travel policies and procedures are followed, to handle technological needs, and to manage organizational details like expense reports.

In addition to direct search support, Academic Search provides resources for the search team and for you that include:

### Administrative Support

Although Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will serve as the primary contacts for the search and will be responsible for all deliverables, our entire consulting team is available to add expertise to the process. Academic Search **President, Dr. Jay Lemons**, and **Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Shawn Hartman** may be contacted for additional support. They are ready to be of service to assist you in meeting your needs and are available to your search chair and hiring authority at any point in the search. At the outset, Dr. Hartman works quickly with your purchasing department or other appropriate institutional officials to execute your standard contract or our simple three-page contract, as he is the authorized agent for Academic Search. He will also ensure that any of your questions concerning billing and invoices are addressed by the finance team.

### Technological Support

Technology can be a serious challenge in a search. Your search committee will benefit from our in-house technical team, which includes the **Director of Operations, Ms. Kelly Daniels**. She can help the search committee by arranging video interviews or meetings at any stage in the search process, handling the creation of campus surveys, and helping to support virtual ADA compliance needs. In addition, they manage the security and reliability of your search committee website, where all application materials are housed, and are available to assist committee members with any website-related issues.

If you are interested in learning more about our team, biographies can be found at [www.academicsearch.org/our-team](http://www.academicsearch.org/our-team).



# RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Academic Search has performed successful recruitment projects for institutions in 49 states and nine foreign countries in the last 10 years. Academic Search has assisted the following institutions of higher education with presidential searches in recent years.

Institution	State	Position
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	California	President
Alabama A & M University	Alabama	President
American University of Nigeria	Adamawa	Vice Chancellor/President
Antioch College	Ohio	President
Aquinas College	Michigan	President
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in New Jersey (AICUNJ)	New Jersey	President
Athens State University	Alabama	President
Augustana College	Illinois	President
Avila University	Missouri	President
Bakersfield College	California	President
Berea College	Kentucky	President
Black Hills State University	South Dakota	President
Bloomfield College	New Jersey	President
California Community Colleges	California	State Chancellor
California Lutheran University	California	President
Carlow University	Pennsylvania	President
Centenary University	New Jersey	President
Central State University	Ohio	President
Chadron State College	Nebraska	President
Chatham University	Pennsylvania	President
Christian Brothers University	Tennessee	President
Cleary University	Michigan	President
Cleveland State Community College	Tennessee	President
College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University	Minnesota	President
Concordia College at Moorhead	Minnesota	President

Coppin State University	Maryland	President
Council of Independent Colleges	Washington, DC	President
Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia	Virginia	President
Delaware County Community College	Pennsylvania	President
Delta State University	Mississippi	President
Eckerd College	Florida	President
Finlandia University	Michigan	President
Frederick Community College	Maryland	President
Gannon University	Pennsylvania	President
Grays Harbor College	Washington	President
Greenfield Community College	Massachusetts	President
Guttman Community College	New York	President
Hartwick College	New York	President
HERS-Higher Education Resource Services	Colorado	President
Houghton University	New York	President
ILIFF School of Theology	Colorado	President and CEO
Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas	Texas	President
Institute for Clinical Social Work	Illinois	President
Jackson State Community College	Tennessee	President
Jackson State University	Mississippi	President
Kentucky Community and Technical College System	Kentucky	President, Big Sandy College
Kentucky Wesleyan College	Kentucky	President
Kern Community College District	California	Chancellor
Lagrange College	Georgia	President
LaGuardia Community College	New York	President
Lower Columbia College	Washington	President
Manchester University	Indiana	President
Maria College of Albany	New York	President
Marshall University	West Virginia	President
Mary Baldwin University	Virginia	President

Maryland Independent College and University Association	Maryland	President
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education	Massachusetts	Commissioner
Mesa Community College	Arizona	President
Muskingum University	Ohio	Provost
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	Washington, DC	President
Nevada System of Higher Education	Nevada	Chancellor
New England Commission on Higher Education	Massachusetts	President
Newman University	Kansas	President
Northeast State Community College	Tennessee	President
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Wisconsin	President
Norwich University	Vermont	President
Ohio Northern University	Ohio	President
Ohio Wesleyan University	Ohio	President
Paradise Valley Community College	Arizona	President
Peru State College	Nebraska	President
Phoenix College	Arizona	President
Pittsburgh Technical College	Pennsylvania	President
Roanoke College	Virginia	President
Rockford University	Illinois	President
Rust College	Mississippi	President
Saint Elizabeth University	New Jersey	President
Saint Michael's College	Vermont	President
Salisbury University	Maryland	President
Sam Houston State University	Texas	President
San Diego Community College District	California	Chancellor
Santa Fe Community College	New Mexico	President
Scottsdale Community College	Arizona	President
Shoreline Community College	Washington	President
Simpson College	Iowa	President

Skagit Valley College	Washington	President
St. John's University-New York	NY	Interim President
St. Mary's University	Texas	President
St. Norbert College	Wisconsin	President
St. Thomas Aquinas College	New York	President
SUNY College at Oswego	New York	President
SUNY Empire State College	New York	President
Texas A&M University-Texarkana	Texas	President
Texas Wesleyan University	Texas	President
The University of Alabama in Huntsville	Alabama	President
United Lutheran Seminary	Pennsylvania	President
University of Maine System	Maine	Chancellor
University of North Texas at Dallas	Texas	Chancellor
University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg	Pennsylvania	President
University of Redlands	California	President
University of South Carolina-Aiken	South Carolina	Chancellor
University of South Carolina-Upstate	South Carolina	Chancellor
University of Southern Maine	Maine	President
Virginia Community College System Office	Virginia	Chancellor
Walsh University	Ohio	President
Wenatchee Valley College	Washington	President
Wesleyan College	Georgia	President
West Virginia University at Parkersburg	West Virginia	President
Whitworth University	Washington	President
Wilson College	Pennsylvania	President
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)	Wisconsin	President and CEO

# CUSTOMIZED METHODOLOGY

Academic Search defined best practices in executive search in higher education over 45 years ago. We continually seek creative and innovative ways to pair our decades of experience and wisdom with special attention to your institution's unique customs and culture. Working closely with your team, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will customize this comprehensive search process to satisfy your specific needs and priorities.

**FROM CONTRACT  
SIGNING TO WEEK 4**

## 1. ORGANIZE

Your successful search begins with clear organization, communication, and collaboration with stakeholders. We will work closely with you to set specific priorities and goals for each phase of the search process. Working with the search committee and the hiring authority, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will facilitate this phase of the process, as needed, by:

- advising on the composition of the search committee and the charge to the committee;
- collaborating with institutional officials on available resources to educate committee members on how to confront and mitigate bias;
- guiding the committee on best practices for an ethical and confidential search process;
- developing a clear search timeline;
- meeting with key stakeholders for their perspectives on the culture of the institution and the qualities needed in the next President;
- developing a profile and advertisement to reach potential candidates and nominators;
- establishing a communication plan to keep candidates, the search committee, and campus constituents appropriately apprised of search progress; and
- meeting with officials in Human Resources and other departments to ensure an understanding of institutional policies and procedures and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

***Deliverables: search timeline, position profile, advertisement, advertising plan that ensures exposure to diverse individuals***

**WEEKS  
5-12**

## 2. RECRUIT

In this phase of the search, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will be recruiting extensively, reaching broad and diverse populations of qualified individuals, and advocating directly on behalf of Fitchburg State to elicit exceptional applicants. You can count on the confidential and hands-on services they are performing:

- targeted email outreach to prospective candidates and nominators through the extensive proprietary database of Academic Search;
- targeted messages to leadership development organizations;
- individual, personal conversations with prospective candidates to promote Fitchburg State and this opportunity for the new President; and
- communication with those in Academic Search's consultants' personal networks.

***Deliverables: recruitment of a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates, updates on search progress, creation of a password-protected website to house candidate materials***

**WEEKS  
13-16**

## 3. EVALUATE, SELECT, AND INTERVIEW SEMIFINALIST CANDIDATES

Once a pool of candidates has been created, we will partner with your search committee in designing and implementing a selection process tailored to your needs and campus culture. Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will work with the search committee to lend expertise to these important steps:

- developing an objective, equitable review method for evaluating candidate materials, including instrumentation and training to the search committee in candidate review technique;
- sharing information and insights gained from conversations with candidates and others; and
- designing a uniform process for conducting semifinalist interviews.

***Deliverables: sharing of information gathered on candidates; sample evaluation tool and interview questions; assistance with interview logistics and selection of semifinalists; continued communication with candidates regarding their status in the search***

**WEEKS  
17 & BEYOND**

## **4. CLOSE THE SEARCH**

During the closing stage of the search, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will assist the search committee in identifying finalists, provide counsel on the finalist interviews, conduct due diligence, and assist in shepherding the top candidate through the appointment process. Specifically, you can rely on assistance in these areas:

- providing guidelines for finalist visits and interviews;
- administering feedback surveys from all who meet with finalists;
- facilitating reference calls and media and background checks, consistent with laws and regulations that govern Fitchburg State University;
- assisting the search committee in making recommendations to the hiring authority; and
- communicating with candidates on their status in the search and announcing the appointment once it is finalized and public.

***Deliverables: assistance with selection of finalists; background, media, and reference checks on finalist candidates; follow-up communication with candidates; transition-related consultation***

## SAMPLE TIMELINE

At the initiation of search activity, a firm written schedule specific to the needs of each search will be developed collaboratively and approved by Fitchburg State University. Thereafter, Academic Search will adhere to that schedule unless modified with the approval of the University.

STEPS	TIMEFRAME
1. Organize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin work with the search chair and hiring authority</li> <li>• Conduct pre-search visits</li> <li>• Finalize the position profile and advertising plan</li> </ul>	Upon Contract Signing
2. Recruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a broad nationwide outreach</li> <li>• Elicit candidacies and individually follow up on each nomination</li> <li>• Make direct contact with prospects and candidates</li> <li>• Accept and process applicant materials</li> </ul>	December 2023-February 2024
3. Evaluate, Select, and Interview Semifinalist Candidates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a dedicated online site for candidate materials</li> <li>• Assist the search committee in establishing its evaluation process</li> <li>• Manage candidate logistics and facilitate interviews</li> <li>• *Conduct preliminary due diligence</li> </ul>	March 2024
4. Close the Search <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in planning and execution of finalist interviews</li> <li>• *Complete final due diligence</li> <li>• Assist as needed with contract negotiations</li> <li>• Update candidates, nominators, and references of the outcome and assist with search closure</li> <li>• New President is appointed</li> </ul>	April 2024

\*Initial research including social media investigation as well as Lexis Nexis and Google searches will be conducted on each semifinalist candidate. For finalists, Academic Search will continue its research and use a properly credentialed and licensed third-party firm to conduct FCRA background checks, including degree verifications.



# OUR ELEVATED STANDARDS

## EMPHASIS ON BUILDING A DIVERSE CANDIDATE POOL

You can count on Academic Search to uphold the highest standards for ensuring attention to equity and inclusion in our searches. Successful candidates come from multiple cultural and ideological backgrounds, from a diverse array of institutions, and with a variety of identities. It is not only important that a diverse pool of candidates be recruited for the search but that candidates be treated with the utmost regard.

Based on experience and best practices, Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will assist Fitchburg State as needed to guarantee respectful consideration to equity and inclusion. We can:

- Assist you in understanding and addressing the market forces and cultural/social factors that may have an influence on attracting a diverse candidate pool.
- Draft a non-gendered, inclusive profile and advertisement for use in recruitment.
- Propose an advertising plan that includes venues assuring exposure of the opportunity to professionals across the diversity spectrum.
- Develop objective criteria to evaluate candidates based on the parameters and requirements of the position.
- Publish in all position advertisements your inclusion policy and an invitation for all qualified prospects to apply.
- Ensure all search materials are ADA compliant.
- Intentionally seek nominations and candidacies of individuals with a history of employment in minority-serving institutions.
- Develop for reporting purposes a survey to capture demographic information about applicants, following campus procedures and adhering to federal, state, and local regulations.
- Provide or partner in providing trainings and workshops to reduce bias in the search.
- Proactively address issues of bias with the search chair.

**IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, 64% OF SEARCHES CONDUCTED BY ACADEMIC SEARCH HAVE RESULTED IN THE PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FROM VARIOUS DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.**

## OUTSTANDING NETWORKS AND RECRUITMENT TOOLS

---

Partnering with Academic Search connects Fitchburg State University with the networks and high-impact tools that improve the quality of the candidate pool. Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler will bring extensive personal networks from which to seek nominations and applications and will work with our other consultants to access their networks as well. In addition, Fitchburg State will benefit from Academic Search's connections to leadership development programs through the American Academic Leadership Institute, our parent organization, and the many other programs that we sponsor. We view leadership development as part of our mission, and our direct support of these programs allows us to access diverse and exceptional talent.

Your search for the new President will also be strengthened because of the extensive database Academic Search maintains, and from which Dr. Crimmin and Dr. Kibler can proactively recruit candidates who possess the skills and attributes you seek.

## OUTREACH TO NON-TRADITIONAL CANDIDATES

---

You may be interested in "non-traditional candidates" who come from outside higher education and can bring fresh perspectives to your institutional needs. Academic Search's consultants are practiced in seeking nominations and applications from leaders in government, nonprofit organizations, and business whose skills might effectively transfer to a role at the University. By holding to high ethical standards in expanding areas of outreach, Academic Search can find candidates with significant relevant experience, even though their paths to the position differ from conventional routes. We maintain membership in the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (AESC), giving us use of AESC's BlueSteps database and access to thousands of professionals that may fit your search.

## COMMITMENT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

---

Confidentiality is paramount in every search both to protect candidates and to allow the work of the search committee to be honest and thorough as it executes its critical responsibilities. We can advise your search chair and provide information on best practices for maintaining confidentiality before, during, and after the search, including ensuring the security of all records in compliance with institutional, state, and EEOC guidelines.

## NON-SOLICITATION PLEDGE

An important added value is our pledge to uphold and exceed the recruitment industry standard for non-solicitation.

We will not directly solicit any employee of any institution for which we are currently performing a search. After the search concludes, we will extend that non-solicitation pledge for a period of one year.

If a member of the campus community receives a direct solicitation from Academic Search during a non-solicitation period, it should be immediately reported to our chief operating officer, and appropriate follow-up action will be taken.

If members of a campus community approach us during a non-solicitation period through application or nomination, we are ethically bound to respond to them and treat them equally in the search process.

The president or chancellor of a partner institution may waive this non-solicitation pledge as to specific employees by communicating that waiver to Academic Search.

# REFERENCES

## MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

---

Dr. Alfred Rankins  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
601-432-6418  
arankins@ihl.state.ms.us

*Dr. Rankins served as the search liaison with the Board of Trustees for three Presidential searches (Jackson State University, Delta State University, and the University of Southern Mississippi).*

## THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

---

Dr. James Hallmark  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
806-433-6121  
jhallmark@tamus.edu

*Dr. Hallmark served as the Search Liaison with the Chancellor and the Board of Regents for the President's search for Texas A&M University-Texarkana.*

## GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

---

One College Drive  
Greenfield, MA

Shannon Lorange  
Assistant to the President, Liaison to the Board of Trustees  
413-775-1410  
lorange@gcc.mass.edu

*Ms. Lorange served as the primary contact for the search for their new President.*

# PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Academic Search proposes to facilitate a comprehensive nationwide search for the new President for Fitchburg State University in consideration of a professional fee of \$77,500, which reflects a discount we provide to member institutions of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. Unlike fee models based on a percentage of the first-year salary of the person placed, this fixed fee provides you with budget certainty going into the process and removes any perceived conflict of interest on behalf of Academic Search.

Our professional fee includes all expenses associated with the work Academic Search undertakes on your behalf, other than discretionary costs for candidate travel, consultant travel, advertising, and background investigations. The framework for these expenses is reviewed and approved by Fitchburg State, and Academic Search can propose cost-saving measures. No additional administrative fees are imposed.

The projected advertising budget (right) includes online-only advertisements, which will attract a significant and robust pool of candidates. Academic Search’s consultants will be glad to work with you in determining whether print advertising is necessary and beneficial. Academic Search’s consultants recruit many top candidates through direct outreach, which is included in the professional fee.

Investigations conducted will be determined by the needs and requirements of the institution but may include credit and driving history, history of criminal and civil litigation, degree verifications and other enquiries and other research as required. The firm obtains signed permission from candidates prior to performing investigations and provides results to the institution on a confidential basis.

The estimate for reimbursable expenses shown in the table on this page does not specify costs for any candidate travel and accommodations related to in-person interviews since this cost could vary widely depending on the number of candidates selected and the location of each candidate. Academic Search will advise candidates in coordinating their travel arrangements pursuant to the policies of the institution, and, if desired, assemble candidate receipts and information for reimbursement by Fitchburg State University.

## PROPOSED INVESTMENT TOTAL

Professional Fee	\$77,500
Consultant Travel	\$5,500*
Advertising	\$3,000
Due Diligence	\$2,975

---

**Estimated Total     \$88,975**

**\*Actual travel only.  
Remote participation is included in the professional fee.**

# INTEGRATED SERVICES

Academic Search offers the following services in addition to our comprehensive search process. To learn more about our Integrated Services and the additional investment, you may contact Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Shawn Hartman.



## TRANSITION & ONBOARDING



## EXECUTIVE COACHING

### TRANSITION AND ONBOARDING

---

Because a leadership change is a critical time for boards, the campus community, senior leadership teams, and the departing and newly appointed leaders, Academic Search is eager to assist you with a clear transition strategy. The success of your next leader may well depend on a smooth transition and partnering with Academic Search can be an investment in both the leader and the institution.

Put simply, the goal for the unique transitional period is to help institutional and organizational leaders work effectively toward the smooth handoff of the baton from one leader to the next, to support a gracious and celebratory exit of the outgoing leader, and to prepare the campus community for the entrance and long-term success of a new leader.

### EXECUTIVE COACHING

---

In the best of times, effective leadership depends on having heart, courage, and wisdom. Competence is required, but competence alone is not enough. The adaptive realities of today make college and university leadership more challenging, more vexing, and more uncertain. What a leader has done in the past does not guarantee present or future success. The most successful and effective leaders know how to ask for and receive help. They know that their growth, capacity, sustainability, and well-being are ongoing endeavors.

Academic Search's commitment to identifying and securing talented leaders for colleges and universities goes far beyond executive search. Strong, thriving, and sustainable institutions necessarily depend on strong, adaptive, and sustainable leaders. The corporate sector realized long ago that one of the most valuable investments it can make in its key leaders is executive coaching. Through our distinctive Executive Coaching Practice solely for higher education leaders, we dedicate ourselves to the ongoing development, effectiveness, sustainability, and well-being of new and incumbent leaders.

# STRENGTHENING HIGHER EDUCATION

In selecting Academic Search, you are connecting the work of your institution with our ongoing commitments to developing the next generations of leaders. Our consultants are regularly engaged—often doing *pro-bono* work—with distinguished organizations and leadership institutes, such as the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), the American Council on Education (ACE), and our non-profit parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI). Through our connections, you become part of this work, as we rely on these networks and knowledge of emerging practices to help you find a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates. You also benefit from Academic Search’s role in sponsoring or facilitating programs from these higher education associations in recent years:

- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
- American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC)
- American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE)
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)
- Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU)
- Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU)
- Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU)
- College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR)
- Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)
- National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE)
- National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP)
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU)
- National Association of Presidential Assistants in Higher Education (NAPAHE)
- National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good
- North American Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges and Universities (NAAMSCU)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

## CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Academic Search is able to tap a diversity of emerging talent via the leadership development programs offered through the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI). Supported solely by Academic Search, AALI is identifying, cultivating, and empowering the next generation of higher education leadership, and in doing so, is building the foundation for the future of colleges and universities nationwide. Our senior consultants volunteer their time and expertise to help AALI’s program participants prepare for the executive search process. This speaks to Academic Search’s mission and broadens our consultants’ connections to prospective candidates and other established campus leaders who are well positioned to help identify potential candidates from their own professional networks.

**ACADEMIC SEARCH**

1015 18th Street NW, Suite 510

Washington, DC 20036

(202) 332-4049

Shawn.Hartman@academicsearch.org

# Coversheet

## Diversified Search Group

**Section:** V. Presidential Search Firms  
**Item:** G. Diversified Search Group  
**Purpose:**  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Diversified Group Fitchburg State President DS proposal.pdf





# Fitchburg State University President

**PRESENTED NOVEMBER 7, 2023 BY:**

**Kim M. Morrisson, Ph.D., Managing Director**  
**Euris E. Belle, Managing Director**

Ms. Jessica Murdoch  
Vice President, Human Resources & Payroll Services  
Fitchburg State University

Dear Jessica:

Thank you for inviting Diversified Search Group to submit our credentials to Fitchburg State University to assist in your search for a new President. Our mission is "Cultivating New Leadership for a Changing World." We are honored to be considered again as your source for new leadership, and we appreciate this opportunity to provide additional details about who we are and how we work.

Kim M. Morrisson, Ph.D.  
Managing Director

Euris E. Belle  
Managing Director

## Contact Information:

Diversified Search Group  
2005 Market Street, Floor 33  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
[Kim.morrisson@divsearch.com](mailto:Kim.morrisson@divsearch.com)  
[Euris.belle@divsearch.com](mailto:Euris.belle@divsearch.com)  
[Visit us on the web: www.diversifiedsearch.com](http://www.diversifiedsearch.com)



# Table of Contents

The Challenge	4
Firm Overview	5
Our Leadership Search Experience	9
The Team for Your Search	12
The Search Process	17
The Plan	21
Fee Structure and Guarantees	22
References	23

## The Challenge

Located on a beautiful campus in northern Massachusetts, Fitchburg State University was founded as a teachers college and has established itself as a liberal arts university with an emphasis on career-oriented learning. Founded in 1894, the University enrolls nearly 6,500 undergraduate and graduate students across an array of outstanding programs and inspires the pride of 48,000 living alumni around the world. With a low student-to-faculty ratio of 13:1, Fitchburg State students benefit from small class sizes and accessible faculty dedicated to teaching. With the search for its next President, the University seeks a leader of extraordinary ability, exceptional judgment, and care and thoughtfulness who will guide this historic and vital institution to a new level of educational impact, regional and national standing, and financial and operational strength.

Fitchburg State University is also embracing its challenges. The University's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan requires a President with the energy, skills of persuasion, and powers of advocacy to inspire significant new levels of philanthropy. It is imperative for the new President to build upon the Plan's six strategic goals, especially goal six: stewarding physical and financial resources responsibly and navigating a path to long-term organizational sustainability. Meanwhile, the growing complexities that higher education faces – including the present moment of economic uncertainty, public concern about the purpose of education, and the pace at which campus issues often now become national debates – place a premium on leadership that combines strategic management, long-term vision and a sense of urgency, and special abilities as a communicator.

Excited by this challenge, deeply invested in the mission of higher education, and with extensive experience serving public institutions, Diversified Search Group greatly appreciates the opportunity to describe how we can support the University in securing the leader ideally suited to the clear and compelling search mission that you have established. We are proud of our long-term partnership with the Fitchburg State University and for completing these past searches with you:

- ◆ President (2003)
- ◆ Chief Financial Officer (2002)
- ◆ Vice President, Academic Affairs (2004)

We would embrace with enthusiasm and pride the chance to build on the knowledge and relationships that we developed during these searches in helping the University secure its next President.

## Firm Overview

### Cultivating New Leadership for a Changing World

Our deep relationships with our clients remind us daily of the value of exceptional leadership in institutions that are vitally important to our communities, our society, and the future. We believe in the transformative power of education and the nonprofit sectors.

### What Will We Bring to Your Search?

Our clients return to us again and again because their success is our priority. They know we will deliver:

- **Integrity** in representing the needs of our clients in a vigorous and diligent manner, while treating all candidates with dignity, fairness, and honesty;
- The **national reputation and connections** that open doors to candidates of outstanding ability and potential from all backgrounds;
- A search process that centers **equity, inclusion, and sustainability** on behalf of our clients and our candidates in recognition of important cultural, political, and historical contexts; and
- The **insight** and **logistical dexterity** that come from decades of search experience and hundreds of completed searches for universities, colleges, and university systems.

### Commitment to Equity and Inclusion

Our colleges, universities, schools, and nonprofit organizations are poised to solve some of our country's most challenging problems; we share our clients' belief that finding new leaders from groups that have historically been excluded is crucial to advancing society's educational needs and solving these problems from multiple perspectives and vantage points. At every stage of the search, we offer counsel on inclusive and equitable best practices, including building a representative search committee (if the search will use a committee), drafting comprehensive language in the position description and qualifications, proactively building a diverse (by all definitions) candidate pool, and guiding the committee through vetting (interviews and referencing) that focuses on demonstrated qualifications measured against clear criteria.

We work at every turn to foster environments of belonging and accountability and recognize the necessity of investing in this work within our own organization. Our entire staff undergoes training to

hone our ability to recognize implicit bias and the cognitive shortcuts to which decision-makers might be prone. Our [Vice President for Equity and Inclusive Excellence, Ralph Tavares, Jr.](#), provides expertise and guidance on best practices in this space and is a dedicated resource to internal teams and clients alike. We are proud to note our distinctive history as a woman-owned and woman-led firm, and we stand ready to help anticipate and identify issues related to equity and inclusiveness in the search process. While all key decisions are the responsibility of the search committee and the institution, we see our role as setting the procedures and tone for a fair, rigorous, and inclusive process.

Questions we frequently ask hiring teams and search committees include:

- What assumptions are we making about the candidate that may not be based on evidence?
- Are we focusing too much on pedigree of degrees or employers versus specific accomplishments or performance of the candidates?
- Have we created criteria that focus on experiences and characteristics that match the challenges and opportunities facing the institution?
- Are we able to distinguish between making decisions on experience versus potential?
- Are we creating a committee culture that allows each committee member to share safely their individual perspectives and insights?
- Are we signaling to all candidates (through position description, questions asked, sensitivity to personal considerations, etc.) the institution's commitments and values around equity and inclusion?

In every search we lead, we commit to working proactively and energetically to recruit an excellent and diverse pool of candidates. We are proud of our record of developing exceptional and diverse candidate pools and, as a result, bringing diversity to leadership. In **2022**, our Education Practice consultants completed more than **200** searches. Among our placements, **55 percent** identified as **women**, and **48 percent** identified as **persons of color**. To ensure we are reflecting the lived experience of our candidates, they may receive an optional demographic data survey allowing them to self-identify in the areas of gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and US Veteran status. The data is reviewed internally for the aggregate analysis of candidate pools to help ensure firm practices are inclusive and representative.

While respecting our past and current clients' confidentiality, we would be happy to share with you, in person, examples of the role we can play in helping the hiring team navigate these important and timely issues.

## Land and Labor Acknowledgement

As an executive search firm that works on behalf of colleges, universities, schools, and nonprofit organizations nationwide, we know how important it is to show respect for our past, acknowledge the present, and work towards a more just future. We recognize the incredible responsibility and privilege that we have as an executive search firm to place leaders in our educational institutions around the globe and how important it is for us to recognize our place within that living history.

We also acknowledge the labor of enslaved people who helped build our country's foundation. We recognize that the wealth and prosperity of our nation, and our institutions of education, were built on the backs of enslaved people. We are committed to working towards a more just and equitable society by placing executive leaders in our colleges, universities, schools, and nonprofit organizations and creating workplaces that are inclusive and welcoming to all people.

Land and labor acknowledgments are one tool for education, advocacy, and healing as we recognize the importance of promoting justice, equity, and inclusion. They can help to build relationships, raise awareness, and create more inclusive workplaces.

**Diversified Search Group** is located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the traditional lands of the Lenapehoking people.

Fitchburg State University is located in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, on the traditional lands of the Agawam and Pennacook people.

We acknowledge the original stewards of our lands, and we pay our respects to their ancestors and descendants. We are grateful for the opportunity to work and learn on these lands and pledge to be good stewards of it.

## Our Story

In 1974, Diversified Search was founded with an innovative purpose: to place diverse leaders across all industries and sectors. Consultants from **Diversified Search**, **Storbeck Search**, and **Koya Partners** form the **Education Practice** of Diversified Search Group, a single firm comprising a portfolio of search firms focused on specialized market sectors. DSG’s family of firms also includes Alta Associates, BioQuest, Grant Cooper, and Yardstick Management, with niches in cybersecurity, life sciences, academic medicine, and consulting, respectively. In combining, we have deepened our networks and expanded our global reach, while maintaining our commitment to diversity and inclusion and our reputation for personalized service.

The Education Practice excels in executive search on behalf of colleges and universities nationwide. Our “92” Net Promoter Score – measuring the quality of our search methodology and client satisfaction – is considered exceptional in the industry. (For comparison, the global benchmark of companies across all industries that measure NPS is 32.) Today with over 300 employees, Diversified Search Group is the largest woman-founded retained executive search firm in the world, with the most diverse leadership team in the industry. We regularly produce more diverse candidate pools and placements than any leading executive search firm in the country.

Diversified Search Group has been ranked among the top ten search firms in the world by *Forbes*. Additionally, DSG is the official U.S. partner of AltoPartners, the international alliance of executive search firms that spans 58 offices in 34 countries across the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific.



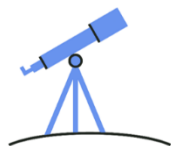
More than two-thirds of our searches are conducted for **returning clients**

**55%**

of placed leaders identify as **women**

Nearly half of placed leaders identify as **persons of color**

**48%**



Since Storbeck’s founding, we have completed **1,000+ searches in the Education and Nonprofit sectors**



**86.5% of our president/chancellor/CEO placements since 2007 are either still in office or served for 5 years or more**



# Our Leadership Search Experience

## Relevant Successes

Diversified Search brings to this search for Fitchburg State University's next President special knowledge gained in two ways:

- ◆ **Years of experience** identifying successful presidents and chancellors for public colleges and universities
- ◆ **Recent searches** that have further strengthened our network, attuned us to the most effective outreach to strong candidates in the current higher education climate, and given us fresh sources of qualified and diverse recommendations for this specific position

Examples of searches that secured new presidents and chancellors for public and private institutions:



[Cathy Cox](#)

President  
Georgia College & State  
University



[Brenda Allen](#)

President  
Lincoln University



[Helene D. Gayle](#)

President  
Spelman College

## Relevant Searches

Our Diversified Search Group and Storbeck Search teams have conducted president/chancellor searches on behalf of the following colleges and universities nationwide:

- ◆ Adelphi University
- ◆ Albertus Magnus College
- ◆ Albion College
- ◆ Albright College
- ◆ Allegheny College
- ◆ American University
- ◆ Austin Peay State University
- ◆ Bates College
- ◆ Boston University
- ◆ Brooklyn College (CUNY)
- ◆ Brandeis University
- ◆ Bucknell University
- ◆ Campbell University
- ◆ Carleton College
- ◆ Carnegie Mellon University
- ◆ Catawba College
- ◆ Central Michigan University
- ◆ Champlain College
- ◆ Clark University
- ◆ Coker University
- ◆ Colby College
- ◆ Colgate University
- ◆ The College at Brockport (SUNY)
- ◆ The College of New Jersey
- ◆ The College of Wooster
- ◆ College of the Atlantic
- ◆ Colorado College
- ◆ Culver-Stockton College
- ◆ Davidson College
- ◆ Delaware Valley University
- ◆ Denison University
- ◆ Doane University
- ◆ Dominican University (IL)
- ◆ Dominican University of California
- ◆ Drew University
- ◆ D'Youville College
- ◆ Edgewood College
- ◆ Elon University
- ◆ Emerson College
- ◆ Fisk University
- ◆ Fitchburg State University
- ◆ Franklin & Marshall College
- ◆ Georgia College and State University
- ◆ Georgia Highlands College
- ◆ Gettysburg College
- ◆ Grand Valley State University
- ◆ Gwynedd Mercy University
- ◆ Hampton University
- ◆ Hanover College
- ◆ Haverford College
- ◆ Hendrix College
- ◆ Indiana University Bloomington
- ◆ Indiana University East
- ◆ Indiana University Kokomo
- ◆ Indiana University Northwest
- ◆ Indiana University Southeast
- ◆ Indiana University South Bend
- ◆ Iona College
- ◆ Jacksonville State University
- ◆ Kalamazoo College
- ◆ Kean University
- ◆ Kent State University
- ◆ Kenyon College
- ◆ Lafayette College
- ◆ Lake Forest College
- ◆ Lake Superior State University (*active search*)
- ◆ Lesley University
- ◆ Lincoln University
- ◆ Luther College
- ◆ Manhattanville College
- ◆ Marietta College (*active search*)
- ◆ Marymount University
- ◆ Mercy College

- ◆ Merrimack College
- ◆ Michigan State University
- ◆ Michigan Technological University
- ◆ Millikin University
- ◆ Molloy College
- ◆ Nebraska Wesleyan University
- ◆ North Carolina Central University
- ◆ North Central College
- ◆ Oglethorpe University
- ◆ Pace University
- ◆ Pennsylvania College of Technology
- ◆ Pennsylvania State University Berks
- ◆ Pennsylvania State University  
Brandywine
- ◆ Pennsylvania State University Hazleton
- ◆ Principia College
- ◆ Queens University of Charlotte
- ◆ Reed College
- ◆ Rhodes College
- ◆ Rider University
- ◆ Ripon College
- ◆ Rollins College
- ◆ Rosemont College
- ◆ Rutgers University–Camden
- ◆ Saint Joseph's University
- ◆ Scripps College
- ◆ Seton Hall University
- ◆ Skidmore College
- ◆ Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
- ◆ Spelman College
- ◆ St. Olaf College
- ◆ St. Lawrence University
- ◆ Stetson University
- ◆ Stevens Institute of Technology
- ◆ SUNY Buffalo State University (*active search*)
- ◆ SUNY Empire State
- ◆ SUNY Fredonia
- ◆ Susquehanna University
- ◆ Swarthmore College
- ◆ Sweet Briar College
- ◆ Temple University
- ◆ Trinity College
- ◆ Trinity University
- ◆ Trocaire College
- ◆ Unity College
- ◆ University of Colorado
- ◆ University of Hartford
- ◆ University of Maine
- ◆ University of Maine at Farmington
- ◆ University of Maine at Fort Kent
- ◆ University of Michigan–Flint
- ◆ University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- ◆ University of Oklahoma
- ◆ University of Oregon
- ◆ University of Pittsburgh
- ◆ University of South Florida Sarasota–  
Manatee
- ◆ University of Southern Indiana
- ◆ University of the South
- ◆ University of Wisconsin–Green Bay
- ◆ University of Wisconsin–Madison
- ◆ University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
- ◆ University of Wisconsin–Parkside
- ◆ University of Wisconsin–Stout
- ◆ University of Wisconsin–Whitewater
- ◆ Ursinus College
- ◆ Vermont State University
- ◆ Wagner College (*active search*)
- ◆ Warren Wilson College
- ◆ Washington & Jefferson College
- ◆ Washington and Lee University
- ◆ Wayne State College
- ◆ Wayne State University
- ◆ Westfield State University
- ◆ Wheaton College (MA)
- ◆ Whitman College
- ◆ Widener University
- ◆ Winston-Salem State University
- ◆ Wilkes University
- ◆ Willamette University
- ◆ Youngstown State University

---

## The Team for Your Search

---

Searches that succeed are well run. They bring to the fore the finest candidates and deliver a leader who will rise to the new challenge. If we are chosen to partner on this search, we will designate a team of experts who bring extensive experience as well as the ability to support your search with efficiency, timely information, impeccable attention to detail, and discretion.

**Kim M. Morrisson, Ph.D., Managing Director**, and **Euris E. Belle, Managing Director**, will lead the team and take responsibility for all aspects of the search. The complete search team, which will be developed based upon expertise and capacity, includes:

- An **Associate** to assist with candidate identification and recruitment;
- A **Search Coordinator** to provide logistical support throughout the process; and
- A **Research Associate** to provide research support at various stages of the search.

Diversified Search Group is distinguished by the collegial working relationships that our consultants and associates enjoy across the firm. In regular, confidential check-in meetings, we pool our knowledge and networks to support each other's searches, including sharing ideas for candidates. If you choose this team to work with you on this search, you are tapping into the expertise and connections of every member of our staff.



### **Kim M. Morrisson, Ph.D., Managing Director**

Kim Morrisson brings decades of higher education experience to executive search, having served as Vice Provost of the University of Pennsylvania before joining Diversified Search.

Kim's work focuses on educational institutions and nonprofit organizations. She conducts senior executive search assignments for research universities, liberal arts colleges, academic medical centers, nonprofit associations, foundations, independent secondary schools, and companies that serve the educational sector.

Kim has also consulted with colleges and universities on organizational structure and improvement of operations and on program development with particular focus on residential planning, integrating academic and non-academic services, and enhancing student service delivery. She has taught on the faculties of the English Department and the Higher Education Division at the University of Pennsylvania.

Before joining Diversified Search, Kim served as Vice Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, leading the Division of University Life for seven years and serving as Vice Provost and Executive Director of the 21st Century Project for the Undergraduate Experience.

As Vice Provost for University Life, Penn's Division of Student Affairs Kim directed strategic, fiscal and human resource planning for 26 departments and more than 300 staff, led facilities planning for the University's residential system, and acted as University spokesperson on student issues. In earlier roles, she was responsible for managing advising services to undergraduates in the College of Arts and Sciences, and for negotiating solutions to problems brought to the Ombudsman's office of the University.

Kim earned her B.A. *magna cum laude* in English with distinction in the major from Smith College, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She earned her Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Pennsylvania.



### **Euris E. Belle, Managing Director**

Euris Belle has conducted senior-level searches for public and private colleges and universities, foundations, and a wide range of non-profit organizations. She is based in Diversified Search's Atlanta office.

Among her placements are presidents, chancellors, provosts, chief academic officers, chief diversity officers, chief information officers, and deans of colleges and universities; and CEOs, presidents, and executive directors of not-for-profit organizations.

Her prior executive search experience includes serving as a principal with Heidrick & Struggles and CEO of a specialty retained search firm. Earlier in her career, she was a vice president with a major money center bank and project manager for a systems integration, training and software consulting company. She began her career in the Management Information Consulting Division of Arthur Andersen & Company (now Accenture).

Relevant to this proposal, Euris has conducted presidential searches for Spelman College, Lincoln University, Fisk University, Winston-Salem State University, North Carolina Central University, and Jacksonville State University. She is currently conducting presidential searches for Bethune-Cookman University, Tuskegee University, and Russell Sage College.

Euris earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Computer Studies from Northwestern University.



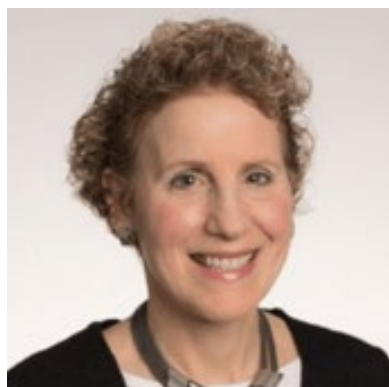
### **Christine Falcone, Senior Search Associate**

Christine brings to executive search ten years of experience in student affairs in higher education supporting students and alumni in their career development journey.

Prior to joining Diversified Search Group, Christine worked at Saint Joseph's University in the Career Development Center as an Associate Director and Pre-Law Advisor. In this role, she managed direct counseling appointments, designed and implemented online career courses, and helped create a successful pre-law program. She built strong one-on-one relationships with students through her work on the counseling team and was committed to providing empathetic support to all those whom she worked with. As Pre-Law Advisor, she established the LEAD Program, a pipeline program for underrepresented students who had an interest in pursuing law school. As a career counselor she successfully navigated the career concerns of incoming freshmen all the way through established alumni seeking career changes.

In addition to her time in the Career Development Center, Christine is also a licensed professional counselor, and supervises those who are working towards licensure. She held leadership roles in the Eastern Association of Colleges and Employers and co-chaired the 2020 conference.

In her higher education assignments with Diversified Search Group, Christine has participated in the placement of deans and provost-level positions. She has also participated in searches for heads of independent schools.



### **Nancy Helfman, Vice President and Senior Search Associate**

Nancy Helfman is a Vice President and Senior Search Associate in Diversified Search Group's Education, Nonprofit, and Arts and Culture Practice. A seasoned executive search consultant, her work focuses on senior-level searches in higher education for academic leaders with a focus on presidents, provosts, and deans, as well as administrative leaders including CFOs, CHROs, and VPs for Student Affairs. Nancy also works on leadership searches for independent schools and a variety of nonprofit organizations. Her career at Diversified search began in the Healthcare Practice working on physician clinical executive leadership and C-Suite searches in academic medical centers and regional healthcare and faith-based systems.

Representative clients include University of Nebraska, University of Texas at San Antonio, Florida International University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Saint Louis University, Loyola Marymount University, Colby College, Germantown Friends School, and a variety of faith-based institutions. Nancy has expertise in developing and executing search strategies, sourcing, screening, referencing, and facilitating the search process.

Nancy joined Diversified Search in 2004, after a successful 12-year run with her own search consulting practice subcontracting to a number of executive search firms, including Diversified Search. Her executive search career began with a boutique firm specializing in physician leadership searches. Prior to her career in search, Nancy worked in human resources management.

Nancy earned her BA in International Relations and MBA from the University of Pennsylvania.



### **Susan Kart, Senior Associate**

Susan joined Storbeck Search following an academic and curatorial career of more than twenty years.

She brings expertise in the interdisciplinary humanities to Storbeck, with particular focus on small to mid-size liberal arts institutions and local and international art organizations. Prioritizing equity and inclusion, improving campus and workplace climate, and increasing access to education and the arts continue to be driving forces in her work as a recruiter.

Susan is a historian of the arts of Africa; her research, publications and exhibitions focus on West and Central Africa, specifically concerning the display and consumption of African art, along with the social lives of art objects and art movements. She has published widely in academic journals and has held teaching and research appointments at Lehigh University (Bethlehem, PA), Sarah Lawrence College (Bronxville, NY), Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, NY), SCAD (Savannah, GA), and both of her alma maters.

Susan earned a Ph. D in Art History, Arts of Africa, as well as an M.A., MPhil in Art History; Arts of the African Diaspora, Global Feminist Practice from Columbia University. She also received an A.B in Art History; Maya Architecture from Smith College.



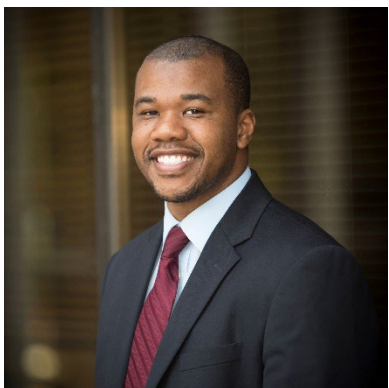
### **Nora Maurer, Senior Search Coordinator**

Nora brings to executive search sixteen years of experience in higher education supporting students, faculty, and staff in their international education and program development endeavors.

Prior to joining Diversified Search Group in 2022, Nora worked at West Chester University of Pennsylvania as the Associate Director of Education Abroad. In this role, she managed direct student advising, faculty-led program development, risk management and mitigation of international programs, and budget development and oversight. She also served as Co-Chair of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education state-wide International Educators Network.

In her higher education assignments with Diversified Search Group, Nora has participated in searches for presidents, vice chancellors, and deans as well as chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officers.

Nora earned her BA in Spanish and Ethnic Studies from Bowling Green State University and her MEd in Higher Education Administration from the University of Toledo.



### **Jay Beckham, Senior Research Associate**

As a research associate, Jay provides strategic intelligence and support throughout the search process while also providing expertise and assistance on technical and research matters.

Previously, Jay served as an Admission Reader in the Undergraduate Admission Office at Princeton University. Jay also worked in the office of Enrollment Management and Student Success at Drexel University and as a Graduate Assistant at the University of Pennsylvania. Jay is a licensed and certified teacher and began his career in education as a K-5 teacher in the Christina School District in Wilmington, Delaware.

Jay has also volunteered his time as a college application coach to high school students in the School District of Philadelphia.

Jay earned an M.S.Ed in Literacy from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.S.Ed in Education from Cabrini University.



# The Search Process

Across more than 1,000 searches, Diversified Search Group has developed a five-step search and hiring process that has resulted in marked success identifying and securing leaders who thrive at the institutions they serve. Each step provides a framework for an intentional search that is attuned to the needs of the institution and to the marketplace of candidates. Within this framework, Diversified Search will customize the process and develop the best path to identifying a President for Fitchburg State University.

The five steps of our search process are: **Listening**, **Recruiting**, **Assessing**, **Referencing**, and **Hiring**.

## Listening

**Understanding, collaboration, and partnership** are our watchwords as we approach our search process with you. To position you for success, we commit to partnering with the Board and the search committee through the entirety of the search, and we begin by providing expert advice regarding:

- Search committee structure and charge
- Best process and timetable according to your needs
- Strategy and best practices for engaging constituencies in fruitful dialogue

**To develop a strong sense of the opportunities and challenges** facing the University and the next President, we will pose the following questions to all constituents, including trustees, faculty, administrators, staff, students, and others you identify as important to understanding the University:

- What is distinctive about Fitchburg State University?
- What are your specific challenges at this time?
- What do your supporters hope to achieve in the future?
- What are critical attributes desired in the next President?
- What change do you want them to lead?

We **synthesize** the wide-ranging community feedback and use it to draft the position specification, which serves to:

- Provide prospective candidates with vital information and insights regarding the University and the opportunities facing the next President
- Focus the search committee on a common point of reference regarding goals, desired qualifications, and selection criteria for assessing candidates

## Recruiting

We **take a proactive and personalized approach** to recruiting and developing a diverse candidate pool and inclusive process. While sharing the advertisement will draw responses, exceptional candidates must be researched and contacted with attention and care. To develop a robust and diverse candidate pool, we will:

- Draw on our broad networks and talk with individuals who can serve as sources of prospective candidates well matched to your search priorities
- Proactively recruit accomplished candidates who may not be looking for new positions
- Leverage our database and research skills to find candidates with strong ties to Fitchburg State University and the region
- Seek out rising stars from a wide variety of backgrounds to ensure diversity and comprehensiveness of the candidate pool with regard to gender, race, ethnicity, and experience
- Research and pursue candidates from outside of higher education where desired
- Devise specific strategies to attract outstanding candidates who may need additional sensitivity to their circumstances and/or accommodations

## Assessing

To aid in the committee's evaluation of candidates, we will:

- Proactively recruit and assess candidates continuously, using the criteria defined by the committee and laid out in the position specification
- Provide the committee with insights we gather from our conversations with the candidates, which may occur by phone, video, or in person
- Offer additional insights gathered in conversations about candidates and vetting through our shared internal resources

- Share all candidate materials and expressions of interest, encourage open and timely communication, and facilitate confidential tracking of candidates by means of a password-protected portal hosted on our website
- Support a rigorous interview process using standard interview questions and assessments
- Prompt a full and thorough discussion of the strengths, weaknesses, and qualifications of all viable candidates at each meeting with a clear framework to mitigate bias

## Six-Step Referencing

Research shows that interviews are the least reliable indicators of a candidate's success in the job and, in addition, that most unsuccessful hires can be linked directly to poor or incomplete referencing. Diversified Search Group differs from other firms in our unyielding adherence to the "no surprises" rule in search, which powers our approach to due diligence in a six-stage referencing process:

1. **Backgrounding:** Before we even speak to a candidate, we source prospects and their attributes with extensive internet research and leverage the data we have compiled in our comprehensive candidate database.
2. **Connecting:** In parallel with backgrounding candidates, we reach out to our contacts to ask specifically about the candidate in question – confidentially. We are able to do this and maintain confidentiality owing to our years of search experience and the strong networks we have developed. Our contacts trust us, and we trust them.
3. **Discovering:** After the committee has narrowed the candidate pool down to top prospects, we will conduct online presence checks and degree verifications. Working with a trusted vendor, we conduct a full review of all publicly accessible information (e.g., internet, news publications, student newspapers, blogs, social media) to identify any potentially negative information concerning these candidates.
4. **Traditional referencing:** We take this step typically after an initial (in-person or video) interview. We encourage the committee to play an active role in this outreach, and we develop a script and a list of questions based on concerns that were identified during the interviews. Reference reports are fully shared with the entire committee.
5. **Targeted referencing:** Here, too, we encourage the committee to play an active role. It is important to note that this stage of referencing is, like the others, carefully coordinated and structured so that the candidate remains informed about outreach, and we all know who is calling whom, when, and how. We have a highly trained staff of professional recruiters and reference checkers, and whether the committee is involved in this referencing stage or not, we employ an appropriately aggressive referencing model to ensure that we explore all possible avenues of questioning, while balancing the need to be respectful of the candidate.

6. **Verifying:** Once the hiring authority has identified preferred candidate(s), we offer a full background check through a trusted vendor. The report may include: employment verification; civil and criminal legal review and checks; plagiarism checks; confirmation of veteran status as appropriate; national sex offender registry, etc. We share this report only with the hiring officer, as it contains sensitive financial information. If significant issues arise from the report, we make a recommendation to the committee to reconsider the candidate.

## Hiring

Because we are committed to the long-term success of Fitchburg State University, we remain in close partnership during the final phases of the search. As the committee prepares to make its recommendation, we will:

- Advise the Board on lead candidates' compensation packages and concerns related to the offer
- Assist in putting together the terms and conditions of employment for the final candidate
- Offer counsel for leveraging the positive impact of the announcement to lay the foundation for a successful transition
- Recommend best practices, such as a transition team, programs for new educational leaders, and executive coaches
- Provide advice, counsel, and follow-up with Fitchburg State University and the hired candidate to ensure the placement's long-term success

## Additional Services

Upon request, we offer strategic advisory services to aid in the successful completion of your search and support our placement and your institution beyond the date of hire. Our services are designed to help transformational leaders succeed and include independent leadership evaluation through the Hogan Personality Inventory assessment, executive coaching, onboarding and strategic advisory consulting, and connected leadership services.

If you are interested in learning more about the additional services we can provide throughout the search process and beyond, we are happy to elaborate on our offerings.

# The Plan

## Search Timeline

Everything we do is customized to your search. We will work with the search committee to develop a timeline that fits your needs and situation. Below is a possible timeline that can be adjusted as needed.

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
<b>LISTENING</b>						
<i>Meet with search committee and key stakeholders</i>						
<i>Draft and finalize position specification</i>						
<i>Develop recruiting strategy</i>						
<i>Confirm search process and timeline</i>						
<i>Research top prospects and sources</i>						
<b>RECRUITING</b>						
<i>Gather candidate ideas and suggestions</i>						
<i>Begin recruitment phase</i>						
<i>Meet with search committee to discuss progress</i>						
<i>Evaluate prospective candidates</i>						
<b>ASSESSING</b>						
<i>Refine candidate profile and modify recruiting strategy as needed</i>						
<i>Continue to identify and recruit candidates</i>						
<i>Meet with search committee to review and select interviewees</i>						
<i>Interviews</i>						
<b>REFERENCING</b>						
<i>Conduct referencing and background checks</i>						
<i>Conduct targeted references and other due diligence</i>						
<b>HIRING</b>						
<i>Identify lead candidate(s)</i>						
<i>Lead candidate(s) meet(s) with others as appropriate</i>						
<i>Negotiate contract</i>						
<i>Plan announcement</i>						
<i>Announce new President</i>						

# Fee Structure and Guarantees

## Fees and Expenses

- The retainer for our services is set as one third of the placement's first-year compensation or at our minimum of \$70,000, billed over the first three months of the assignment and then adjusted upward at the end if needed.
- Our fee for indirect expenses is 12 percent of the retainer and covers the apportionment of such administrative costs as system database management, technology licenses, and data analytics costs. This fee is billed along with the retainer.
- All fully reimbursable expenses such as travel, advertising, printed materials, overnight delivery, and the services of a third-party vendor to perform background checks and press searches are billed at cost. The total cost for these expenses is driven by the search process and the decisions made by the institution. Direct expenses are invoiced as incurred on a monthly basis.

## Guarantees:

- We will not recruit our placements.
- We will not recruit any person reporting to the placement for a period of one year after the completion of an assignment unless we receive approval granting an exception.
- If a candidate we place leaves the position within 12 months of their start date, we will reinitiate, for expenses only, a search for the same position and level as the original placement, under the following circumstances: (i) the placement's departure is for cause, or (ii) the placement resigns (for reasons that do not include a material change in the job requirements).

## References

---

As strong believers in the power of referencing, we highly encourage you to contact the recent clients listed below to learn more about working with us.

### Spelman College, President

**Client contact:** Terri Harris Reed, Ph.D., Senior Vice President & Secretary of the College  
[treed15@spelman.edu](mailto:treed15@spelman.edu), (404) 270-5005

**Placement:** Helene D. Gayle, [hgayle@spelman.edu](mailto:hgayle@spelman.edu)

### Lincoln University, President

**Placement:** Brenda Allen, Ph.D., [ballen@lincoln.edu](mailto:ballen@lincoln.edu), (484) 365-7400

### Nellie Mae Education Foundation, CEO

**Board chair:** Warren Simmons, Ph.D., [warsim51@gmail.com](mailto:warsim51@gmail.com), (401) 225-8659

### Florida International University, Senior Vice President for Advancement & CEO of the FIU Foundation

**Search chair:** Aime Martinez, Ph.D., Senior Vice President, [amartin@fiu.edu](mailto:amartin@fiu.edu), (305) 348-2679

# Coversheet

## Isaacson Miller

**Section:** V. Presidential Search Firms  
**Item:** I. Isaacson Miller  
**Purpose:**  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** IM Proposal\_Fitchburg State University President.pdf





# Executive Search Proposal

Fitchburg State University | President

November 3, 2023

# Table of Contents

---

## Proposal Letter

- Our Understanding and Relevant Experience
- Our Approach to Search
- Building a Deep and Inclusive Candidate Pool
- Proposed Team
- Proposed Timeline
- Fee Structure
- Conclusion

## Addenda

- Representative Clients
- Sample Timeline
- Sample Work Plan
- Fees and Expenses



November 3, 2023

Ms. Jessica Murdoch  
Vice President, Human Resources & Payroll Services  
Fitchburg State University  
160 Pearl Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Emailed to: [jmurdoch@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:jmurdoch@fitchburgstate.edu)

Dear Ms. Murdoch:

Thank you for the opportunity to propose our firm for your consideration in the search for the next President of Fitchburg State University. Isaacson, Miller (IM) would welcome the chance to partner with you on this important recruitment, and we are confident that our experience and disciplined approach would serve you well. We bring distinctive expertise to this assignment, rooted in our deep and immediate experience in a broad range of presidential searches, our understanding of the modern challenges facing public universities, an unparalleled commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in search, and our recognition of the signature qualities that are desirable in successful presidential placements. We are a Boston-based firm, and we bring extensive experience with higher education searches throughout the Commonwealth. We believe that you are in an excellent position to attract outstanding candidates for the presidential role by activating our regional and national networks and expertise.

This letter and enclosed materials provide information on our firm, search process, proposed team, relevant experience, and fee structure. You might also refer to [www.imsearch.com](http://www.imsearch.com) for information on some of our current searches and recent placements.

### **Our Understanding and Relevant Experience**

Founded in 1982, IM is an employee-owned corporation with approximately 270 employees across the country. Unlike many of our competitors, we do not use independent contractors. Since our founding, we have been committed to strengthening and diversifying the leadership of the civic sector nationwide. We conduct approximately 500 executive searches each year and have completed nearly 9,000 searches over the past 40+ years, most of them for non-profit leaders. More than half of our searches are in higher education, recruiting university and college presidents, chancellors, vice presidents, provosts, and deans. We have the most comprehensive higher education practice in the country. As you will see in the attached list of clients, we have significant experience working with public universities across the nation. Our clients also include research institutes, healthcare institutions, especially academic health care, foundations, arts and culture organizations, environmental defense, economic development organizations, human service agencies, and national advocacy organizations. In 2022, 80% of our searches were for organizations that returned to IM for additional searches after being pleased with our past results.

Ms. Jessica Murdoch  
November 3, 2023  
Page 2 of 6

ISAACSON, MILLER

As a result of our work spanning the full spectrum of higher education institutions, we have developed a profound appreciation for the increasing complexity of these positions and a deep understanding of leadership qualities most desired by search committees. We have enclosed a comprehensive list of our searches for presidents and chancellors.

### **Our Approach to Search**

Our process is simple but disciplined and consists of three essential parts—definition, candidate discovery, and selection—built around a schedule, with each deliverable and decision-point planned with you at the search launch.

**Definition |** Early in the search, we will learn from you. We will visit with you via video or in person, joining you for appropriate on-campus listening sessions to hear firsthand feedback from community stakeholders and arranging individual meetings with the leadership. These meetings will help to build confidence in the search process, giving those who are not on the search committee an opportunity to share their aspirations and concerns for the new leader, as well as the attributes that they believe are necessary for the next President. We will examine the core challenges and identify in detail what makes this job compelling and what constitutes success. Our goal is to write a compelling case for the organization, to make explicit the hard work new leadership must undertake, and to internalize as much as possible the mission, strategy, and culture of Fitchburg State. We take pride in the fact that both clients and candidates appreciate the clarity of our presentation and the nuances that we convey as we describe the search in writing and orally.

**Candidate Discovery |** After the listening sessions and preparation of the position profile, we network assiduously. IM maintains an extensive proprietary database—Searchlink—that contains more than 642,000 people records, and we add over 3,500 new records per month. This database includes not only prospects and candidates from our prior searches, but also sources we have used, as well as members of selection committees and boards. Our team will tap our extensive networks to recruit excellent candidates, especially those who are not seeking a new position. We will inform your decisions with our sense of their experience, reputations, and aspirations. We will also work hard with you to galvanize the natural networks of the organization. Maximizing a network takes time and effort, and we would partner with you to communicate broadly.

We interview individuals under consideration repeatedly and at length, so that by the time the committee selects and meets with candidates, we will have developed as full a sense as possible of their history, motives, aspirations, and the trajectory of their leadership learning. When our clients hire us, they expect us to know and understand the people we present for their consideration. We understand our clients' commitment and take the responsibility seriously.

**Selection |** We help in preparation for semi-finalist interviews, providing written and oral guidance on the interview process and proposing questions. We help to structure committee interviews, both to provide an opportunity for the candidates to learn more about the organization and the position, and for our client

Ms. Jessica Murdoch  
November 3, 2023  
Page 3 of 6

ISAACSON, MILLER

to learn more about each candidate. In the final stages of the search, we help our client make a well-informed decision and stay in close contact with the finalists to address their questions and concerns. Specialized and dedicated reference professionals conduct at least six thorough references (on-list and off-list) on the finalists, in the form of extensive conversations that yield many pages of commentary. Finally, we are often asked to play an important role in the final negotiations between the candidate and our client. Although we do not provide legal advice, we can help think through compensation packages and provide advice on relocation and family considerations.

We pride ourselves on providing extraordinary service and personal attention to our clients. The best results occur when our team and the committee share a commitment to rigor and to the search as an elaborate learning process—learning first about the role, then about the universe of possibilities for candidates, and finally learning in more detail about fewer and fewer people. In addition to formal search committee meetings, we typically schedule regular check-in calls with the committee chair and have a fair amount of ad hoc contact with the chair and with committee members. We support meetings and calls with a secure website where committee members can follow the progress of the search.

In addition, throughout the search process we will:

- Work with the search committee to design a search process that is in compliance with applicable rules for conducting presidential searches in the Commonwealth.
- Work with the search committee to prepare an “Invitation to Apply” or “Position Profile” for publication and dissemination.
- Make recommendations to the search committee concerning appropriate venues and a distribution plan for the Invitation to Apply.
- Develop a recruitment strategy for each search based on the challenges facing the University and the opportunities it offers potential candidates.
- Identify, recruit, and screen potential candidates.
- Maintain a detailed database for the search, recording all contacts with potential candidates, sources, and research.
- Interview all potential candidates that we determine are qualified before presenting them to the search committee for its evaluation.
- Share comprehensive oral presentations on each potential candidate with the committee.
- Organize interviews—including travel and accommodations, etc.—for the candidates and search committee and help the search committee and the candidates prepare for those interviews. We will also participate in interviews as appropriate.
- Conduct extensive, in-depth referencing (both on-list and off-list) and thorough background checks for all final candidates.
- Close the search after the hire by notifying all candidates and sources of your decision.

### **Building a Deep and Inclusive Candidate Pool**

Higher education leadership is at the core of Isaacson, Miller's work. We have been tracking the current and emerging talent in the field for more than 40 years, and our knowledge of leadership records and accomplishments is second to none. By virtue of our depth in the sector we have established relationships with presidents, provosts, vice presidents, and deans across every sector of higher education. These relationships will enable us to identify and persuade a broad array of candidates into the pool, including those who are successful and deeply ensconced in their current leadership positions. We will partner closely with the institution to make sure that we use every lever, including occasional direct engagement by the client, to ensure that we have persuaded the best candidates to engage in the process.

Our firm maintains an extensive proprietary database—Searchlink—that contains more than 642,000 people records, and we add over 3,500 new records each month. This database includes not only prospects and candidates from our prior searches, but also sources, as well as members of search committees and boards. As you will see from our enclosed list of previous clients, we have completed a significant number of leadership searches that have introduced us to many individuals whom we can call upon both formally and informally.

To recruit a candidate pool with leaders from underrepresented backgrounds, we have found that the most important success factor is making a significant up-front investment of time to brainstorm, research, and identify a broad and diverse set of potential candidates. The diversity among current leadership in research universities by gender, race, or other aspects of difference—statistics that we track assiduously—are not sufficient to produce a robust pool without intentionality, focus, and commitment. Consistent effort, raising diversity in all sourcing conversations, and thinking creatively and expansively about the types of institutions and leadership roles we might consider ensures that our clients are presented with a truly diverse pool of candidates.

With every search, IM expands its facility to identify individuals from underrepresented populations and deliver on our client's commitment to this critical work. This includes:

- Developing a position profile that is free of bias and addresses the minimum, as well as preferred, qualifications for the position, using "preferred" as much as possible to create an open and inclusive set of criteria.
- Articulating the client's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in communications to signal that the process is fair and equitable, the institutional dedication is genuine, and the climate is welcoming, particularly to individuals from groups that are underrepresented.
- Ensuring that a tailored and targeted research strategy is developed, which emphasizes diversity of candidate backgrounds and profiles.
- Networking with associations and affinity groups focused on diversity and sourcing a diverse network of leaders, as well as tapping into the numerous Minority Serving Institution searches the firm has conducted.

Ms. Jessica Murdoch  
November 3, 2023  
Page 5 of 6

ISAACSON, MILLER

- Where appropriate, advertising in targeted publications and extending our outreach through postings on relevant websites, listservs, and targeted email lists.
- Encouraging candidates in their application/letter of interest and throughout the interview process to outline their experience, commitment, and results in the area of equity, diversity, and inclusion as it relates to the institutional diversity goals at Fitchburg State.

### Proposed Team

If selected to partner with you on this search, I, Daniel Rodas, would lead the search on behalf of IM. I am a senior partner in the firm, and am based in Newton, Massachusetts. I would serve as a strategic thought partner and would participate in all client meetings, interview clients in depth, and provide advice and counsel to the search committee throughout the process. My professional biography is below.

The full IM team would include an associate, who would assist in networking and recruiting; a search coordinator, who would be responsible for logistics and project management of the search; a research specialist, who would participate in brainstorming sessions to develop and refine our networking list; and a reference specialist to interview references provided by the candidate and those known to us from our own sources who have worked with the candidate. Additionally, the entire recruiting staff at IM would be aware of this search. IM is highly collaborative in sharing candidate and source suggestions and in helping to spread the word about any opening.

### Daniel Rodas | Partner



Dan joined the firm in 2013 after a career in higher education spanning more than two decades. At Isaacson, Miller, he has built a multi-faceted search practice, leading recruitment assignments in higher education, academic medicine, research institutes, independent schools, and other non-profit organizations. As an experienced executive search consultant, he has an extensive track record of recruiting executive leaders for leading institutions nationally. Dan has led numerous presidential and chancellor searches for a wide range of institutions. He also has extensive experience with financial and enrollment management searches as well as academic leadership searches.

Prior to joining the firm, Dan served as vice president for planning and vice president for human resources at Long Island University, as well as provost of Southampton College. He has also held administrative positions at Duke, Stanford, and Harvard universities.

Dan holds a BA from Williams College, an EdM from Harvard University, and an MBA and PhD in Higher Education from Stanford University.

Ms. Jessica Murdoch  
November 3, 2023  
Page 6 of 6

ISAACSON, MILLER

### Proposed Timeline

We expect a search like this to take approximately four to five months. In our experience, the factors most likely to affect the schedule will be the initial discovery phase, when we visit the client organization, interview stakeholders, and develop a position profile that is then finalized with the search committee's input—and the selection phase, with finalist interviews, selection of the successful candidate, negotiation, and acceptance. These, in turn, are affected by the number and range of constituencies that must be included, the size and complexity of the organization, and its prevailing customs and traditions with respect to making significant strategic decisions.

We would work with you to develop a schedule that both meets your scheduling requirements and has a high probability of success. We would recommend at least eight and optimally ten weeks for outreach and networking to develop a high-quality, robust pool of candidates with a diversity of backgrounds and professional experiences. The remainder of the time required for the search is largely driven by candidate, search committee, and decision-maker schedules.

A sample timeline and detailed work plan are attached for your review. These guidelines provide a road map for the search and help to ensure accountability.

### Fee Structure

IM works for clients on a retainer basis. Our fee is one-third of the amount that you agree to pay the hired candidate for the first year of employment, with a minimum fee of \$60,000. We also incur two types of reimbursable expenses, which are described in more detail along with our guarantee in the enclosed materials.

### Conclusion

The selection of a president is the most important task of any university board. We are sensitive to the heightened intensity that will surround this effort and believe that we are in a strong position to support Fitchburg State in its search for a new leader. We believe that the collective energy of our organization and the experience of our team will serve you well. Thank you again for the opportunity to present this information for your consideration of our services. In the meantime, please let us know if we can provide anything further to assist in your decision-making process.

Sincerely,



Daniel Rodas | Partner  
617-933-1888 | [drodas@imsearch.com](mailto:drodas@imsearch.com)



**HIGHER EDUCATION | PRESIDENTS + CHANCELLORS  
SEARCHES 2013 - PRESENT**

**Alexandria Technical & Community College**

Alexandria, MN

President

**American Academy in Rome**

New York, NY

President and Chief Executive Officer

**American University of Armenia**

Yerevan, Armenia

President

**American University of Central Asia**

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

President

**The American University of Paris**

Paris, France

President

**Amherst College**

Amherst, MA

President

**Antioch College**

Yellow Springs, OH

President

**Arapahoe Community College**

Littleton, CO

President

**ArtCenter College of Design**

Pasadena, CA

President

**Auburn Theological Seminary**

New York, NY

President

**Bates College**

Lewiston, ME

President

**Bay Path University**

Longmeadow, MA

President

**Bellarmino University**

Louisville, KY

President

**Bentley University**

Waltham, MA

President

**Boston Architectural College**

Boston, MA

President

**Bowdoin College**

Brunswick, ME

President

**California College of the Arts**

San Francisco, CA

President

**California Institute of the Arts**

Valencia, CA

President

**California State Polytechnic University,  
Pomona**

Pomona, CA

President

**California State University, Channel Islands**

Camarillo, CA

President

**California State University, Chico**

Chico, CA

President

**California State University, Fullerton**

Fullerton, CA

President

**California State University, San Marcos**

San Marcos, CA

President

**California State University, Stanislaus**

Turlock, CA

President

**Central European University**

Vienna, Austria

Rector

**Chicago Theological Seminary**

Chicago, IL

President

**Church Divinity School of the Pacific**

Berkeley, CA

President

**The City College of New York**

New York, NY

President

**City University of New York**

New York, NY

Chancellor

**City University of New York, The Graduate Center**

New York, NY

President

**Clark Atlanta University**

Atlanta, GA

President

**Clarkson University**

Potsdam, NY

President

**Cleveland Institute of Music**

Cleveland, OH

President

**College of the Holy Cross**

Worcester, MA

President

**Columbia College Chicago**

Chicago, IL

President and Chief Executive Officer

**Community College of Aurora**

Denver, CO

President

**Community College of Denver**

Denver, CO

President

**Converse University**

Spartanburg, SC

President

**County College of Morris**

Randolph, NJ

President

**DePaul University**

Chicago, IL

President

**DePauw University**

Greencastle, IN

President

**Dickinson College**

Carlisle, PA

President

**Dillard University**

New Orleans, LA  
President

**Duke University**

Durham, NC  
President

**Duke University Health System**

Durham, NC  
Chancellor for Health Affairs, Duke  
University and President and CEO, Duke  
University Health System

**EARTH University**

San Jose, Costa Rica  
President/Rector

**Elizabeth City State University**

Elizabeth City, NC  
Chancellor

**Emory & Henry College**

Emory, VA  
President

**Fisk University**

Nashville, TN  
President

**Front Range Community College**

Westminster, CO  
President

**The George Washington University**

Washington, DC  
President

**Georgian Court University**

Lakewood, NJ  
President

**Goucher College**

Baltimore, MD  
President

**Grinnell College**

Grinnell, IA  
President

**Hamilton College**

Clinton, NY  
President

**Hamline University**

St. Paul, MN  
President

**Hennepin Technical College**

Eden Prairie, MN  
President

**Hobart and William Smith Colleges**

Geneva, NY  
President

**Hollins University**

Roanoke, VA  
President

**Howard University**

Washington, DC  
President

**Hudson Valley Community College**

Troy, NY  
President

**Humboldt State University**

Arcata, CA  
President

**Illinois Institute of Technology**

Chicago, IL  
President

**Ithaca College**

Ithaca, NY  
President

**IYRS School of Technology and Trades**

Newport, RI  
President

**John Carroll University**

University Heights, OH  
President

**Johnson C. Smith University**

Charlotte, NC  
President

**The Juilliard School**

New York, NY  
President

**Kansas City Art Institute**

Kansas City, MO  
President

**King Abdullah University of Science and  
Technology**

Thuwal, Saudi Arabia  
President

**Lawrence University**

Appleton, WI  
President

**Lehigh University**

Bethlehem, PA  
President

**Lesley University**

Cambridge, MA  
President

**Lincoln College**

Lincoln, IL  
President

**Lincoln University of Missouri**

Jefferson City, MO  
President

**Louisiana State University Health Sciences  
Center Shreveport**

Shreveport, LA  
Chancellor

**Louisiana State University Shreveport**

Shreveport, LA  
Chancellor

**Loyola University Chicago**

Chicago, IL  
President

**Loyola University Maryland**

Baltimore, MD  
President

**Loyola University New Orleans**

New Orleans, LA  
President

**Marist College**

Poughkeepsie, NY  
President

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

Cambridge, MA  
President

**Medgar Evers College**

Brooklyn, NY  
President

**Miami University**

Oxford, OH  
President

**Middlesex Community College**

Bedford, MA  
President

**Mills College at Northeastern University**

Oakland, CA  
President

**Minneapolis College of Art and Design**

Minneapolis, MN

President

**Missouri University of Science and Technology**

Rolla, MO

Chancellor

**Monmouth College**

Monmouth, IL

President

**Monmouth University**

West Long Branch, NJ

President

**Moore College of Art & Design**

Philadelphia, PA

President

**Morehouse College**

Atlanta, GA

President

**Morgan Community College**

Fort Morgan, CO

President

**Mount Holyoke College**

South Hadley, MA

President

**Mount Saint Mary College**

Newburgh, NY

President

**New England College of Optometry**

Boston, MA

President

**New England Conservatory**

Boston, MA

President

**New Jersey Institute of Technology**

Newark, NJ

President

**The New School**

New York, NY

Interim President

**New York University**

New York, NY

President

**Northern Kentucky University**

Highland Heights, KY

President

**Northland College**

Ashland, WI

President

**Northwestern University**

Evanston, IL

President

**Oberlin College and Conservatory**

Oberlin, OH

President

**Occidental College**

Los Angeles, CA

President

**The Ohio State University**

Columbus, OH

Executive Vice President and Chief

Executive Officer, Wexner Medical Center

President

**Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology**

**Graduate University**

Okinawa, Japan

President

**Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology  
School Corporation**

Okinawa Prefecture, Japan

President

**Oregon State University**

Corvallis, OR

President

**Peirce College**

Philadelphia, PA

President

**Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts**

Philadelphia, PA

President and Chief Executive Officer

**Pennsylvania State University**

University Park, PA

President

**Pitzer College**

Claremont, CA

President

**Plymouth State University**

Plymouth, NH

President

**Pratt Institute**

Brooklyn, NY

President

**Presidio Graduate School**

San Francisco, CA

President

**Purchase College, State University of New York**

Purchase, NY

President

**Quest University Canada**

Vancouver, Canada

President and Vice Chancellor

**Randolph College**

Lynchburg, VA

President

**Regis University**

Denver, CO

President

**Rhode Island School of Design**

Providence, RI

President

**Riverland Community College**

Austin, MN

President

**Rochester Community and Technical College**

Rochester, MN

President

**Rochester Institute of Technology**

Rochester, NY

President

**Roger Williams University**

Bristol, RI

President

**Roxbury Community College**

Roxbury Crossing, MA

President

**Rush University**

Chicago, IL

President

**The Sage Colleges**

Albany, NY

President

**Saint Anselm College**

Manchester, NH

President

**Saint Joseph's College of Maine**

Standish, ME

President

**Salve Regina University**

Newport, RI

President

**Samuel Merritt University**

Oakland, CA

President

**San Francisco State University**

San Francisco, CA

President

**San Jose State University**

San Jose, CA

President

**Sarah Lawrence College**

Bronxville, NY

President

**Savannah State University**

Savannah, GA

President

**Schenectady County Community College**

Schenectady, NY

President

**Simmons University**

Boston, MA

President

**Sonoma State University**

Rohnert Park, CA

President

**South Central College**

North Mankato, MN

President

**Southeast Technical**

Winona, MN

President

**Southwestern Law School**

Los Angeles, CA

Dean and Chief Executive Officer

**Spelman College**

Atlanta, GA

President

**St. Edward's University**

Austin, TX

President

**St. John's College**

Annapolis, MD

President

**St. John's College**

Santa Fe, NM

President

**St. Lawrence University**

Canton, NY

President

**State University of New York at Geneseo**

Geneseo, NY

President

**State University of New York Clinton  
Community College**

Plattsburgh, NY

President

**State University of New York System**

Albany, NY

Chancellor

**State University of New York, Downstate  
Health Sciences University**

Brooklyn, NY

President

**Stevenson University**

Stevenson, MD  
President

**Stony Brook University**

Stony Brook, NY  
President

**Suffolk County Community College, SUNY**

Selden, NY  
President

**SUNY Rockland Community College**

Suffern, NY  
President

**SUNY Ulster County Community College**

Stoneridge, NY  
President

**Transylvania University**

Lexington, KY  
President

**Tufts University**

Medford, MA  
President

**Tuskegee University**

Tuskegee, AL  
President

**Union College**

Schenectady, NY  
President

**The Universities at Shady Grove**

Rockville, MD  
Executive Director, and Associate Vice  
President, University System of Maryland

**University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences**

Little Rock, AR  
Chancellor

**University of Bridgeport**

Bridgeport, CT  
President

**University of California System**

Oakland, CA  
President

**University of California, Berkeley**

Berkeley, CA  
Chancellor

**University of California, Davis**

Davis, CA  
Chancellor

**University of California, Irvine**

Irvine, CA  
Chancellor

**University of California, Irvine Health**

Orange, CA  
Chief Executive Officer

**University of California, Merced**

Merced, CA  
Chancellor

**University of California, Riverside**

Riverside, CA  
Chancellor

**University of California, San Francisco**

San Francisco, CA  
Chancellor

**University of California, Santa Cruz**

Santa Cruz, CA  
Chancellor

**University of Connecticut**

Storrs, CT  
President



**University of Dayton**

Dayton, OH  
President

**University of Detroit Mercy**

Detroit, MI  
President

**University of Indianapolis**

Indianapolis, IN  
President

**University of Maryland**

College Park, MD  
President

**University of Maryland, Baltimore**

Baltimore, MD  
President

**University of Maryland, Baltimore County**

Baltimore, MD  
President

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

Amherst, MA  
Chancellor

**University of Massachusetts Boston**

Boston, MA  
Chancellor

**University of Massachusetts Dartmouth**

North Dartmouth, MA  
Chancellor

**University of Massachusetts Lowell**

Lowell, MA  
Chancellor

**University of Michigan, Ann Arbor**

Ann Arbor, MI  
President

**University of Missouri System**

Columbia, MO  
President

**University of Missouri, Columbia**

Columbia, MO  
Chancellor

**University of Nebraska Medical Center**

Omaha, NE  
Chancellor, and Vice President, University of  
Nebraska

**University of Nebraska System**

Lincoln, NE  
President

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

Lincoln, NE  
Chancellor

**University of New Hampshire**

Durham, NH  
President

**The University of New Mexico**

Albuquerque, NM  
President

**University of New Mexico - Los Alamos**

Los Alamos, NM  
Chancellor

**University of New Mexico - Taos**

Ranchos de Taos, NM  
Chancellor

**University of New Mexico - Valencia**

Los Lunas, NM  
Chancellor

**University of North Carolina System**

Chapel Hill, NC  
President

**University of Rhode Island**

Kingston, RI

President

**University of San Francisco**

San Francisco, CA

President

**University of Southern California**

Los Angeles, CA

President

**University of the Arts**

Philadelphia, PA

President

**University of Virginia**

Charlottesville, VA

President

**University of Washington, Bothell**

Bothell, WA

Chancellor

**University of Wisconsin-River Falls**

River Falls, WI

Chancellor

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**

Whitewater, WI

Chancellor

**University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland**

California, MD

Executive Director

**Vassar College**

Poughkeepsie, NY

President

**Virginia Commonwealth University**

Richmond, VA

Senior Vice President for Health Sciences  
and Chief Executive Officer, VCU Health  
System

**Virginia State University**

Petersburg, VA

President

**Virginia Union University**

Richmond, VA

President

**Washington State University**

Pullman, WA

President

**Washington State University, Tri-Cities**

Richland, WA

Chancellor

**Washington University in St. Louis**

St. Louis, MO

Chancellor

**Wellesley College**

Wellesley, MA

President

**Western Kentucky University**

Bowling Green, KY

President

**Westminster College**

Salt Lake City, UT

President

**Xavier University**

Cincinnati, OH

President

**Xavier University of Louisiana**

New Orleans, LA

President

ISAACSON, MILLER

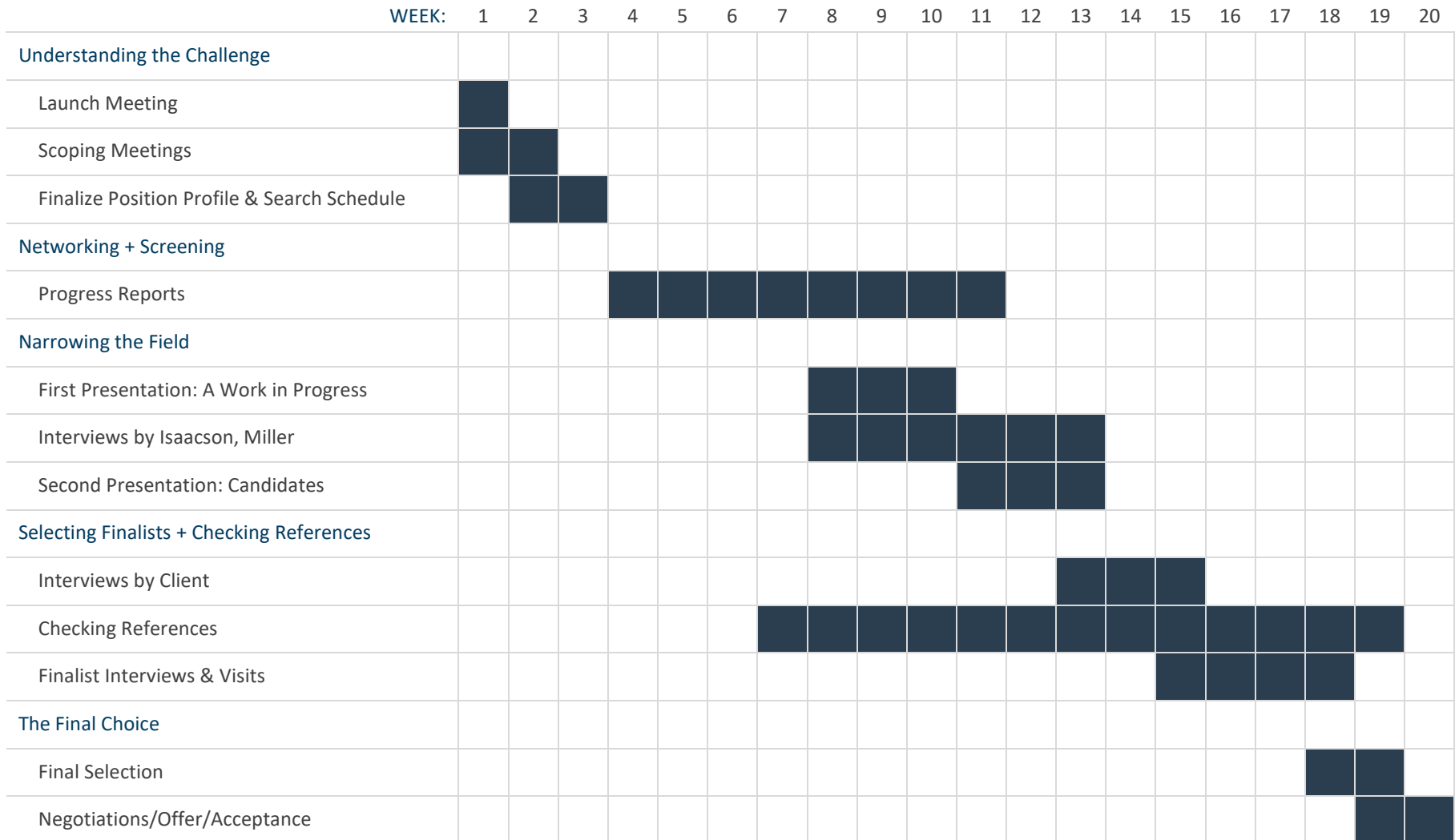
**Yale-NUS College**

Singapore

President

### Sample Search Timeline

The following chart illustrates the approximate pace of a typical search. We will develop with you a specific timeline for your search.



**Sample Search Work Plan**

<b>Understanding the Challenge</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<p><b>Launch Meeting</b> Review search process and timeline. Schedule dates for future meetings. Discuss challenges, opportunities, and objectives. Begin developing a profile of the ideal candidate.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Scoping Meetings</b> IM meets with key internal and external stakeholders, as recommended by the client.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Finalize Position Profile and Search Schedule</b> Final approval of the public document. Confirm the search schedule. Distribute preliminary lists of applicants + nominees. Solicit suggestions of sources and candidates.</p>	<hr/>
<b>Networking + Screening of Prospective Candidates</b>	
<p><b>Progress Reports</b> Regular reports to the search chair on the progress of the search, input from search committee including additional suggestions of sources + candidates.</p>	<hr/>
<b>Narrowing the Field</b>	
<p><b>First Presentation   A Work in Progress</b> Presentation of active prospects and preliminary candidates to the search committee. This is an opportunity to share insights gleaned from initial networking and to review models for the ideal candidate.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Interviews by Isaacson, Miller</b> IM interviews candidates in person and notes impressions and recommendations for search committee in preparation for second presentation.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Second Presentation   Candidates</b> Presentation of full candidate pool to the search committee, who decides on pool of candidates to interview.</p>	<hr/>
<b>Selecting Finalists + Checking References</b>	
<p><b>Semi-finalist Interviews (by Client)</b> Search committee interviews candidates and selects finalists. Typically takes two full days.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Checking References</b> IM conducts extensive references on each candidate and reports findings to the committee.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Finalist Interviews + Visits</b> Client arranges meetings for the finalists with senior staff and a second round of interviews with the search committee (typically 3-4 candidates).</p>	<hr/>
<b>The Final Choice</b>	
<p><b>Final Selection</b> Search committee reviews references, evaluation materials + selects its preferred candidate.</p>	<hr/>
<p><b>Negotiations, Offer + Acceptance</b> IM helps, as appropriate, with the transition of candidate to employee.</p>	<hr/>

## Fees and Expenses

**Professional Fees** | Isaacson, Miller works for clients on a retainer basis. Our fee for this search is one-third of the hired candidate's first-year earned compensation, with a minimum fee of \$60,000. Compensation includes salary, special deferred executive compensation, signing and performance bonuses—but not contributions to federally qualified pension plans that are available to all employees. We bill our retainer monthly in three equal installments based on an estimate at the start of the search and make any necessary adjustments at the conclusion. Retainers are billed at the time the search begins and at 30 and 60 days.

If, during the course of a search, we introduce a person who is hired for another position within 12 months of the closing of the original search, we will bill a separate fee of 25% of the first year's earned compensation.

If you choose to terminate or discontinue our relationship at any time, your obligation to us would be limited to all fees invoiced and all reimbursable expenses incurred through the date of termination. If there is a significant change in the scope of the search or the agreed upon role definition, if the search is placed on hold by you for more than 60 days or if the search has not resulted in a hire within one year of start date, we will consider this contract terminated and a revised contract with adjusted fees, if necessary, will be negotiated. Our fees are non-contingent and non-refundable.

**Expenses** | We incur two types of reimbursable expenses: direct and indirect. Direct expenses include advertising and the actual costs of candidate and consultant travel, meals, and lodging associated with the interviewing and selection process and with visits to the client. These expenses are billed separately on the last day of each month and are due within 30 days of billing date.

Indirect expenses cover the administrative support costs to serve our clients well. They include communications and web portal applications, postage and courier deliveries, printing and production, public profile research, references and background checks, and usage of IM's proprietary database Searchlink. We charge 11% of the retainer to cover indirect expenses and include this with the billing of our three retainers. Original receipts are not available for indirect expenses.

**Guarantee** | If you hire a candidate whom we have evaluated and recommended, and, if within one (1) year from the hired person's employment start date, you choose to terminate the person for any reason (excepting disability, change of ownership, or organizational realignment), or the person leaves for any reason (excepting death, disability, change of ownership, or organizational realignment), then we will reopen the search and replace the person for no additional professional fee, provided that the new search commences within three (3) months of the employment termination date, unless we mutually agree on a later re-launch date. You will be responsible only for ordinary reimbursable expenses and an additional 11% of the original fee to cover additional indirect expenses.

# Coversheet

## Discussion and VOTE (20-23/24)

**Section:** V. Presidential Search Firms  
**Item:** L. Discussion and VOTE (20-23/24)  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** VOTE Presidential Search Firm selection.pdf

**Fitchburg State University  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

TO: Board of Trustees	DATE: November 14, 2023
FROM: The President	REQUEST NUMBER: 20-23/24
SUBJECT: Executive Search Firm Selection	

It is requested that the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees vote to authorize \_\_\_\_\_ to conduct the President Search for the next President of Fitchburg State University.



# Coversheet

## Personnel Actions (N03-23/24)

**Section:** VI. Notifications  
**Item:** A. Personnel Actions (N03-23/24)  
**Purpose:** FYI  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Report 11142023 (1).pdf

TO: Board of Trustees  
 FROM: The President  
 SUBJECT: Personnel Actions

DATE: November 14, 2023  
 NOTIFICATION NUMBER: N03-23/24

#### Hires

Rebecca Colby, Ph.D. Effective: 11/13/2023	Associate Director of Institutional Research Institutional Research and Planning	\$87,500.00
Mouhamadou Diagne, Mdiv Effective: 11/6/2023	Assistant Director of Multicultural Outreach and Recruitment Admissions	\$52,000.00
Krysta Lopez, BS Effective: 11/6/2023	Staff Assistant, Program Coordinator Center for Diversity and Inclusiveness	\$52,000.00
Eamon Toohey, MA Effective: 10/17/2023 End Date: 5/31/2024	Assistant Librarian (Temporary Appointment) Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library	\$32,176.17

#### Resignation

Christopher Adams Effective: 12/31/2023	Associate Professor Psychological Science	\$86,955.51
Lisa Lane McCarty Effective: 11/3/2023	Police Concentration Academy Director Behavioral Sciences	\$89,402.95
Joseph Wachtel Effective: 8/31/2024	Associate Professor Economics History Political Science	\$73,804.50

#### Retirement

Arlana Arsenault Effective: 8/31/2024	Instructor Nursing	\$78,018.44
Les Nelkin Effective: 8/31/2024	Associate Professor Communications Media	\$77,461.96

Abdulkeni Zekeria Effective: 5/31/2024	Associate Professor Mathematics	\$108,168.36
---	------------------------------------	--------------

**Change in Title and Salary**

Peter August Effective: 10/9/2023	From: Assistant Director of Admissions for SGOCE To: Senior Assistant Director of Admissions Operations SGOCE <i>Increase includes the 4% COLA and \$3K retention increase</i>	From: \$69,360.00 To: \$75,134.40
--------------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------

**Change in Title Only**

Maya McCabe Effective: 10/23/2023	From: Staff Assistant, Education Coordinator To: Assistant Director, Upward Bound Math and Science Upward Bound Math and Science	\$51,500.00
--------------------------------------	--	-------------

Kayla Thomas Effective: 9/1/2023	From: Assistant Professor To: Instructor Nursing <i>Corrected title</i>	\$68,000.00
-------------------------------------	--	-------------

**Reappointment to 2nd year (temp)**

Jason Flynn Effective: 9/1/2024 End: 5/31/2025	Assistant Professor Communications Media	\$63,000.00
--	---	-------------

# Coversheet

## News Articles

**Section:** IX. President's Report  
**Item:** C. News Articles  
**Purpose:** FYI  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** November news clips.pdf

# Sentinel & Enterprise

**'A SPECIAL PLACE'**

## Lapidus to retire as Fitchburg State president

He's departing at end of academic year

**Submitted Article**

**FITCHBURG** » Fitchburg State University President Richard Lapidus announced Monday that he will be retiring at the end of the 2023-2024 academic year. Lapidus joined Fitchburg State in July of 2015 and is the university's 11th leader.

Lapidus has led school during the creation of new academic programs such as the expansion of online offerings, has deepened ties between the campus and the city, and has guided the University through the challenges of the global pandemic.

During his time as president, Fitchburg State's institutional accreditation was renewed and a new strategic plan was adopted.

"From the day I first interviewed for the position on campus, I knew that Fitchburg State was a special place, and it has been an honor to have contributed to its positive evolution," Lapidus said. "This is a campus of dedicated individuals who care deeply about our students, and as I have said many times, each of you makes a difference every day and for that I can't be more appreciative."

C. Deborah Phillips, chair of the Board of Trustees, said it has been an honor and a privilege to serve during Lapidus' tenure. She cited his navigation of the Univer-

**LAPIDUS** » PAGE 8



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Fitchburg State University President Richard Lapidus, who joined Fitchburg State in July 2015, will retire in 2024.

## Lapidus

**FROM PAGE 1**

sity during the pandemic as an example of his contributions to the Fitchburg State community.

"During the COVID -19 health crisis, President Lapidus demonstrated strong and compassionate leadership as the University faced uncharted territory," Phillips said. "Because of his foresight in upgrading the university's technology platforms in the years prior to the COVID crisis, Fitchburg State was uniquely positioned for the virtual teaching and learning environment essential for the campus community to function during those uncertain days and months."

The Board of Trustees chair said that, under the leadership of Lapidus, Fitchburg State didn't just

survive COVID but was able to also thrive.

"Not only did the university function during COVID, but new ways of serving the student body were developed, new programs were implemented, and even new traditions were established," said Phillips. "For nine years President Lapidus has led Fitchburg State with calmness and agility. His intuitive and gracious leadership will be missed, but he leaves the University well positioned to face the challenges ahead."

A comprehensive national search will be undertaken for Lapidus' successor.

Founded in 1894, Fitchburg State has more than 30 undergraduate programs and 22 master's degree programs; in total the school serves 6,000 full and part-time students. Learn more at [fitchburgstate.edu](http://fitchburgstate.edu).

6 hours ago

# Fitchburg State president to retire



PHOTO | COURTESY OF FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Fitchburg State University President Richard Lapidus will retire at the end of the 2023-24 academic year.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

By Timothy Doyle

**F**itchburg State University President Richard Lapidus will retire at the end of the 2023-24 academic year.

“From the day I first interviewed for the position on campus, I knew that Fitchburg State was a special place, and it has been an honor to have contributed to its positive evolution,” President Lapidus wrote in a letter to the campus community included in a Tuesday press release from the school. “This is a campus of dedicated individuals who care deeply about our students, and as I have said many times, each of you makes a difference every day and for that I can’t be more appreciative.”

In the letter, Lapidus said he intends to spend more time with family and friends and pursue interests outside of the university. He was hired by the University in July 2015.

During his tenure at FSU, he saw the school through the COVID-19 pandemic, launched a new strategic plan, and worked to deepen ties between the City of Fitchburg and the university.

Lapidus was named a member of [WBJ Power 50 Class of 2022](#) for the effect he has had on the redevelopment of Downtown Fitchburg, of which FSU has played a crucial role in redeveloping older buildings, particularly along the [theater block at 717 Main St.](#), where it has installed new school facilities. One of the focuses of the school’s efforts has been the restoration of the Main Street theater.

Fitchburg State will undertake a comprehensive national search for a new president, according to the Tuesday press release.

Fitchburg State is the seventh-largest college in Central Massachusetts, as ranked by 2022-23 full-time enrollment, according to the WBJ Research Department. The school has 6,000 full- and part-time students enrolled, according to the Tuesday press release. Its endowment is \$24.4 million.

## EDUCATION

# Fitchburg State receives Moderna research grant

## Moderna Charitable Grant to support student researchers

### Submitted Article

**FITCHBURG** » Fitchburg State University will launch a community of research fellows mentored by faculty this fall with a newly-announced grant from the Moderna Charitable Foundation.

The University's Biology and Chemistry departments will lead the effort, targeting traditionally underserved populations to engage students in mentorship and high-impact practices as an undergraduate research community. Students will also be paid stipends for their time in the program.

"We are grateful for the support of the Moderna Charitable Foundation for this initiative that will lead to meaningful educational experiences for our students," Fitchburg State President Richard Lapidus said. "The faculty mentorship and instruction that is built into this program will encourage student success while fostering the next generation of researchers."

The program is designed to help students navigate a post-COVID higher education landscape by increasing the retention and graduation rates of traditionally underserved populations.

"We are grateful for funding that allows us to expand our capacity to mentor students through a unique, powerful program, supporting students' skill development, career exploration, and financial needs," said Fitchburg State Dean of Health and Natural Sciences Jennifer Hanselman.

Receiving a stipend and academic credit, the student research fellows will work 10 hours per week, receiving one-on-one mentorship and instruction on cutting-edge techniques in their fields of interest.

Over the life of the grant, a total of 36 students (six per semester) will each be paired with a faculty mentor to conduct credit-bearing research. The students in the program will be paid for all aspects of their work, including performing experiments in the lab, analyzing data, preparing for weekly presentations, and career development activities.

At the end of the spring 2024 semester, the 12 students in the inaugural cohort will present their work at the university's annual Undergraduate Conference for Research and Creative Practice, as well as a statewide research conference.

*Courtesy Fitchburg State University*

Powered by BoardOnTrack

EDUCATION EVOLVES

# SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IGNITES CREATIVITY



COURTESY FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

The North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra and Fitchburg State University recently started a new partnership. Seated from left are Associate Professor/Concert Band Director Amy McGlothlin and Associate Professor/Director of Choir Jonathan Harvey. Standing from left, are Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Patricia Marshall, NWCSO Vice President Tinson Lam, NWCSO Conductor Jared Bloch, NWCSO Clerk Olivia Minchello, Jason Cote, Logistic at NWCSO, Joshua Sabourin, FSU Concert Band member, NWCSO President Michael Hoffmann and Fitchburg State University President Richard S. Lapidus.

## Partnership benefits North Worcester Orchestra and Fitchburg State

By Sara Arnold  
Correspondent

Fitchburg State University and the North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra have formed a new partnership that both the school and regional musical performance group are very excited about.

“This partnership is going to ignite a fire throughout the college community and our corner of the music world,” said Michael Hoffmann, President and Executive Director of North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra (NWCSO).

In March of 2023, Fitchburg State University Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choirs Jonathan Harvey had learned that the NWCSO was searching for collaborators and reached out to eventually form the partnership that is now getting off the ground.

Part of the orchestra’s mission is to provide educational opportunities to music students in the area, as well as to reach and fos-

**“This collaboration will create learning opportunities for students as well as providing another source of cultural enrichment for the campus and wider communities.”**

— Fitchburg State University President Richard S. Lapidus

ter new relationships with underserved parts of the community via professional classical music, like students on the Fitchburg campus and area residents.

It also fits the university’s goals of bringing the community together on campus.

Weston Auditorium is a large, state-of-the-art performance venue for the orchestra and it already has percussion instruments and a new Steinway Model D grand piano on site. The performing partnership with Fitchburg State’s Humanities Department, concert and chamber choirs, and concert band was already in the works

so it was a natural progression.

“I am always seeking opportunities for our music students to work with new musicians and new venues... Students tend to love these collaborative opportunities — to make music next to someone new always yields growth, and often new friends,” Harvey said.

The choir and band students will be performing with the orchestra throughout the concert season, which will be scheduled around the university’s academic schedule so both the needs of the college and the orchestra are met.

“Benefit to the music students at Fitchburg State will be

tremendous. Collaboration is all about learning and growing from working with each other, so it’s a great learning experience to see how different organizations function, how different artists approach their craft, and to perform alongside new and different folks,” Harvey said.

He continued, “It’s always exciting to bring the wider community onto Fitchburg State’s campus — as a regional public university, we strive to be a resource and a hub of cultural activity. Finally, I am optimistic about future professional learning for our music students, such as student interns working with the orchestra on marketing and publicity, non-profit management, and other experiential learning opportunities in arts entrepreneurship.”

The benefits to the orchestra include community engagement, increased visibility of the orchestra in the region (and in a new city where they haven’t previously performed), diversi-



# Orchestra

FROM PAGE 1

fied musician demographics, and nurturing a passion for music on campus and in the wider community. They also save money with the instruments already available for use at Fitchburg State and get to perform in a large, modern auditorium with excellent acoustics.

“This collaboration will create learning opportunities for students as well as providing another source of cultural enrichment for the campus and wider communities. We want members of the community to feel a sense of ownership and belonging on our campus, and hosting performances is just one means of accomplishing that,” said Fitchburg State University President Richard S. Lapidus.

It’s also about accessibility of the performing arts, for students and the community. Student musicians should be able to see and perform with profes-

sional musicians, students of other stripes should be able to enrich themselves with live music, and they shouldn’t have to travel long distances to do that. Tickets are free of charge to students, staff, and faculty of Fitchburg State so there is no financial barrier, which there often is with other live music.

Community members should also be able to consistently attend local performances at affordable prices.

“Live performances of classical music are very important because you are there in the moment to experience music in a way that can not be replicated through tv programs, YouTube, Apple Music or other recordings,” said Camie Hoffman, NWCSO Director of Education and Outreach, retired teacher, and Fitchburg State University alumni. “Live performances are where the real sound is heard. It is a far more powerful and meaningful experience; there is nothing like it!”

Their first concert to-

gether will be “A Symphonic Christmas Carol” on Dec. 8 and 9 at 7:30 p.m. in Weston Auditorium on the Fitchburg State campus. Fitchburg State students, staff, and faculty are free with valid college ID. Tickets for the public are VIP seating for \$30, adults are \$25, seniors are \$20, and non-Fitchburg State student tickets are \$15. All seats are reserved.

It will be an evening of music based on Charles Dickens’s “A Christmas Carol” which features music of Christmas past, present & future.

In that concert, they will be playing “music of the future” with a portion of the show being five selections that reimagine old classics. Most of the pieces will be in the style of the Trans-Siberian Orchestra which incorporates rock and roll music into the songs, providing a different sound for the audience to enjoy.

There will be up to 300 musicians on the stage at once during the performance. Additional ensembles such as the Greater Gardner Community Choir, Nashoba Valley Chorale, Westford Chorus, and local rock band Perfect Alibi will also be participating. They intend it to be an annual tradition.

“Music is by nature a collaborative effort and to be able to bring all of these performers together is very exciting,” said Jared Bloch, musical director of MWCSO.

The logistics of getting so many musicians together have been daunting, but the orchestra and the university will be ready, with lots of rehearsals and pre-planning for easy musical and physical transitions between numbers in the show.

“This is a huge group performing together, but it is worth it through every challenge due to the opportunity it will create for all involved, musicians and audience members alike,” said Olivia Minchello, NWCSO board member.

“Rarely in our region do you see concerts of this magnitude”, Hoffmann added, who said it would be a “holiday spectacular.”

The university has public funding, endowments, and its own capital campaigns, but NWCSO relies on financial support from people and businesses in the community to continue to thrive. They would love to broaden their financial base with donations, sponsorships, and other monetary assistance for their future endeavors and contribute to their success.

NWCSO will still be partnering with Leominster City Hall and the mayor, with their main concert season taking place there; they are also attempting to renovate the auditorium in city hall with grants and the Massachusetts Cultural Council to make it more accommodating to the performing arts.

Their ancillary concert series will be at venues throughout Leominster and other local towns.

“It is our goal in the future to also collaborate with high school [and college] bands, choruses, and other professional orchestras throughout Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire,” Mike Hoffmann said, as well as other musicians, groups, venues, and organizations.

To contact NWCSO, collaborate, donate, or buy tickets for any of their concerts, please go to [nwcsoschoolorchestra.org](http://nwcsoschoolorchestra.org).



# Sentinel & Enterprise

Sunday, November 5, 2023

\$3.00 FACEBOOK.COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE TWITTER.COM/SENTANDENT

sentinelandenterprise.com

## FITCHBURG STATE

# Exploring the Italian immigrant experience

By Cheryl A. Cuddahy  
Correspondent

**FITCHBURG** » The Center for Italian Culture at Fitchburg State University will present two film screenings by award-winning directors Martin Scorsese and Spike Lee in November as part of its year-long exploration of the Italian immigrant experience.

The series, titled “Nuovo Mondo: A Century of Migrations from and to Italy”, will present a screening of acclaimed director Martin Scorsese’s documentary “Italianamerican” at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, in Ellis White Lecture Hall, Hammond Hall, Fitchburg State University, 610 Pearl St. Admission is free and open to the public.

“Italianamerican” (1974) features the director’s parents, Catherine and Charles Scorsese, who reflect on their experiences as the children of Italian immigrants to New York City.

The series will continue with a screening of Spike Lee’s celebrated “Do the Right Thing” (1989) at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 30, also in Ellis White Lecture Hall, Hammond Hall. Admission is free and open to the public.

Lee’s classic comedy-drama explores the sim-



COURTESY OF FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

A free screening of Martin Scorsese’s documentary “Italianamerican” (1974) will be shown at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, at Fitchburg State University. The film features the director’s parents, Catherine and Charles Scorsese, who reflect on their experiences as the children of Italian immigrants to New York City.

merging racial tensions in a Brooklyn neighborhood between African-American residents and the Italian-American owners of a local pizzeria, culminating in violence and tragedy on a hot summer day.

In addition, the Fitchburg State University Archives and Special Collections, the CIC, and the Fitchburg Historical So-

cety have collaborated to present a digital exhibit on Fitchburg’s Italian-American neighborhood, the Patch. All materials were sourced from the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library, the Center for Italian Culture Archives, and the Fitchburg Historical Society.

This digital exhibit was created by Ross Caputi, archival assistant at the Cen-

ter for Italian Culture Archives, and Asher Jackson, archivist at Fitchburg State University, in collaboration with the Fitchburg Historical Society. It can be viewed at [FitchburgState.libguides.com/cicarchives](http://FitchburgState.libguides.com/cicarchives).

For more information on The Center for Italian Culture, and the Nuovo Mondo series, visit at [fitchburgstate.edu/nuovo-mondo](http://fitchburgstate.edu/nuovo-mondo).