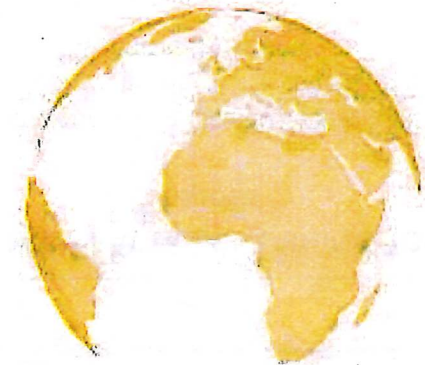




Proposal:

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Fee for F-1 International Graduate Students



Academic Affairs
Spring 2024

OUTLINE

<p>1. UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH in number of international students</p> <p>Volume of student traffic and OPT-participation has spiked in the last three years.</p>	<p>2. WORKLOAD INCREASE associated with growth</p> <p>absorbs the time of OIE staff, creating pressure to keep up with federal compliance requirements and routine office administrative tasks</p>	<p>3. OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) FEE proposal</p> <p>to support our students and the effective operation of the OIE, which are central to our institutional mission.</p>
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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To promote International Engagement, Global Citizenship, and Diversity

University Mission:

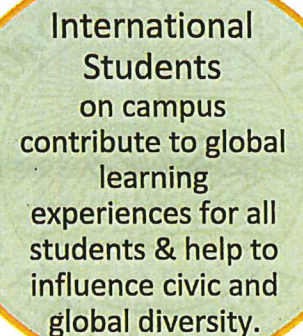
Our comprehensive public university prepares students to lead, serve, and succeed by fostering lifelong learning and civic and global responsibility.

Core Value:

...Offering equitable access to high-quality programs and services to people of varying cultural backgrounds living within and beyond our diverse community of North Central Massachusetts.

Academic Plan:

Internationalizing the curriculum... [through] exchange programs and international student recruitment:



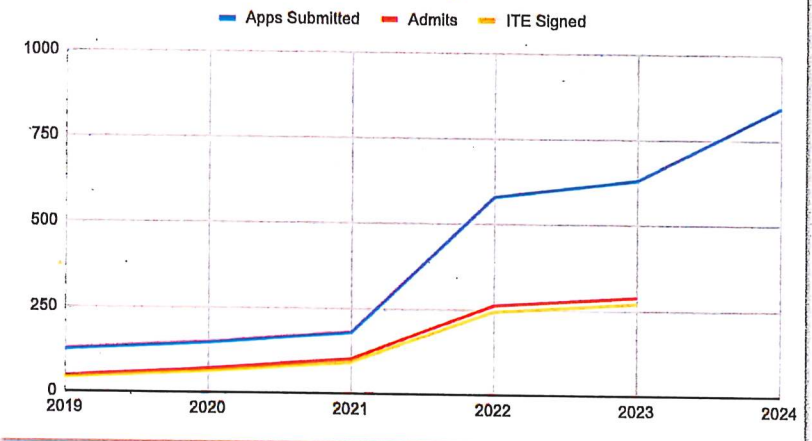
International
Students
on campus
contribute to global
learning
experiences for all
students & help to
influence civic and
global diversity.

1. UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH

International students at Fitchburg State by number

	GRADUATE APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED	ADMITS	ITEs SIGNED (Intent to Enroll)	% Yield
2019 (FA & SP)	126	45	41	32%
2020 (FA & SP)	148	68	61	41%
2021 (FA & SP)	180	99	89	49%
2022 (FA & SP)	581	261	343	59%
2023 (FA & SP)	631	288	270	42%
2024	844	IN PROGRESS: est. 380		Avg. 45%

Apps Submitted, Admits and ITE Signed



1. UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH

Financial Snapshot: Tuition

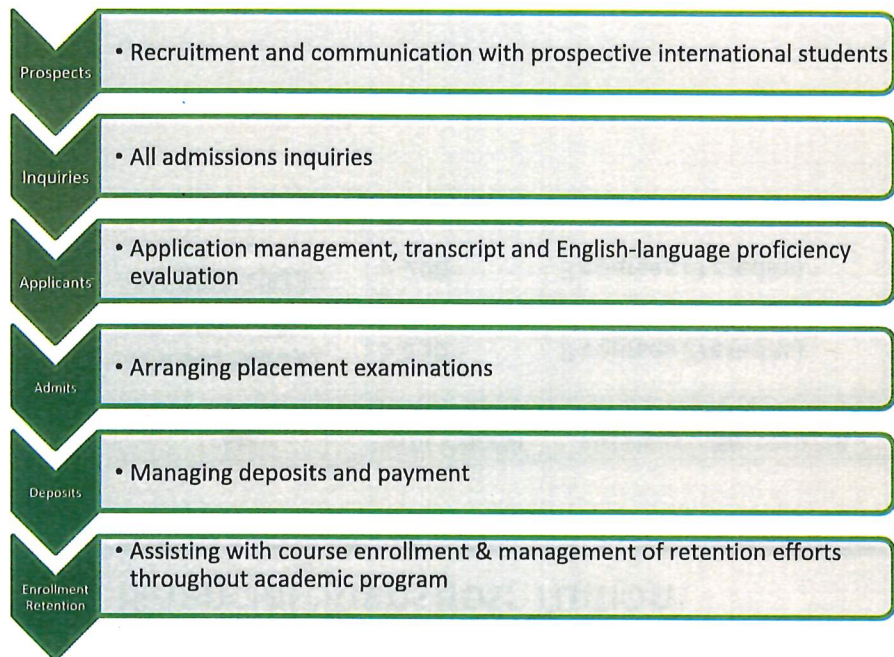
YEAR	INT'L STUDENT ENROLLMENT	AVERAGE COURSE LOAD PER TERM	AVERAGE TERMS TO DEGREE	AVERAGE TERM TUITION COST	REVENUE GENERATED FOR 3 TERMS
AY 2021-2022 Spring, Summer, Fall	> 120	3 courses (9 credits)	3	\$3123/student (\$1041/course)	~ \$1.1 million
AY 2022-2023 Spring, Summer, Fall	> 200	3 courses (9 credits)	3	\$3123/student (\$1041/course)	~ \$1.9 million



2. WORKLOAD Associated with Building an International Student Body

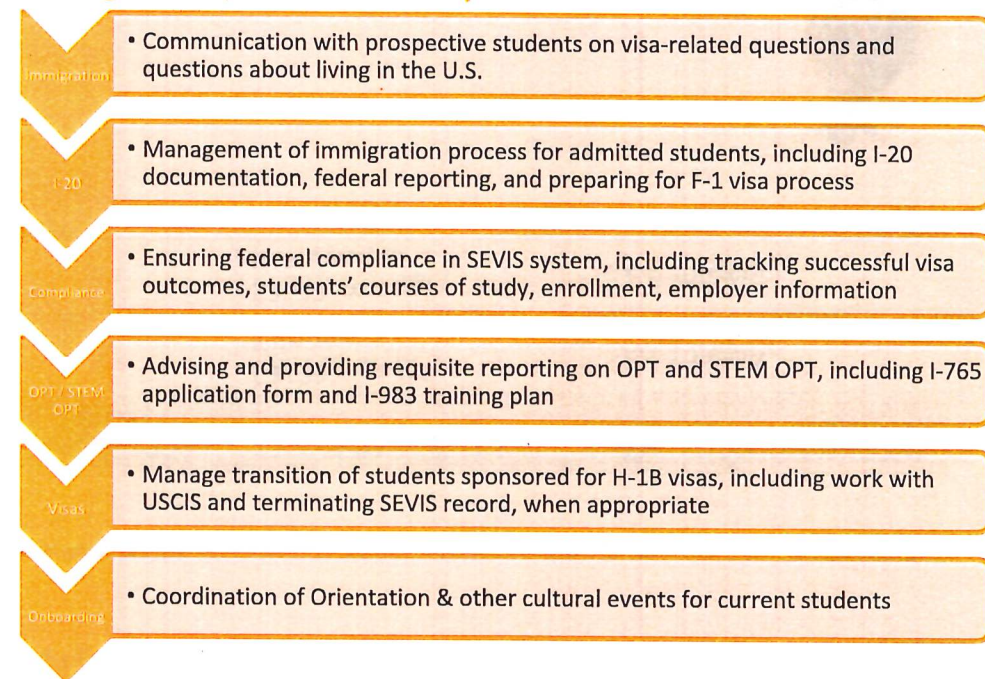
SGOCE:

Student Recruitment & Admission



OIE:

Immigration, Federal Compliance & Matriculation



2. WORKLOAD INCREASE

Current Staff Dedicated to International Student Enrollment & Matriculation

SGOCE		
Name	Title	Role
Mary Gowdy	International Coordinator / Associate Director of Graduate Admissions	Coordinator for international recruitment, applications & admissions
Peter August	Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions	Manages graduate admissions, including the MS in Computer Science and the on-campus MBA

Office of International Education		
Name	Title	Role
Nelly Wadsworth	Director	Primary Designated School Official (PDSO)
Sandy Yu	International Student Coordinator	Designated School Official (DSO)
NhuPhuong Trieu-Hindle	Part-Time Assistant	12.5 hours/week



2. WORKLOAD INCREASE

F-1 Visa Students: Optional Professional Training (OPT) Requirements

Eligible students can apply for up to 12 months of OPT before or after completing their academic studies.

Students who earn a degree in certain STEM fields can apply for a 24-month extension of post-completion OPT, called STEM OPT.



F1-issuing institution is required to advise, provide services for, and submit SEVIS tracking on international students engaged in OPT/ STEM OPT for up to 3 years after graduation.



2. WORKLOAD INCREASE

Campus comparisons of OPT Enrollment

Institution	Fall 2023:	
	# of International students	# of OPT Registrations
Framingham State	72	17
Worcester State	100	15
Salem State	181	23
Bridgewater State	115	25
Fitchburg State	220	187*
Westfield State	67	14
Mass Art	117	31


* Majority Computer Science students pursuing professional training

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEE Proposal

Introduce a \$250.00/semester International Student fee in for all international graduate students.



International student fees are a common practice across institutions of higher education.



Fees offset cost of processing, tracking & assisting students in federal documentation required for OPT and STEM OPT, including I-20, I-983 and SEVIS documentation, reporting changes, updates, job tasks, and H-1B preparation.

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEE

Campus comparisons

Institution	Fee	Fee Term	Student Population
Framingham State	\$1,355	Semester	All international graduate Students
Worcester State	\$250	Semester	All international students
	\$125	Summer	
Westfield State	\$500	Semester	All International students
UMass-Lowell	\$500	Semester	All international students
Southern New Hampshire Campus-based Programs	\$500	Semester	All international students
Fitchburg State	\$250	Semester	All international graduate students

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEE

Support FT Administrative Assistance in the OIE

Proposal

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS	PROPOSED FEE
> 200	\$250/semester
Total	> \$50,000

CURRENT	CURRENTLY BUDGETED COST	PROPOSED
12.5 hours/week at \$26/hour	\$16,900	Full-time Administrative Assistant to support processing and tracking students in federal documentation required for OPT and STEM OPT, including I-20, I-983 and SEVIS documentation, reporting changes, updates, job tasks, and H-1B preparation.

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEE

How will a full-time Administrative Assistant benefit students?

Will allow the OIE to absorb growth in I-20 processing, track missing SEVIS documentation, enter updates to SEVIS, and verify federal record accuracy in a more timely manner.

Will allow the OIE to respond to increased telephone, email & in-person inquiries and keep up with critical tasks delayed by workload increase associated with int'l enrollment growth.

Will enhance overall responsiveness and excellence of service, critical for this growing population of students for whom interpersonal influence has long been noted as a primary motivator for studying abroad (Mourali *et al*, 2005).

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEE

Risk of not funding a FT Administrative Assistant in the OIE?

