

**Farmingdale
State College**
State University of New York

ANNUAL REPORT TO SUNY

2021 - 2022



Overview

Farmingdale State College has fared well through the myriad of challenges during the last two-three years. As we start the 2022-23 academic year, the report that follows will highlight numerous advances and identify some of the obstacles that will confront the College in the years ahead.

Enrollment & Retention

Farmingdale State College continues to experience robust enrollment. Over the past decade Farmingdale has remained a system-wide leader in enrollment growth. Our Fall 2022 headcount of 9,399 slightly exceeded our target and was just above 2021. We experienced slight increases in both our continuing and returning numbers and first time/full time enrollment with transfer numbers falling just below our target. Enrollment in some programs is particularly strong. Currently over 1,000 students are enrolled in FSC's Computer Sciences, Computer Engineering Technology, Security Systems and Computer Programming and Information Systems Technology programs. Of particular note is the significant increase (13%) in enrollment in the computer fields which is largely attributable to our new Computer Science program. Farmingdale ranks 5th across SUNY – just below University Centers – in terms of the number of students supported by programs in these disciplines. The College exceeded its targets without experiencing a decline in the high school GPA of its entering cohort. Although the demographic environment has led to a decline in transfer students from our nearest institutions (Nassau Community College and Suffolk County Community College), our outreach into Queens, the creation of joint admission agreements with Westchester Community College, and the addition of new academic programs have been instrumental in meeting our targets.

The College is working to address retention issues, which are particularly concerning among junior and



senior students in some disciplines. In Spring 2022, a thorough retention study was completed and is informing the work of both academic and enrollment working groups. The retention study included detailed data. Action steps need to be formulated based on this information. Steps to aid retention are taking shape including a stronger focus on advising. A required first year experience course will be implemented in fall 2023. A program and celebration for first generation students was launched in 2021 and is being continued.

In summer 2022 a five-year Strategic Enrollment Management Plan which identifies enrollment targets, broad strategies, goals, and action items was completed and is now being implemented. The Plan focuses on traditional first-time full-time students as well as transfer students, online offerings, and adult/returning students.

Financial Position

As a result of strong enrollment, prudent management, and carefully reduced spending over the past 16 months, the College is in excellent financial position with unrestricted operating reserves totaling \$32.8M. We are identifying strategic priorities to which funds should be appropriated to further strengthen the institution; among these are the need to address salary disparities, and fund continuous improvement of the campus

in technology, classrooms, and lab facilities. Farmingdale has been able to fund new faculty positions that will permit the growth of key new academic programs that will help the College sustain its high enrollment, improve the student/full-time faculty ratio, and permit greater student/faculty interaction. The new SUNY allocation of \$1.6 million for recruitment faculty is most welcome, and reflects Farmingdale's strong enrollment growth.

Over the last three years, the College has made \$15 million in investments to address campus needs. These include a civil engineering lab, an air traffic control simulator, improved instructional technology, and numerous aesthetic improvements.

Fundraising

FSC's Development and Alumni Engagement Office has turned a corner after years of underperforming. Over the past fiscal year (2021-22) the Foundation set a fundraising record with over \$3 million in gifts. Over an 18-month window, four of the largest gifts in College history have been received. These gifts allowed FSC to launch its first college-wide honors program in which 20 students have received renewable scholarships of at least \$1,000 and the opportunity to be involved in specialized courses and dedicated programming and activities. In addition, a single gift of \$1.4 million is supporting the creation of a new radio frequency lab on campus.

During COVID a student emergency fund was created and has been sustained. We expect in November 2022 to announce a major gift totaling \$100,000 to endow the student emergency fund.

In addition, the number of donors has doubled in the space of two years reaching 1,500 individuals, the highest number in FSC history. A number of alumnae also created or added to endowed scholarships. Total assets grew to \$10.6 million in June 2022, up from \$10.2 million. This occurred despite the decline in equity values due to a significant growth in revenues.



In conjunction with Enrollment Management, the Foundation dramatically improved the efficiency of the scholarship award process and increased the minimum scholarship award to better recruit and retain successful students. Students are notified of awards earlier which should help improve the admissions yield among scholarship candidates. The College is now in a position to set a higher minimum award level for these scholarships.

The College and its Foundation successfully concluded a search for a Director of Development position. This reflects the growing confidence in the ability to attract and engage donors and build upon recent success.

Farmingdale continues to host a group of about 70 Sillcox Scholars with a \$400,000 annual gift from the Tortora-Sillcox Foundation. The Sillcox' have given about \$1.1 million since 2016 to support the scholarship program. These students are overwhelmingly from distressed school districts and would be unlikely to pursue a college opportunity without the Sillcox/Farmingdale partnership. Although the donors are retiring from some of their philanthropic work, they have indicated strong and continued support for FSC and its access and opportunity work.

In fall 2021, the Foundation moved in earnest to establish and promote a planned giving program. A small number of donors have already surfaced

and indicated that the Farmingdale Foundation is included in their estate plans. An estate gift of approximately \$600,000 is expected by the conclusion of this calendar year.

For many years the College Foundation was not, on balance, a great asset to the institution and its place in aiding the College was unclear. This has changed dramatically. Recently, the Foundation received the platinum seal of transparency from Candid (formerly Guidestar).

Student Success/Outcomes

Farmingdale promotes itself as an engine of opportunity. In spring 2022 the College launched its Metrics That Matter campaign that focuses on student achievement, employment opportunities, and early career earnings. FSC was ranked in the top 2% nationally in early career earnings according to CollegeNet's Social Mobility Index and in the Top 10% nationally in CollegeNet's rankings of colleges that move low-income students into high-earning careers. Additionally, the College was ranked #28 nationally by Washington Monthly for advancing student social mobility and #23 for promoting public service. The SUNY/NYS DOL grad wage data reveals that FSC graduates earn among the highest salaries of any SUNY graduates at three, five, and ten-years following commencement. In any given year, only three to four campuses have graduates who earn more than FSC graduates across a 64-campus system. The College's semiannual survey of graduates continues to show that over 90% of responders are gainfully employed or pursuing graduate degrees within six months. The substantial majority remain within the New York Metro or Long Island area which reinforces the College's place in stemming the brain drain. FSC's place in helping to retain talent has been widely noted within the Long Island business community.

Recent data from The Wall Street Journal highlight a number of FSC degree programs. In summer 2021



the WSJ published data on the ratio of student debt to income for graduates who were three years removed from degree completion. Fourteen Farmingdale programs appear within the top quarter of programs ranked by this measure of return on investment. Eight programs appeared in the top ten nationally.

Perhaps nothing underscores the value of the FSC experience more than the success of its students on national and regional licensure and certification exams. Over the past four semesters students in FSC's Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Medical Lab Science, and Professional Pilot programs have each achieved licensure/certification pass rates of 100%.

Similarly, students in the College's numerous opportunity programs (EOP, C-STEP, TRIO) show remarkably high retention rates. The average retention rate over five years for EOP was 91%. For TRIO this rate was 91% and for CSTEP 95%. In each case the year one to year two retention rates exceed the college-wide average.

Since 2016, the College has hosted the RAM (Research Aligned Mentorship) program initially supported by a US Department of Education First in the World grant. The program remains a point of pride. Over 50 RAM scholars participated in mentored research and internship opportunities, including 14 who were accepted to national

undergraduate research programs in summer 2021. Over the five years of the program, retention across the approximately 1,000 students who participated in cohorts 1 – 5 is about 90%. The success of the various programs occurs largely as a result of the concerted and intensive work that the staff does to provide support and various opportunities to students. These go well beyond financial support and involve mentoring, monitoring, and providing options for working closely with faculty and staff.

Academics

The addition of new academic programs has been a key to Farmingdale's success and accounts for much of the growth that has occurred in recent years. Most recently, B.S. degrees in Computer Science and Civil Engineering Technology have been added. Civil Engineering Technology now enrolls 102 students with 225 enrolled in Computer Science. This program has doubled in size in a single academic year while Civil Engineering grew by over 60%.

FSC is a SUNY leader in microcredentials, having established 17 different offerings. Recently the College created an office to oversee the development of these credentials and other extended learning opportunities. The microcredentials offer ways to both enhance the value of the student experience and build on the College's mission to be recognized as a center for applied learning.

In 2022, the College launched a Division of Computing within its School of Engineering Technology. As noted, the computer and information technology fields at FSC have been a pillar of the College's steady, stable enrollment. The Division houses several programs that share courses and faculty while enrolling well over 1,000 students. The SUNY system recently adopted capital plan calls for the construction of a \$75 million Center for Computer Science and Information Systems which will house these programs.



Interinstitutional programming is becoming increasingly important. The new Cannabis Production and Management certificate has successfully enrolled and served as a foundation for a partnership with Queens College. Two highly successful and highly enrolled cannabis workshops were delivered at Queens College in June 2022 with funding secured through the Workforce Development Institute. The program will be offered again in November 2022 and Farmingdale is in preliminary discussion with Queens about how to embed the cannabis certificate option within the Queens business curriculum. This presents a unique opportunity to create an academic partnership between a CUNY and SUNY institution.

FSC has joint admissions agreements in place with both Nassau Community College and Suffolk County Community College and recently executed a similar agreement with Westchester Community College. Transfer students from these community colleges are integral to Farmingdale's enrollment success, and we continue to work with these partner institutions to make greater use of joint admissions agreements.

FSC is also partnering with SUNY Old Westbury to deliver BS to MAT degrees in both Health Education and Technology Education. We anticipate

those programs will be operational in the 2023-24 academic year.

Other new programs are in various stages of development. The proposal for an online Masters of Science in Nursing is complete. An online degree completion program in Artificial Intelligence Management has been submitted and a Human Resources Management certificate has been approved and registered.

The Nexus Center for Applied Learning and Career Development continues to make Farmingdale a leader in applied and experiential learning and has been widely recognized as such.

The Center hosted nearly 50 approved virtual applied learning co-curricular activities and placed 2,737 students in credit-bearing applied learning placements in '21-22. In fall 2022 the Center began overseeing the College's newly formed Office for Community and Civic Engagement.

Program-level accreditation remains a key institutional priority. Previously we reported that the School of Engineering Technology earned renewed ABET accreditation of seven programs. More recently the College's Aviation programs completed the reaccreditation process with Aviation Accreditation Board International. The School of Business is advancing toward Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business accreditation. The College's Sport Management program is now seeking accreditation through the Commission on Sports Management Accreditation. The Bachelor of Science degree program in Visual Communications, Art & Graphic Design, and the Bachelor of Science degree program, Interaction Design, have earned accreditation by the prestigious National Association of Schools of Art & Design. In summer 2022, the Federal Aviation Administration recognized Farmingdale State College as a partner institution under their Air Traffic Control-Collegiate



Training Initiative. FSC graduates with AT-CTI status bypass the first 5-weeks of training as they seek to become air traffic controllers.

FSC was awarded specialized accreditation for its University in the High School program in 2020, through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment. The UHS program partners with over 100 schools and enrolls 6,700 students. It has become an important recruitment vehicle for the College. About 16% of FSC's first-time full-time students for Fall 2022 semester had earned UHS credit.

After nearly two years of planning and fundraising, the College has established an honors program that is currently enrolling five students in each of the College's four schools. Funding is in place to recruit five honors students annually to each of the schools for a maximum of 80 honors students.

Remote Learning/ Distance Education

The College continues to add programs delivered via distance learning. These programs build on current areas of strength or provide academic opportunities that are otherwise lacking in the region or within SUNY. In addition to the existing degree completion programs in Nursing and Dental Hygiene, a move to an online option for Geographic Information Systems is underway. The newly

approved Cannabis Management and Production certificate is also fully online. Farmingdale will pursue a Nursing Administration MS, Quality Assurance MS and an Artificial Intelligence Management completion BS. All will be delivered online.

Beyond the current and proposed degree programs, hundreds of additional courses and sections are being delivered remotely. Over 780 faculty members trained to teach remote online classes. One hundred ten workshops for 750 participants were offered on topics for online course teaching. Academic Affairs DL incentive program produced 117 new online Work for Hire courses. A SUNY+ proposal was submitted which will move FSC towards SUNY Online designation.

Diversity & Inclusive Excellence

FSC is now a majority minority institution. In August 2022 the College earned Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) recognition fulfilling a notable institutional goal. HEED recognizes colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Further, we anticipate that Farmingdale may soon be identified as a Hispanic Serving Institution as our Hispanic population seems to be about 26-27% of our student body. This diversity extends beyond race and ethnicity. Approximately 150 students are veterans of the US armed forces. The College has also had approximately 450 legal permanent resident students.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence office completed a campus-wide equity scorecard that has been shared with the campus and is available through the College website. Preliminary data reveal little evidence of an academic equity gap at FSC. At least in terms of fall to fall retention and baccalaureate level graduation rates, a high degree of parity exists among students regardless



of race or ethnicity. However, some important gaps seem to exist when comparison is made to other SUNY institutions.

Farmingdale, does, have a gender gap in enrollment, particularly in its School of Engineering Technology and its Business School. Presently, 57% of FSC students are male (vs. about 45% across SUNY). Nonetheless, according to American Society for Engineering Education, Farmingdale ranks third nationally in the number of Engineering Technology degrees awarded to underrepresented minority students and eighth nationally in the number of such degree awarded to women.

FSC successfully launched its inaugural “First Gen Proud” event which brought together students, faculty, and staff. We hosted a week-long celebration to recognize and support first-generation college students and their families. The program is being replicated and expanded in Fall 2022.

The Department of Nursing created a DEI Advisory Council, the mission of which is to establish

a nursing department with a curriculum and culture that embodies inclusion and equity, values humanism, and promotes a holistic environment in which students and faculty can learn, work, and grow together. Additionally, the Council works to design more inclusive curricula.

The College is cognizant of the need to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty. Toward that goal, Farmingdale is participating in the Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) funded by the National Science Foundation. This is the first individual NSF grant awarded to Farmingdale.

The NSF-AGEP Predominantly Undergraduate Institution Alliance is comprised of Stony Brook University (lead institution), Farmingdale State College, Suffolk County Community College and Brookhaven National Laboratory. Faculty at FSC are selected to provide teaching mentorships and micro-teaching experiences for underrepresented minority doctoral candidates in the STEM disciplines from Stony Brook University. The goal of the project at FSC is to ultimately hire visiting doctoral students as full-time faculty, paving the way for increased diversity, and allowing minority FSC undergraduate students to see themselves more represented in the faculty body.

The College implemented a Memorandum of Understanding with TheDream.US, a well-financed organization that assists Dreamers with full tuition scholarships. These are undocumented immigrant youth who came to the U.S. at an early age. Most have DACA or Temporary Protected Status that allows them to remain in the country. Our first cohort of over 20 Dreamers arrived on campus in Fall 2022. Farmingdale is the first SUNY college and first Long Island institution to sign an agreement with The Dream, and its work with The Dream is being replicated elsewhere. Farmingdale's focus on Dreamers received attention in the November 2022 issue of Insight Into Diversity.



Organizational Structure

A number of organizational changes have taken place. The attempt to integrate enrollment and student engagement did not prove successful and prompted some staffing changes. The Student Affairs division has flourished with a return to a traditional, flatter structure and new leadership. Campus activities of all kinds continue to increase and attendance is much improved. New staff were added in campus housing, campus recreation, and other areas and student engagement is increasing. Enrollment Management is now reporting to the VP of Administration and Finance—an arrangement that seems to be working.

Student Engagement

The College has made major advances in the areas of student engagement and student life. Long known principally as a commuter serving institution, the College's residence halls were filled in Fall 2022 as a result of new staff, aggressive promotion, policy changes, and improvements in programming. Resident assistant training was completely redesigned with a focus on crisis recognition and intervention. For the first time in recent history, Farmingdale's small residential program enjoyed waiting lists and resorted to placing a number of students in triples with minimal issues.

Additionally, new staff in campus recreation and in the dean of students' office have created a more ambitious and engaging series of programs that help make it worthwhile to stay on campus. These include more guest speakers, both passive and active recreational and health programs, a fitness program, special celebrations, expanded Greek life (which grew by 40% to include over 300 students), added student clubs, and extended hours in some student service areas.

Esports continues to experience exponential growth resulting in over 150 students active as members of 10 competitive teams. The team attended its first ever national local area networking (LAN) event in Atlanta in May and secured its first sponsorship with G Fuel Energy Drink.

Civic Engagement & Partnerships

In 2020 the College received Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, an elective designation indicating institutional commitment to community engagement. This was the culmination of a lengthy process. The College's Nexus Center for Applied Learning and Career Development has taken responsibility to maintain the Carnegie designation and building on FSC's involvement with the broader community. A new Office of Community and Civic Engagement launched to further our Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

Notably, the College was successful in filling the vacant building at the Broadhollow Bioscience Park. The long vacant building is now leased by the Estée Lauder Companies. This is considered as a regionally significant achievement as FSC—a partner in BHBP—worked for nearly three years to secure an anchor tenant and an agreement that provides recurring benefit to the campus. The five-year arrangement provides \$350,000 in recurring revenue to the College Foundation and offers internship



by BW Research, was completed in December, 2021. A coordinating council was recently formed and an initial Request for Proposals will soon be made available to SUNY institutions with relevant programs. The OWTI is positioned to distributed \$8-9M to SUNY affiliated institutions over a period of two to three years.

In 2022, the College secured Land Lease legislation which will permit a partnership with Dynamic Sports Management—a well-known entity that hosts lacrosse events around the region. The partnership will lead to the development of approximately 10-12 acres as a lacrosse complex on the FSC campus. The fields will be available for college use and will host tournaments that will generate a recurring flow of revenue to the College.

Additionally, FSC is the sponsoring institution for both the Long Island Educational Opportunity Center (LIEOC) and for the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Both Centers are New York State leaders in the number of persons served and in outcomes. The LIEOC had the third highest enrollment among state-wide EOCs, ranked second among statewide EOCs in retention percentage, recorded the highest total completions among statewide EOCs, and placed second among statewide EOC's in completion percentage. The SBDC ranked first in the number of clients served among the 22 SBDC centers state-wide with an estimated \$40M in economic impact. Recently, through collaboration with the campus, the SBDC received a grant to assist FSC's minority students and recent alumni with entrepreneurial aspirations.

Looking Forward

Farmingdale's most pressing challenges are demographic and infrastructural. We expect that the strong enrollment growth experienced in recent years will subside. Evidence of this is already occurring and it requires the College to think differently about recruitment and retention in the years ahead. The newly adopted Strategic Enrollment Management Plan identifies several steps that the College will take to maintain its strong enrollment numbers. It is vital that SUNY institutions work together to retain students in the System and provide ready pathways to additional degrees or credentials within and among SUNY campuses. To some degree, this is underway as a result of our joint admissions agreement with Nassau Community College and Suffolk County Community College. In addition, the Provost's Office is nearing completion of joint admissions agreements with other community colleges.

It will be important to think differently and more broadly about how best to recruit community college students. This may include considering the option of offering the upper division of FSC bachelor



level degrees at these campuses to make retention of students on Long Island and within the System as easily attainable as possible. This could address issues of mobility or work/family commitment for community college students. In recent months Farmingdale and Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) officials have met to identify the steps needed to establish an extension site at one of the SCCC campuses.

Beyond this, the College intends to explore the recruitment of adult learners beginning with students who have stopped out in recent years through return to complete initiatives. This may require further use of remote learning courses. Previously, FSC has benefitted greatly from SUNY's re-enroll to complete initiatives. Given the retention issues for third and fourth-year students, the College will need to prioritize outreach to encourage these populations to return.

New academic programs have been at the center of Farmingdale's enrollment growth. As noted above, some new programs are being developed for distance education, others will be delivered on campus. In addition to the microcredentials and programs mentioned above, academic areas are exploring an Applied Physics degree and programs in regulatory affairs that would build on the College's strong Bioscience program and its connection with Estée Lauder and the Broadhollow Bioscience Park.

The College will need to think creatively about new programs. Students will increasingly expect credentials that can be delivered over a shorter duration, at different locations, and by other means than the traditional baccalaureate degree.

However, new programs require appropriate space and facilities if they are to appeal to prospective students and their families. For example, the addition of Computer Science along with existing programs in Computer Programming and Information Systems, Computer Security Technology, Security Systems, and Geographic Information Systems, brings total enrollment in these fields to nearly 1,000 students. With FSC's Science Technology and Society degree included, enrollment reaches over 2,000. The College is integrating these programs in a Division of Computing and is pursuing a much needed new, academic building to house this Center. The campus's existing spaces simply cannot accommodate the anticipated growth on these fields. Although \$250 million has been committed to campus renovation projects that will dramatically improve Farmingdale's aging infrastructure, a new building for Computer Science and Information Systems is vital to FSC's growth prospects and is needed to raise the profile and appeal of these programs to current and prospective students.

FSC is using its Middle States self-study document by adopting a number of its recommendations for future action. Subsequent to the April 2021 team visit, the Cabinet adopted, with input from the College-wide Committee on Planning and Resource Allocation (CPRA), a number of Key Performance

Indicators which are accompanied by metrics, goals and action items that are linked to the strategic plan.

That plan, which expires this year, has served the College well. CPRA was recently charged with leading a campus-wide effort to review and update the objectives of the plan and is undertaking a campus wide survey to gauge institutional priorities.

The Cabinet understands that past growth and success do not assure a successful future and is currently working with Simpson Scarborough in gauging internal and external perceptions of the College, identifying brand pillars and undertaking steps that will raise the profile of the institution. It is imperative that this analysis go beyond the usual listing of factors, both internal and external, that may impede or aid the College's success; rather, it should involve deeper levels of analysis, diagnosis and prescriptions. Farmingdale remains a very strong institution, but one that needs to be cognizant of the changing landscape in higher education and its brand identity. The College will need to become better at focusing on the specific needs of its students who are overwhelmingly commuters. As Simpson Scarborough recently pointed out, Farmingdale should be identified as a college that distinctively serves commuters, not simply a commuter campus.

Although Farmingdale is quite distinctive in its program mix, the College will need to better differentiate itself in a competitive environment. Its recent Metrics That Matter campaign was a step in that direction. Much more will need to be done.

