DRAFT

Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees Enrollment Management Meeting

Enrollment Management Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday October 20, 2026 at 10:00 AM

Location
This is a fully remote meeting and it will be livestreamed

Public Live Stream:
https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/live

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

Committee Members Absent
S. Rodriguez

Committee Members who arrived after the meeting opened
J. Flanagan

Ex Officio Members Present
D. Hodge (remote)

Guests Present
David Tiernan (remote), David Weiss (remote), Franca Barricelli (remote), Jannette McMenamy (remote), K. Lundgren (remote), Matt Bruun (remote), Matt Burke (remote), Matt Lechter (remote), Michael Cloutier (remote), Nate Robichaud (remote), Pam McCafferty (remote), Stacey Luster (remote), Stefan Dodd (remote), Tim St. John (remote), Travis Chambers (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

E. Gregoire called a meeting of the Enrollment Management and Student Success Committee of Fitchburg State University to order on Tuesday Oct 20, 2026 at 10:01 AM.

C. Approve Minutes from the 3/25/2026 Meeting

M. Fiorentino, Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from March 25, 2026 Enrollment Management and Student Success Committee Meeting on 03-25-26.
L. Barrieau seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
S. Rodriguez	Absent
E. Gregoire	Aye
J. Flanagan	Absent

J. Flanagan arrived at 10:03 AM.

II. Enrollment Management and Student Success

A. Enrollment Management

Institutional Context & Credit Generation Trends
Vice President P. McCaffrey presented a multi-year level-setting report on enrollment and credit generation metrics.

- Total generated credits across the university experienced a 14% overall decline over the five-year evaluation period.
- Undergraduate Day generated credits declined by 18% over five years, currently representing 48% of total generated credits.
- Graduate generated credits decreased by 15% over five years, now comprising 37% of generated credits.
- Undergraduate Evening (SGOCE) generated credits increased by 10% over the five-year period, representing 15% of total credits.
- Combined SGOCE credits (Graduate and Evening Undergraduate) now account for 52% of the university's total generated credits across the academic year.
- Within the Massachusetts state university system, Fitchburg State accounts for 9% of total system Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) in FY26.

- Fitchburg State maintains its position as the state system leader in graduate education, representing 30% of total graduate FTE market share and approximately 44% of headcount share.

Student Retention & Outcome Metrics

Unofficial cohort retention rates indicate upward progress across recent entering classes. The six-year graduation rate dropped by 8.7 percentage points for the 2020 entering freshman cohort due to severe pandemic-related retention challenges during their initial semester.

Administration anticipates a secondary dip in six-year graduation rates when the 2023 cohort reaches completion, reflecting high school learning disruptions during COVID-19.

Fall 2026 Enrollment Successes

- The Fall 2026 incoming class reached 770 students, compared to 580 in Fall 2025 and 740 in Fall 2024.
- Fall 2026 marks the first year since 2017 that Fitchburg State did not experience a decline in Day School enrollment, achieving a 1% increase in FTEs.
- First-time freshman enrollment increased by 38% and transfer enrollment increased by 20% year-over-year.
- Enrollment from local Fitchburg high schools surged by 160% because of targeted direct admissions and the Fitchburg Promise initiative.
- Local high school graduates now represent approximately 30% of the incoming class (and 50% from the broader North Central Massachusetts region), up from a historical average of 17%.

B. Student Success

- The university held its third Falcon Assist Week before classes, offering extended hours and a welcome tent outside the Anthony building to assist students with schedules, IDs, and enrollment needs.
- New external signage was added to Anthony building explicitly designating "Admissions," alongside improved parking orientation and schedule-code directional signage.
- SU Success Coaching Team: Funded by a ~$1.2 million Department of Higher Education (DHE) allocation, the university established an SU Success Coaching team consisting of a director and four dedicated success coaches.
- Collocated in the Academic Coaching and Tutoring (ACT) Center, the success coaches proactively engage first-generation students using a high-touch framework modeled after TRIO (which boasts a 95% retention rate and 75% graduation rate on campus).

- SU Success funding was leveraged to institute 12-month housing and dining options for students with housing insecurity, student-athletes, and summer course participants.
- The university received state grant approval to establish formal co-op programs in Biology/Chemistry and Business Administration.
- Faculty participation in the week-two attendance census reached a record 87%, providing real-time data for coaching outreach.
- Career Services engaged nearly 500 students during the first month of the semester across four major events, including employer roundtables and job fairs.

Fall 2027 Recruitment & Strategic Financial Aid

- Recruitment for Fall 2027 is actively underway, supported by four newly onboarded admissions recruiters and Interim Director of Admission Gretchen Mayhew.
- Upcoming Fall Open Houses are scheduled for Saturday, October 24, and Saturday, November 7 (aligned with Homecoming weekend).
- Initial Fall 2027 acceptance letters are being issued this week, marking the earliest decision release in three to four years, supported by expedited application review.
- Financial Aid Packaging Strategy: Finance and Enrollment Management are partnering to shift scholarship distribution upfront as a recruitment incentive rather than utilizing funds exclusively for post-enrollment retention.
- The Fitchburg Promise waiver cost $350,000–$380,000 in year one and is projected to reach $1.0 million to $1.4 million annually once four full student cohorts are enrolled.
- Partnership discussions regarding direct admissions and yield strategies are expanding to Leominster Public Schools and Gardner.

Board Requests & Trustee Discussion

- Trustee Chairman M. Fiorentino requested a detailed 5-year enrollment trend report categorized by academic major to analyze shifting student career interests and assess physical plant and financial requirements. The administration will prepare and present the program-level 5-year trend data at an upcoming board meeting.
- Renovations to Conlon Hall for film/video programs are underway, and the Nursing cohort was successfully expanded from 70 to 84 seats.
- A joint committee including faculty, deans, and MSCA union leadership was formed to review and modernize the General Education curriculum.

C. Next Steps

Trustee Chairman M. Fiorentino requested a detailed 5-year enrollment trend report categorized by academic major to analyze shifting student career interests and assess

physical plant and financial requirements. The administration will prepare and present the program-level 5-year trend data at an upcoming board meeting.

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

M. Fiorentino, Jr. made a motion to Adjourn the Meeting.
J. Flanagan seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
J. Flanagan	Aye
S. Rodriguez	Absent
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 11:09 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Gregoire