

Concise Summary of Fitchburg State's Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan

The Fitchburg State University 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is focused on increasing student success in all divisions of the university and providing the long-term financial support to help the institution thrive.

The goals that comprise the Plan and are elaborated in it are:

1. Strengthen academic programs and expand methods of delivery.
 - a. Prepare students for workforce success through an education combining liberal arts with professional programs
 - b. Develop new, flexible models for curricular delivery to better serve student needs
 - c. Make innovative use of developing technologies for curriculum delivery
 - d. Affirm and enhance diversity among students, faculty, and staff
2. Focus on promoting student success.
 - a. Identify barriers to student success through data and eliminate or mitigate obstacles to retention and completion
 - b. Expand use of high-impact teaching practices to enhance learning and student success
 - c. Reorganize or focus student support services to ensure that student needs are met
3. Develop further Fitchburg State's role in the city, state, and region, embracing civic and global responsibility.
 - a. Collaborate with local partners on community-based projects and internships
 - b. Seek out collaboration with external constituencies like alumni to make better use of their knowledge and experience
 - c. Promote the health and development of the city and region
4. Enhance fiscal growth and the long-term strength of the institution.
 - a. Pursue educationally sound opportunities to enhance existing revenue streams and develop new revenue streams
 - b. Revitalize marketing of the university
 - c. Increase financial resources through philanthropy

Fiscal Requirements and Implications

1. Currently, there is a \$3 million structural budget deficit that is being covered by the use of reserves. Staying the present course, given demographic projections of a steady decline in high school graduates, will exhaust the reserves in four years, so the structural deficit must be eliminated.

2. New operating expenditures to accomplish the Plan total \$1.6 million annually by the fifth year. Significant expenditure categories include enhancing student advising, increasing student recruitment efforts, staffing new programs, adding a key marketing position, and operating an entrepreneurial center.
3. New revenues and reduced expenses required to eliminate the deficit, support the new expenditures, and offset expected revenue declines total \$8.3 million. Conservative estimates of significant new revenues include enhanced educational programs currently in development. Additional new revenues come from increased retention and improved graduation rates, increased numbers of out-of-state, transfer, and international students, and differential charges for a few important programs that generate far fewer resources than they consume. Reduced expenditures come from holding some non-personnel budgets flat and eliminating a few positions following expected retirements. Further, a balanced budget will require additional reductions in current expenditures whenever possible.
4. Getting to a balanced, more robust financial position by the fifth year will need to be supported by continued use of reserves in the intervening years, but meeting revenue and expense goals will mean that significant reserves will remain in year five.