

# **President's Report to Trustees: Goals for 2020-21 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. Continue to lead the campus efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

- Managed the campus consistent with the Higher Education Control Plan.
- The campus conducted its academics in fully remote, hybrid and face-to face this academic year.
- Support services were provided both face-to-face and in a remote form.
- Housing was de-densified and food services were distributed on a to-go basis.
- The Environmental, Health and Safety team collected and processed approximately 22,000 COVID-19 tests.
- Case management of positive cases and close contacts were handled internally with support from local public health officials.
- Quarantine and isolation accommodations were provided to residential students impacted.
- Overall campus positivity rate was approximately 0.5% as compared to the city and region which hovered at its height at approximately 14%.
- Adjusted maintenance and cleaning to successfully operate during the COVID pandemic.
- Worked closely with Fitchburg Public School to open McKay Elementary School during the pandemic.
- Delivered virtual commencements and the Falcon Walk for student graduates.

### **2. Maintain sound financial management and operational controls.**

- The university had a clean audit in FY2020.
- Managed and disbursed CARES Act funding.
- Total private support (new gifts and pledges) yielded \$835,451.
- Grants totaled \$2,119 million.
- Student fees were held relatively stable.
- Managed an early retirement program (19 departures) and worked to reassess ongoing personnel needs.
- The Accounting Department has transitioned to 85% electronic processing which has improved efficiency and allowed for successful transition to remote work.
- Implemented SMS text messaging in Student Accounts to better communicate with students.

- Completed the payment site optimization in Student Accounts to allow for mobile devices with Touchnet

## **Information Technology**

### User Services

- Upgraded and rebuilt our Virtual Desktop Infrastructure that improved performance, security and speed for over 800 systems.
- Restricted rights and increased security on high-risk factor personnel.
- Removed all instances of Windows 7 in conjunction with end-of-life support from Microsoft.
- Loaned out several hundred laptops and WIFI hotspots to students in need as the University transitioned to remote instruction.
- Conducted extensive training on system and application usage for faculty and staff as they worked remotely.
- Implemented multi-language support on all multifunction devices on campus.
- Developed a Covid tracking system to invite, track and report on all employees and student Covid testing for all semesters.
- Began conversion of on-campus drive storage for individuals to Google Drive.

### Networking and Telecommunications

- Converted wireless networks to a single SSID that is role-based for increased security.
- Investigated core networking replacement equipment, developed an RFP and awarded a vendor.
- Installed three Google Meet room conferencing systems on campus for easy virtual meeting.
- Encrypted all main wireless networks from edge to core.
- Converted all classrooms to wireless electronic door locks with lockdown alerts generated automatically to Campus Police.
- Installed Panic Button software on all dedicated phones on campus to allow Campus Police to be notified of an emergency and listen in.

### Security

- Enabled 2 factor authentication for Banner for critical users with elevated privileges and for all of IT on Gmail.
- Updated Spirion and began scans of all University owned devices for protected information.
- Responded to the Raiser's Edge breach affecting only ~ 400 alumni internally.
- Migrated to Cygiant's Logpoint system with no additional cost to upgrade our SIEM and threat protection posture.
- Completed IT annual risk assessment and assigned responses.

- Enabled SSO on a number of services and applications.

#### Core Services

- Encrypted all data at rest on our VM environment including our Banner data.
- Continued to produce electronic forms and routing information for the campus - now up to 88 forms in production.
- Migrated to a new website that is hosted on a Drupal platform for the main university.
- Created several programs that allowed FSU to track student attendance for COVID tracking and contact tracing.
- Added gender-neutral restroom location to the mobile map.
- Completely redesigned the self-help website for technology questions to make it easier for remote users to find help.

### **3. Continue to work on the completion and approval of the new campus strategic plan (2020- 2025).**

- The Strategic Plan was completed and granted final approval by the Board of Higher Education with a unanimous vote in December.
- The three main principles of the plan are education justice, being a student-ready campus, and inclusive excellence.

### **3a. Begin the implementation of strategic initiatives.**

#### New Programs

- Campus Based M.Ed. in Educational Leadership in Management added 2 new concentrations. Both will be offered 100% online in a 7-week format.
  - Online Education Administration Graduate Certificate
  - Special Education Graduate Certificate
- A certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language was approved and will be available Fall 2021.
- Delivered workforce development and corporate training
  - Supporting LGBTQIA and Gender Diverse Students in the K-12 Environment
  - An Introduction to Cultural Competency for Educators
  - MassEdCO New Employee DEI Workshop/Staff Retreat
  - Social Justice Webinar Series
  - Intercultural Competency for Real Estate Professionals
  - NewVue Community Steward Social Justice Training
  - COVID-19 Business Training Series
- Continued the implementation of the revised general education program. 623 LAS courses were moved successfully through campus governance.
- All academic departments now have a Freshman Year Experience course.

- Arts and Sciences moved through governance a new interdisciplinary major and minor (English Studies and Communications Media) in Digital Media Innovation.

### Student Success

- Received governance approval of the *Institutional Learning Priorities* which served as a framework for a new strategic plan and the general education curriculum.
- As part of the implementation of the new general education curriculum, 200 Integrated High-Impact Practice courses will be making their way through governance.
- Established a case management and coordinated care system in the peer tutoring and academic coaching program. The program tracks multiple alerts (attendance, mid-semester deficiencies, academic coaching/tutoring referrals, and students on probation and warning). Through this coordination a holistic picture of a student needs is identified so that appropriate services can be deployed.
- The Center for Teaching and Learning was restructured with a strengthening of advising in an effort to enhance retention and student success.
- Created and passed through governance new General Education Transfer Pathways in an effort to streamline the student approval process.
- OER Pilot Phase 1 and Phase 2 were completed through a Davis Education Foundation grant. Students are expected to save over \$40,000 per semester in textbooks in 15 courses.
- A Digital Reserves Pilot Project was successfully implemented. This allows students to use e-textbooks on reserve for a period of time and not come to campus for their use.
- The Career Center established a Career Success Certificate Program. This is a 6-week course open to all students (asynchronous format) that assists with cover letter, resume and interview preparation.
- Recruited a new Associate Director for Career Services who will lead efforts to generate visible pathways for students to move from academics to careers.
- TRIO Student Support Services Grant renewed (\$1.46 over five years).
- Agreed to participate in the “Moving to College” program to assist students that are currently experiencing homelessness.

### Equity

- Anti-Racism scholarship and curricular development. Deans’ Anti-racism fund established to assist faculty in developing curriculum and planning programming to embed anti-racist lens across the curriculum. Funds will also assist with faculty social justice and ant-racist scholarship.
- Implemented the Future Educators Academy and the Young Falcons Academy to increase recruitment of underrepresented student populations and create a feeling of belonging for these students on campus.

- Awarded \$51,743 grant by the Department of Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) grant for Heritage Language Program. Funds provide support for English-language programming for students across campus.
- Summer Intensive English Program for English Language Learners.
- Middle School Young Falcon's Camp (4-day camps during February and April school breaks).
- Recruitment and training of Fitchburg High School tutors for our Early College students.

### Community

- Creation of the Corporate and Community Engagement Working Group. Fostered collaboration with:
    - Association of General Contractors (\$100,000 gift, development of an Advisory Board and participation at the on-campus Career Fair.)
    - Partnership with PTC engineering software (creation of a regional training hub for their product.)
    - Unital MOA (\$15K over 3 years) to support ENGT capstone for solar decathlon and undergraduate research conference.
  - Crocker Center continued to offer its \$1,000 “mini-grants” to faculty, librarians, and staff for the implementation of various community engagement projects. This past academic year saw the following eight mini-grants awarded:
    - Racial Disparities and COVID-19 in Greater Fitchburg Area.
    - Community Conversation on the State of Local News.
    - Real Talk: A Facebook Live/YouTube Panel Discussion of Critical Health/Social Issues Affecting the Ghanaian Community in New England.
    - Life Outside the Bubble: The Benefits of Living an Inclusive Life.
    - Not Just Not-Racist, but Antiracist: Exploring the Student Perspectives of Antiracism Action in the Behavioral Sciences Department at Fitchburg State University.
    - Virtual Choir Collaborative.
    - Cultural Heritage Through Image.
    - Falcon Bazaar Intern.
  - As a campus member of the Equity & Engagement Consortium (EEC) with Salem and Worcester awarded a \$100,000 Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) Grant. The initiative supports community engaged work and support a commitment to building and maintaining diversity in the faculty.
- 4. Oversee the self-study year in support of the NECHE accreditation process to conclude in March 2022 with a review team visit.**
- The NECHE self-study process is well underway and on schedule.
  - Inclusive campus committees have drafted sections of the report consistent with the

NECHE standards.

- NECHE personnel have reviewed the first draft of the report with positive feedback.
- The Chair of the NECHE Review Team will be on campus to meet with members of the campus team in early October.

#### **5. Continue to finalize the work on the new website redesign and launch.**

- The website was completed and launched in December.
- Feedback thus far has been positive.
- Refinements are underway and will be ongoing.
- During the course of the year, the university website had 3,048,237 page views and 2,462,356 unique page views.

#### **5a. Guide the development of integrated communication in support of the website and campus brand.**

- A broad range of ads were generated to targeted populations in support of university recruiting and special interest topics (Google Ads, viewbook, promotional display ads, radio ads, connected TV)
- Social media emphasis was increased with the following results:
  - **Facebook:** 11,383 page “Likes” (increase of 4% compared to the previous year)
  - **SGOCE Facebook:** 2,828 page “Likes” (increase of .75% compared to the previous year)
  - **Instagram** (our fastest growing channel): 3,158 followers (increase of 20.21% compared to the previous year)
  - **LinkedIn:** 29,075 (increase of 6.2% compared to the previous year)
  - **SGOCE LinkedIn:** 1,971 followers (increase of 6.02% compared to the previous year)
  - **Twitter:** 4,732 followers (increase of 2.45% compared to the previous year)
  - **SGOCE Twitter**
    - 294 followers (increase of 3.52% compared to the previous year)
    - 17,423 tweet impressions (decrease of 11.11% compared to the previous year)

#### **6. Continue to work on student enrollment goals.**

- Hired an Associate VP of Enrollment Management.
- Hired a Customer Service Management professional.
- Contracted with EAB services to enhance the enrollment funnel (increase of 1,758 applicants).
- Increased communication efforts targeted at rising juniors and seniors.
- Increased parent communications.
- Sent materials in Spanish to prospective students.
- Increased the variety and amount of financial aid incentives targeted at the incoming class.
- Delivered a broad range of virtual information sessions, open houses, financial aid

seminars, among others.

**7. Continue to evaluate the campus organizational structure in support of the university mission.**

- Administered a successful early retirement program for faculty and staff.
- Hired three tenure-track faculty members, five one-year faculty and 37 staff members.
- Critically evaluated and redefined job descriptions as necessary to meet the changing needs of the university and the realities of declining enrollment.
- Emphasized the importance of diversity of all candidate pools.

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

- Continued work on the electric infrastructure power project (approximately \$25 million).
- Completed, or nearly completed, \$1.2 million in small deferred maintenance projects.
- Upgraded the energy management system at Simonds Hall to integrate to an Automated Logic System
- Changed 70 campus water meters.
- Completed phase 4 of McKay C-Wing construction.
- Completed the final phase of Percival Hall.
- Installed a new roof on the Recreation Center and a portion of the Service Center.
- Received the Leading By Example Award from the State of Massachusetts for outstanding clean energy and sustainability achievements.

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

- The University has placed significant effort on strengthening alumni relations with support of the Alumni Association
- Developed virtual alumni town halls, coffee hours and “Falcon Talks.”
- Continued to strengthen connection with the Fitchburg Art Museum with programing and sponsorship support. Renewed our MOU with the museum in support of strengthening and broadening collaborative interaction.
- The university produces a monthly Alumni E-Newsletter and Contact Magazine.
- The university has worked with the City of Fitchburg on infrastructure planning around the downtown main street area (ReImagine North of Main).
- The university supported the creation and development of the Snow Street Abolitionist Park.
- The university has assisted the city with distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations.
- 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
- NCAA Presidents Advisory Group
- NCAA Committee on Infractions
- Presidents Higher Education Reopening Working Group (Advisory to Governor Baker's Massachusetts Reopening Advisory Board)