FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

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PRESIDENT

President's Report to Trustees: Goals for 2018-19 Academic Year

Overview:

The president is responsible for leading the university in an effective and efficient manner, and administering daily operations with a primary focus on quality and excellence. The goals for this year are consistent with the campus strategic plan and are designed to support and strengthen the mission and vision.

Goals:

1. Maintain sound financial management and operational controls.

- The University had a clean financial audit this year with no findings.
- The University continued to reduce its structural deficit without a general fee increase.
- The University produced a flat budget in support of fiscal conservatism.
- The University was able to hold student fees stable.
- University Development raised $1,946,000 from gifts and grants ($746,430 from 1,790 donors and $1,199,570 in grants ($627,710 from federal sources and $571,869 from state sources.)
- The University closed out fiscal year FY19 with no open P.O's or work encumbrances.
- The University made significant changes to the student employment program.
- The University implemented an online parking permit sales system.
- The University added a Risk/Emergency Management position and revised its Emergency Management Plan.
- The University coordinated a new grants approach with the Comptroller's Office involving the MMARS processing system.
- Student Accounts implemented new 1098T processing for FY18 tax year reporting, implemented a single summer term billing process for Summer 2019 and enhanced a number of processes and reports to streamline and reduce manual activity and error.
- In conjunction with Chartwell's the University launched the Catertrax online ordering system and launched the mobile ordering system at the Bistro.
- Established the "Swipe It Forward Program" to assist with student food insecurity.

Information Technology Upgrades

- **OneCard and Networking/Telecom**
    - Cable TV Upgrade – Converted the Campus Cable TV system from analog to all digital channels and increased the number of HD channels available to students.

- Internet Upgrade – Upgraded internet connection from 2G to 4G with expansion up to 20G.
- Network Software Upgrade and Reconfiguration – Upgraded network switchgear to newer firmware and reconfigured the network environment for a better end user experience.
- Chartwells Online Ordering – Integrated Chartwells BOOST system to the Blackboard Transaction system. Allowing students using mobile online ordering to use OneCard Fitchburg Gold, Falcon Dollars, and Dining Points as payment.
- Emergency Call Box Conversion – Expanded the outdoor emergency broadcast alert system by installing six new VOIP units and two WEBS towers.
- Security Camera System – Replaced and upgraded Simonds Hall, Ross Parking Lot, Civic Center, and Conlon security cameras from analog to HD. Expanded the camera system to Percival, Theater Bock, and Edgerly.

- **IT Business Office**
    - Replaced Help Desk ticketing system - migrated from SysAid to Dell KACE. The system is more user friendly and more cost effective.
    - Replaced Lecture Capture software. The software is well received and more cost effective.

- **Helpdesk**
    - Improved the computer refresh process.
    - Hired a technology trainer whose primary purpose is to be the interface between the end users and the User Services staff
    - Implemented a classroom problem tracking system.
    - Improved classroom technology reliability by installing 13 new laser projectors in classrooms.
    - Upgraded Internet Service (increased bandwidth from 2 to 4 gig)
    - Moved the Library and general classroom VDI environment to Windows 10

- **Server and Enterprise Apps**
    - Deployed Banner 9 across campus under budget and ahead of deadline.
    - Degreeworks server refresh performed.
    - Automated the import of Slate records into Banner, reducing the possibility of human error and reducing admissions staff workload.
    - Began pilot of Banner SSB9 applications. Ellucian has delivered new modules such as Attendance Tracking, Communications Management, and Faculty Grade Entry.
    - Completed a major upgrade of XTender.
    - Automated the BDMS import of documents from Slate into Banner.
    - Performed a major upgrade of core VMWare environment.
    - Upgraded the entire Crystal Reports environment, including all clients and server hardware.

2. Continue to work in support of strategic plan goals.

Academic strategic plan goals saw positive progress or completion this past year. A select few are presented below:

- **Strategic Goal 1. Strengthen Academic Programs:**

  - A new General Education Curriculum was created, reviewed and approved. It integrates both a "First Year Experience" and a signature applied learning experience for all students. It is the first major curricular reform in 15 years.
  - A new "Environmental Public Health" major was approved and will be offered to students in fall 2019.
  - A new "Educational Studies" major (a non-licensure education major) was approved and will be offered in the fall 2019.
  - A new concentration in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology was approved and will be offered in fall 2019.
  - A new online Social Media concentration in Applied Communication Master's program was approved and will be offered in fall 2019.
  - The University developed and had approved three new concentrations for the Online MBA program. Health Care Management will begin during fall 2019, Marketing will begin Spring 2020 and Supply Chain and Logistic in Summer 2020.
  - A 4+1 MBA program option was developed and approved and will be implemented for fall 2019.
  - Four Academic Schools were created through the governance process.
  - In partnership with AUIA, a China based educational company, beginning in the Summer of 2019 approximately 93 students from over 30 different U.S. universities will taught by Fitchburg State faculty in China.
  - The Police Program curriculum was revised to articulate with new MPTC standards and to better align 'traditional' CJ and CJ/Police programs.
  - A Police Academy Summit was held to underscore the campus-wide nature of this unique policing program and develop processes to better facilitate its annual implementation.
  - Study abroad programming was reorganized to establish a three-year rotation of new destinations, courses and programs, so as to facilitate and increase student participation.
  - The Education department revised undergraduate programs which eliminated double majors, and added and increased the number of pre-practicum hours.
  - The Industrial Technology department and majors were restructured and renamed "Engineering Technology" in order to better meet workforce demands and to align more closely with ABET accreditation standards.
  - The Library doubled its book collection by adding over 180,000 e-books through its purchase of the EBSCO Academic Complete ebook package subscription.

- The Library also added the JSTOR Life Sciences Journal Collection adding extraordinary depth in the biological and general sciences and coverage in medicine, nursing, epidemiology, and public health.
- The Library added access to over 70,000 ebooks from prestigious scholarly publishers through JSTOR, effective July, 2019. These books are all DRM license free and can be embedded directly into courses.
- The Library added two new streaming video collections to support the mental health, counseling, and psychology curricula, effective July, 2019.
- An online workshop for all newly hired online adjunct faculty was developed. This training will also be made available and promoted to all current full-time and adjunct faculty. Faculty that complete the training will receive a certificate which will assist in maintaining best practice quality standards in the courses.
- A list of standards was developed to be used as a guideline for faculty reviewers who are tasked with reviewing and approving online courses. This will also assist with maintaining quality standards across departments for online courses.

- **Strategic Goal 2. Promote Student Success by Breaking Down Barriers:**

  - Received a positive state audit regarding ADA compliance (support of students with disabilities, emergency evacuation plans and necessary accommodations). One minor finding regarding the documentation of staff member training participation was identified. This issue has been addressed and noted by the State Auditor's Office.
  - Implemented a new Academic Warning and Probation policy to facilitate early identification of at-risk students.
  - Funded through a PIF Grant, a program was established to mentor incoming male Hispanic students. The grant sought both to improve the retention rate (and thus overall enrollments) of incoming male Hispanics, but also to gather data so as to better mentor the same and new students moving forward.
  - Established a new multi-tiered communication strategy that allows texting with students that have registration barriers and bottlenecks.
  - Created a probationary admissions option for graduate students to assist with retention as previously students were dismissed if they earned one grad of 0 and would be unable to reapply for one year. This policy will provide students with an opportunity to make up that course without being dismissed.
  - An Open Educational Resources working group has been formed to better understand and promote these resources.
  - The Education department has continued with MTEL success initiatives. Student retention rates from freshman to sophomore have increased by 24% over a three-year period.
  - Athletics has been working with the Student Success Collaborative (SSC) and with faculty to identify academic concerns of student-athletes as early as possible so that coaches can address them.
  - Summer Bridge continues to be effective at helping students who are classified as Category 4 matriculate into the fall semester.

- The CARE Team continues to work on a growing number of cases particularly related to mental health issues.
- The University conducted an assessment of the student commuter population, benchmarked for best practices, and reviewed the research to create a strategic plan to better serve commuters more effectively.
- A new Commuter Handbook will be distributed in fall 2019 to all new and returning commuter students.
- The Expanding Horizons Program reported that 94% of its students were in good academic standing at the end of Spring 2019 and that more than 85% have registered for Fall 2019. 82% of the 2013-14 EHP cohort have obtained their bachelor's degree within 5 years.
- The Food Insecurity Initiatives reported 479 visits to the Falcon Bazaar Food and Necessities Pantry, by 182 students. The Swipe it Forward program distributed 265 meals.
- Health Services reported that 99% of respondents to their Student Satisfaction Survey indicated that their academic progress was supported positively by the services provided by Health Services.
- Housing and Residential Services staff connected individually with residential students who were on the mid-term grade deficiency list.
- The First Year Residential Experience (FYRE) Program hosted 10 programs.
- The University is working to create a Housing Marketing Strategy targeting at new students in alignment with Admissions and targeting returning students to promote the value of living on campus, and increased customer service.
- Launched suite-style gender inclusive housing.
- Gender inclusive bathroom signs were added to Hammond Hall.
- Strong support was provided to multicultural and LGBTQ+ organizations in providing programming to the campus and opportunities for growth and development for the student leaders.

- **Strategic Goal 3. Build a University Community that Embraces Civic and Global Responsibility:**

  - The University hosted the Leading For Change Institute meeting March 2019 with over 20 universities in attendance.
  - The University hosted the Crocker Center Civic Engagement symposium and Department of Higher Education Making Democracy Work: Civic Learning and Civic Engagement in Higher Education meetings in May 2019.

- **Strategic Goal 4. Grow and Strategically Align Fitchburg State's Resources:**

  - Developed an alumni mapping project to better understand the distribution of our more than 46,500 alumni to assist the departments and the newly formed schools to engage alumni.

- Developed a closer relationship with MWCC, including a grant to fund our STEM Summer Bridge for community college-Fitchburg State transfers in STEM fields, and the STEM Summer Research program for MWCC freshman.
- Drafted Dean's Council Charter to define the scope of activities for a collective Dean's Advisory Board.
- The University hosted a number of state-wide conferences and meetings, including:
  - Massachusetts Parole Officers training conference.
  - Digital Learning Unit hosted the annual state MCO conference in with over 40 Universities attending.
  - The New England regional meeting of the Math Education Association.
  - The inaugural regional "Connected- Student Success Navigator" conference with more than 20 schools in attendance.
  - The "Watermark TK20" users conference for new England with more than 35 schools in attendance.

3. Continue to work on the improvement of student enrollment goals.

Undergraduate enrollment numbers were down slightly over the course of the year (approximately 150 students) as compared to the prior year. This is a statewide and New England issue that has been identified and discussed. Overall, enrollment numbers are trending slightly up as the result of aggressive work in graduate education. The following actions are being undertaken as a means of stemming the decline in undergraduate enrollment and to address enrollment in general.

- Received State Designation from the Governor's Office as an Early College Program provider. The newly formed consortium, North Central Mass Early College Academy, is a partnership amongst Fitchburg State, MWCC, Fitchburg High School, Leominster High School, Sizer School, and Gardner High School. The academy will serve high school students from underrepresented populations and support them towards college enrollment and completion.
- Successfully secured a grant from the Department of Higher Education for dual enrollment (CDEP)
- Fitchburg State was the first public institution in Massachusetts to receive approval under the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) allowing the institution to offer its online programs across all 50 states.
- Quick Start Registration System was implemented. This allows for online registration and enrollment of all of our Extended Campus students. By Fall 2019 all partner organizations will have moved to the Quick Start registration process.
- The position of Outreach and Recruitment Coordinator was added to campus to assist with improving recruitment outreach for the undergraduate degree completion population. The position is charged with expanding contacts in the community and local businesses, further exploring continuing education non-credit programming opportunities and implementing strategies to promote our credit-based programs through local employers.

- An articulation agreement was signed between the Physical Therapist Assistant program at MWCC and the EXSS program at Fitchburg State.
- Fitchburg State established Guaranteed Admissions agreements for our RN to BS in Nursing program with Bristol, Northern Essex and North Shore Community Colleges.
- A successful and full implementation of the STEM & Health Sciences living and learning communities was completed.
- Worked with "Spark451" to update all of the communication that currently goes out to GCE undergraduate applicants. This is part of the overall effort to increase enrollment in our online degree completion programs. The templates developed through this initiative are now being adapted to all GCE related admissions communication.

4. **Continue to evaluate the campus organizational structure and grow faculty and staff in support of the university mission.**

- The University conducted 56 searches.
- The University launched the HR onboarding module for benefitted employees.
- The University transitioned to Everfi for training modules to meet compliance requirements; implemented a process to increase completion rate.
- The University coordinated interpreters for deaf tenure track faculty and adjuncts.
- The University provided professional development programming for campus related to diversity and inclusion efforts, mindfulness, retirement, wellness and professional engagement trainings.
- On-boarded a new Director of Title IX and Compliance.
- The University began converting all I-9 document storage to electronic files.
- The University began creating electronic payroll files for all new hires.
- The University began streamlining processes to eliminate manual process and reduce paper.

5. **Oversee ongoing capital projects and advocate for additional funding to address deferred maintenance and renovation needs as appropriate.**

- The University completed construction of Percival (phase 3) and opened new classroom and office space.
- The University completed the Edgerly elevator project.
- The University completed the Russell Towers Bathroom project (phase 1).
- The University completed construction of the IdeaLab.
- The University completed the Holmes Cooler project.
- The University was award funding to install its first electric vehicle charging station.

6. **Oversee the campus branding exercise.**

- The university brand review, including a marketing audit and market research was completed.

- A new key institutional message and the rollout of a refreshed visual identity is underway as part of the development and launch in spring 2020 of a new fully responsive website.

- **Strategic Communications Planning**
    - The 2018-2019 academic year included more experimentation with selection, timing and quantity of media advertising.
    - Worked to strengthen search engine optimization in support of online programs.
    - Increased inclusiveness of university recruiting efforts (adult students, transfer students, veterans, other underserved populations etc.)
    - Updated academic Majors and Concentrations collateral materials, including the addition of new programs.
    - Created new graduate and undergraduate programs flyers for International Education.
    - Created 9 webinar promotions (which includes Facebook ads, social posts, blogs, email invitations, campus TV promos, web homepage ads and web page updates - https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/admissions/graduate-studies/webinars/).
    - Created Graduate Fair promotion materials (including graphic banners, A-frame posters, campus TV promo, flyers, Facebook ads, social posts on Facebook/LinkedIn/Twitter, etc.)
    - Created GCE Blog.
      Published 40 blogs – shared on Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn (11,015 views)
    - Two issues of Contact Magazine were produced and distributed to nearly 40,000 alumni and friends.

7. **Continue to strengthen university/community relationships.**

   - Sizer School - Board of Trustees
   - Our Fathers House - Board of Directors
   - Fitchburg Art Museum - Board of Trustees
   - Chamber of Commerce - Board of Directors
   - Fitchburg Plan - Co-Chair
   - United Way - Board of Directors
   - UMass Memorial Health Alliance Hospital - President's Council
   - Cushing Academy - Board of Trustees
   - Fitchburg Public Library - Foundation Board
   - The University served as a moderator for a number of local political debates.
   - The University has placed significant effort on strengthening alumni relations with support of the Alumni Association.
   - Continued to strengthen connection with the Fitchburg Art Museum with programing and sponsorship support.
   - The Alumni Office organized 49 events, of which 34 were on-campus and 15 off-campus.