APPROVED

Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees

Date and Time
Tuesday November 7, 2023 at 8:15 AM

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

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Academic Affairs Committee on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 8:15 a.m. in Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Committee Members Present
E. Gregoire, J. Flanagan, L. Barrieau (remote)

Committee Members Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
D. Phillips, R. Lapidus

Guests Present
A. McGlothlin, F. Barricelli, G. Doiron, J. Bry, J. Hanselman, J. Harvey, J. Murdoch, J. Wolfman, K. Morgan, L. Bayless, M. Bruun, M. Fiorentino, Jr. (remote), P. Marshall, P. McCafferty, R. Toomey, S. Dodd, S. Levine

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Flanagan called a meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee of Fitchburg State University to order on Tuesday Nov 7, 2023 at 8:15 AM.

C. Approve minutes from the March 27, 2023 meeting - VOTE (12-23/24)

E. Gregoire made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee Meeting on 03-27-23.
L. Barrieau seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

D. Phillips	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye

II. Academic Affairs

A. Provost Remarks

P. Marshall provided a few updates on activities that are taking place in the Academic Affairs division. The Library continues to lead Fitchburg's Community Read, working with public libraries, ALFA, the Fitchburg State Alumni Board, and faculty to develop community programming centered on this year's read: White Mountains State: A Four-Year Journey Hiking and Summiting New Hampshire's 48 Highest Peaks by Fitchburg State alum Keith Gentili. The programming schedule is being finalized and will include a talk by the author, hikes, and also a community storytelling event. This is the 11th year of the Community Read. We have just wrapped up our annual STEM Week, which included shadow days, a Faculty Research Symposium, and panels on topics such as fusion energy and invasive species. Our Exercise & Sports Sciences department recently submitted their self-study for accreditation and Psychological Science implemented a new curriculum that includes a focus on high-impact practices in the lab. We recently received a $750k grant from the Mass Life Sciences Center to support equipment for biotechnology. This grant was part of a $30.5 million dollar investment by the Healey-Driscoll Administration. One of our CommMedia students, Isaiah Manuel, recently won the first-place prize at the annual Student Media Summit at Emerson College. The Student Media Summit is organized by the Massachusetts Production Coalition's Education Consortium, and 14 Higher Ed Institutions sent students, including 11 film/video students from Fitchburg State and cohorts from Boston University, Emerson, Tufts, Middlesex Community College, and Mass Art.

The most significant update from our School of Education is our recent visit by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation or AAQEP. Our visitors were very impressed with steps we have taken to diversify the teacher workforce through our Tomorrow's Educator Pathway, Future Educator Academy, and Future Falcon Academy. At the conclusion of their visit, they stated that we truly care about our students and they were impressed with the sense of community that we have created in Education. In AY 2023-2024 we will be undertaking the review of our Mission, and we have formed a committee to help shepherd this work.

Our Dean's anti-racism fund is in its 4th year. The goal of the fund is to support anti-racism and anti-bias initiatives by Fitchburg State faculty and librarians and to work to end systemic and institutional racism. Two examples of funded projects for this year include:

The Future Educator Academy and Building Representation of Underrepresented Alumni Voices in the Oral History Collection

We have an exciting new partnership with the North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra, which will include joint concerts with our Chorales and Bands, as well as Main Stage Concerts to be held in Weston Auditorium with free tickets for students, faculty, and staff. And, finally, faculty will be participating in a Panel on the Middle East Crisis on November 14th at 3:30 in Ellis White.

P. Marshall next discussed the two new academic programs for consideration: Creative Arts Enterprise and Expressive Arts Therapies. These are two proposals inspired by the same goal: to professionalize the Arts at Fitchburg State University. Both of these new programs will be housed in the Humanities Department, which is in the School of Arts and Sciences. She recognized Associate VP for Academic Affairs, Franca Barricelli, Dean Sara Levine, Professor Jonathan Harvey, and Professor Amy McGlothlin for all of their work on these LOI's. It has truly been a team effort. The internal and external processes were discussed. She next talked about why the arts are so important to Fitchburg State and the community. The goal of these majors 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 gainful careers in the arts or related fields.

P. Marshall provided a description of the program, discussed demand, provided an overview of the intent and mission, the curriculum, enrollment projections, and the program's projected costs and revenue. Creative Arts Enterprise (CAE) is a combination of coursework in business, professional writing, and marketing communications, that allows students to simultaneously hone their artistic skills as musicians, visual artists, or theatrical artists.

The program will prepare students for careers as active artists who are equipped to meet the administrative, promotional, and business needs of various types of arts organizations (including theaters, orchestras, choirs, galleries, museums, studios, and churches). This program is aligned with the University's Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. Speaking specifically to our mission, it "blends liberal arts and sciences and professional programs within a small college environment." The blending in this case is direct, as this program allows students to bring the professional skills of entrepreneurship, administration, marketing, and management into conversation with the visional and performing arts. This program will also help us to realize our vision of being nationally recognized for our excellence in teaching and learning in current and emergent fields. 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. In short, this program is innovative.

The program is also aligned to the statewide Equity Agenda, as it makes arts majors more accessible to underrepresented groups.

The curriculum consists of

- 15 credits of entrepreneurial and community engagement coursework,
- a 24-26 credit concentration in music, art, or theater,
- 12 credits of electives in professional writing, business, and communications,
- up to 12 credits of world language, and
- a 6-credit capstone (creative project, design, research, or internship).

P. Marshall stated that looking at the cost and revenue, this program combines existing resources and, for all intents and purposes, is cost neutral.

A discussion ensued.

E. Gregoire asked about competition with other schools regarding this program. P. Marshall responded that we have no direct competitors but this proposal will be sent to the Board of Higher Education for public viewing where other institutions can comment on the proposal.

J. Harvey commented that there is direct, two-fold, really deep level of interdisciplinary work on this across campus and this program is built to be responsive to this particular economic movement. Studies will learn how important art is to a community.

There was a discussion on partnerships, internships and fundraising.

B. New Academic Program: Creative Arts Enterprise

L. Barrieau made a motion to approve the Creative Arts Enterprise new program.

E. Gregoire seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call
E. Gregoire Aye
J. Flanagan Aye
L. Barrieau Aye

C. New Academic Program: Expressive Arts Therapies

P. Marshall discussed the Expressive Arts Therapies (EAT) program. This program is a combination of a student's chosen arts modality with pre-professional coursework in Human Services and Psychological Science.

The program prepares students for graduate study in expressive therapies as well as entry-level positions as recreational therapists, activity directors, and assistant and/or technician roles in education and mental health counseling. Similar to the CAE program, this program aligns with our mission as a thoughtful integration of arts education with professional skills and experience. The program also aligns with our strategic plan in the following areas: the promotion of greater interdisciplinary teaching and the development of innovation combinations across academic departments. The program also leverages existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs. Like CAE, EAT is built primarily with courses already present in our curriculum, leveraging existing resources and the skills of existing faculty across campus. Finally, this program is aligned with the statewide Equity Agenda, as it makes arts majors more accessible to underrepresented groups. And since this program also leverages existing faculty and resources, it is virtually cost neutral.

The curriculum consists of

- 30 foundational credits in psychology, human services, and the arts and 24 credits in the students' chosen field of music, art, or drama.
- Students will also complete up to 12 credits in a world language and a 6-credit field internship.

There was a discussion on the preparedness that a student would possess after completing this program to move on to a Master's program here, or at another institution.

The trustees in attendance expressed their enthusiasm and support of the work taking place surrounding these two new programs. They would both add to the marketing of the institution and provide a service to the community.
E. Gregoire made a motion to approve the Expressive Arts Therapies new program.
L. Barrieau seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

E. Gregoire Aye
J. Flanagan Aye
L. Barrieau Aye

D. Potential Topics

J. Flanagan suggested that Board members and others, please send any suggested topics to her for future meetings.

III. 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 8:59 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Flanagan