**Unit Action Plan**

**2020-2021**

Division: **Academic Affairs.**

Unit: **Health and Natural Sciences**

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| **Unit Mission:**  The mission of the School of Health and Natural Sciences is to help students develop the skills and habits of mind necessary for scientific inquiry and analysis in their professional, personal and civic lives. Faculty experts and engaged staff in the fields of biology, chemistry, earth and geographic sciences, exercise and sports science, mathematics, physics, psychological science, and nursing support students via foundational learning in the general education curriculum and mastery of content in a variety of majors. Our faculty offer classroom, laboratory, and clinical instruction as well as research opportunities in the sciences and health professions. Faculty and staff collaborate across the university and beyond to offer interdisciplinary learning opportunities. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation |

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| **Objectives**  Align programmatic learning goals with the Institutional Learning Priorities.  Implement and advance the LA&S curriculum. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Programs will have considered how their programmatic learning goals connect with the LA&S core curriculum under the umbrella of the ILP framework.  All programs will have identified and submitted courses that contribute to the LA&S curriculum. Foundational and existing LA&S courses will be prioritized. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives |

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| **Objectives**  The Health Professions and Nursing Residential Learning Communities will be implemented for the AY21 year.  Development of a strategic plan for the Health Professions Advising program.  In conjunction with the Davis Foundation Grant, career core competencies will be identified and mapped which will allow students to articulate their preparedness for the world of work.  Connect successful outreach activities to facilitate internship and career opportunities for students at the department level to the Career and advising center. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  The RLC is integrated with the Health Professions Advising Program with which includes specialized advising, guest speakers, and activities.  For each RLC, a guiding document exists which outlines the purpose, objectives, and assessments. These documents will serve as a foundation for a generalized model which assists in connecting residential learning communities to academic programs. Assessments to gauge the impact of this High Impact Practice will be identified and implemented.  The Health Professions Advising program will be institutionalized across multiple departments and advisors. Protocols and policies will promote the advising and recruitment of students, retention, and promote successful post-graduate goals. Co-curricular outcomes will be developed.  The Biology and Chemistry and Mathematics Departments will have successfully identified competencies and completed maps.  Students are able to utilize the career center for internship and career placement. The career opportunities of students are more closely embedded into programs. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Promote greater interdisciplinary teaching and develop innovative combinations across academic departments |

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| **Objectives**  Interdisciplinary coursework will be part of a new Data Science and Statistics program at Fitchburg State.  Other possible IDS collaborations among members of the campus community will be considered. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  A faculty member with the background and experience to lead the development of this program will be successfully hired.  One new IDIS course will be proposed. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Leverage existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs. |

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| **Objectives**  The Environmental Public Health major will be revised to include distinct tracts in order to attract students and facilitate ease of transfer.  The viability of implementing new majors identified in previous action plans will be considered. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Three new tracks within the EPH major which will give students greater options and enhance transfer of students into the program.  Data Science and Statistics new faculty hire will determine the nature of the new major.  A final decision will be made on the Strength and Conditioning 4+1 and a possible Health Sciences major.  A preliminary plan to use a Psychological Science major for degree completion will be proposed. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Across all academic and co-curricular programs leverage institutional expertise in online education and distance learning to reinforce the University’s commitment to access |

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| **Objectives**  Expand modalities of course delivery to consider how more flexible options could be structured into our traditional course offerings to allow for greater access by non-traditional or older students.  Develop and promote common expectations for what an online class should be with particular attention given to experiential or laboratory experiences.  Explore how student research could occur under new modalities. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Diversified course delivery modalities throughout the School of HNS.  Increase in the number of 7-week courses offered from within the School of HNS  Guidelines will be established for best principles for online laboratories or experiential modalities.  Percentage of students completing a high impact practice increases even as access to campus is limited. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially students of color, so that we meet them where they are |

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| **Objectives**  Implementation of new Math Readiness standards and the new developmental math courses.  Implement a holistic admissions model in Nursing.  Expand availability and utilization of open educational resources (OER) to reduce learning- related costs for students | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Timely completion of first college credit bearing Math class by 1st year students. Reduction in the number of students requiring remedial mathematics courses.  The Nursing incoming class more closely reflects the demographic make-up of the state.  An inventory completed of the number of Health and Sciences faculty using OER in their courses by end of the 2020-21 academic year. An increase in the number of faculty adopting OER resources. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Develop and implement a coordinated and holistic model of student support services grounded in evidence-based practices and a case management model |

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| **Objectives**  Revisit the concept of a STEM Success Center, work with the Advising Center and Student Success Office to develop a multi-modality platform for STEM tutoring and support. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Improvement in the retention of students in STEM majors |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Integrate career services into departments and curriculum, and build more consistent career advising across campus, especially for first-year students and sophomores |

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| **Objectives**  Map the core competencies our students gain on campus, to help them articulate their preparedness for the world of work | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Completed under Goal 1 |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Provide faculty and staff training around equity and inclusiveness both in and out of the classroom |

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| **Objectives**    Grant proposal to the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Inclusive Excellence competition, or other appropriate funding source, to fund professional development for faculty and staff to gain knowledge and skills to build equitable systems that are culturally sensitive and eliminate the achievement gap for our underrepresented student population.  Establish the Academic Dean’s Anti-Racism Fund. The fund will be a coordinated activity among the four academic Schools and the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library to support campus-wide and community-based anti-racism and anti-bias initiatives. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  The funds if awarded would be used for professional development of faculty members. Faculty members will be able to take part in training which will facilitate a shift to a focus of inclusive excellence in teaching, advising, and assessment.  The Fund will support activities including but not limited to symposia, training, library resources, curriculum development, and educational programming. Initial monies will have been spent. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Ensure all processes and support services are adequate to meet the unique needs of transfer students, non-traditional students, online learners, and graduate students |

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| **Objectives**  Make FSU’s majors more transfer-friendly and simplify the pathway and process for transfer students matriculating into the University.  Identify barriers to completion within programs of study for transfer students.  Begin the process developing a holistic model to deliver educational programming within departments that includes course in both the day and SCGOE. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  The STEM Transfer Academy will be used as a model to facilitate transfer of all students into the campus order to ease their transition especially for those coming from community colleges.  Identify new potential transfer and articulation agreements especially for EPH.  Programs with large numbers of transfer students such as the RN to BS or LPN to BS programs will have implemented a transfer process which streamlines the process of admission.  Reduction in barriers with appropriate policy changes within program.  Integrate course schedule planning into a larger planning process to reduce the disconnect between the day and evening divisions. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL FOUR: Establish inclusive excellence, innovation, and environmental stewardship as signature strengths** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Increase the visible diversity of our faculty and staff, and nurture the commitment to equity and inclusion throughout the campus community |

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| **Objectives**  Expand Residential Learning Communities and themed housing on campus to ensure that the representation within the communities reflects the same demographic as the campus as a whole.  Continue supporting the recruitment of faculty from diverse and traditionally underrepresented backgrounds in the recruitment and retention process. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Representation of students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds are the same in the RLC as the majors in which they are studying. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL FOUR: Establish inclusive excellence, innovation, and environmental stewardship as signature strengths** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Promote environmentally sustainable values across the institution and assert the University’s commitment to “green” practices as central to FSU’s institutional identity |

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| **Objectives**  Members of the FSU community will be stewards of the environment and will work together to make FSU a greener campus that embraces environmentally sustainable practices.  Transform the existing sustainability advisory committee into an action committee with greater ownership for implementation of suggestions it brings to the table | **Performance Measures/Targets**  A larger number of faculty, staff and students will take full advantage of the sustainable options offered by Print Services to reduce environmental impact.  Faculty and staff members with appropriate expertise will become part of an action committee dedicated to improving the campus commitment to sustainable practices. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL FIVE: Assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Establish FSU’s commitment to education justice as a cornerstone of the University’s positioning strategy |

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| **Objectives**  Participate in campus-wide discussions on how we define student success on this campus. Explore the meaning of educational justice in the sciences.  Inventory or identify academic courses or programs with the School of HNS that offer diverse course offerings that focus on social justice, civil rights, responsive citizenship, and social awareness. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  A clear vision of how student success is defined on campus with particular emphasis on success in STEM and Health programs of study.  Increased awareness by faculty members and students about options to explore these concepts within the framework of their major. |

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| **Goals/Outcomes:**  **GOAL SIX: Steward physical and financial resources responsibly and navigate a path to long-term organizational sustainability** | **Associated Strategic Plan Strategy:**  Align academic and co-curricular program plans with long-term enrollment demands by taking a data- driven, mission-focused approach to evaluate performance of current offerings and guide development of new programs |

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| **Objectives**  Implement and integrate Academic Performance Solutions as a tool to use data to drive decisions within the school. | **Performance Measures/Targets**  Chairs will have been introduced to the different metrics available from EAB and will have used at least one metric during the year. |