



2021 COMPREHENSIVE NECHE SELF-STUDY



Institutional Characteristics Form

This form is to be completed and placed at the beginning of the self-study report/

Date 9/17/2021

1. Corporate name of institution: Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology
2. Date institution was chartered or authorized: May 24, 1905
3. Date institution enrolled first students in degree programs: September 1958
4. Date institution awarded first degrees: June 1960
5. Type of control:

Public

State

City

Other

(Specify) _____

Private

Independent, not-for-profit

Religious Group

(Name of Church) _____

Proprietary

Other: (Specify) _____

6. By what agency is the institution legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond high school, and what degrees is it authorized to grant? Massachusetts Board of Higher Education to award degrees in Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science.

7. Level of postsecondary offering (check all that apply)

Less than one year of work

At least one but less than two years

Diploma or certificate programs of at least two but less than four years

Associate degree granting program of at least two years

Four- or five-year baccalaureate degree granting program

First professional degree

Master's and/or work beyond the first professional degree

Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctoral level (e.g., Specialist in Education)

A doctor of philosophy or equivalent degree

Other doctoral programs _____

Other (Specify)

8. Type of undergraduate programs (check all that apply)

- Occupational training at the crafts/clerical level (certificate or diploma)
 Liberal arts and general
- Occupational training at the technical or semi-professional level (degree)
 Teacher preparatory
- Two-year programs designed for full transfer to a baccalaureate degree
 Professional
- Other _____

9. The calendar system at the institution is:

- Semester
 Quarter
 Trimester
 Other _____

10. What constitutes the credit hour load for a full-time equivalent (FTE) student each semester?

- a) Undergraduate ___12___ credit hours
- b) Graduate _____ credit hours
- c) Professional _____ credit hours

11. Student population:

a) Degree-seeking students:

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Full-time student headcount	340	NA	340
Part-time student headcount	163	NA	163
FTE	433	NA	433

b) Number of students (headcount) in non-credit, short-term courses: _____

12. List all programs accredited by a nationally recognized, specialized accrediting agency.

Program	Agency	Accredited since	Last Reviewed	Next Review
Opticianry	Commission on Opticianry Accreditation	Fall 2009	Fall 2020	Spring 2024
Electrical Engineering	ABET	August 2020	Spring 2020	Spring 2026
Automotive	ASE Education Foundation	Fall 2013	Spring 2019	Spring 2024

13. **Off-campus Locations.** List all instructional locations other than the main campus. For each site, indicate whether the location offers full-degree programs or 50% or more of one or more degree programs. Record the full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE) for the most recent year. Add more rows as needed.

	Full degree	50%-99%	FTE
A. In-state Locations			
N/A			
B. Out-of-state Locations			
N/A			

14. **International Locations:** For each overseas instructional location, indicate the name of the program, the location, and the headcount of students enrolled for the most recent year. An overseas instructional location is defined as “any overseas location of an institution, other than the main campus, at which the institution matriculates students to whom it offers any portion of a degree program or offers on-site instruction or instructional support for students enrolled in a predominantly or totally on-line program.” **Do not include study abroad locations.**

Name of program(s)	Location	Headcount
N/A		

15. **Degrees and certificates offered 50% or more electronically:** For each degree or Title IV-eligible certificate, indicate the level (certificate, associate’s, baccalaureate, master’s, professional, doctoral), the percentage of credits that may be completed on-line, and the FTE of matriculated students for the most recent year. Enter more rows as needed.

Name of program	Degree level	% on-line	FTE
Health Information Technology	Associates and Bachelor	100%	7.7
Computer and Information Technology	Associates	100%	15.2
Computer Aided Design with SolidWorks	Certificate	100%	1.5

16. Instruction offered through contractual relationships: For each contractual relationship through which instruction is offered for a Title IV-eligible degree or certificate, indicate the name of the contractor, the location of instruction, the program name, and degree or certificate, and the number of credits that may be completed through the contractual relationship. Enter more rows as needed.

Name of contractor	Location	Name of program	Degree or certificate	# of credits
Cyberwarriors	Boston	Computer Technology – Cybersecurity	Certificate	27

17. List by name and title the chief administrative officers of the institution.
18. Supply a table of organization for the institution. While the organization of any institution will depend on its purpose, size and scope of operation, institutional organization usually includes four areas. Although every institution may not have a major administrative division for these areas, the following outline may be helpful in charting and describing the overall administrative organization:

BFIT Organizational Chart included in workroom.

- a) Organization of academic affairs, showing a line of responsibility to president for each department, school division, library, admissions office, and other units assigned to this area;
 - b) Organization of student affairs, including health services, student government, intercollegiate activities, and other units assigned to this area;
 - c) Organization of finances and business management, including plant operations and maintenance, non-academic personnel administration, IT, auxiliary enterprises, and other units assigned to this area;
 - d) Organization of institutional advancement, including fund development, public relations, alumni office and other units assigned to this area.
19. Record briefly the central elements in the history of the institution:
- 1905: State legislature authorizes City to maintain technical school
 - 1908: The Franklin Union begins operation with 533 students
 - 1917: U.S. military takes over during day to train active-duty soldiers and sailors
 - 1918-1924: School serves as training center for returning veterans
 - 1924: Franklin Union begins offering day programs
 - 1941: Franklin Union becomes Franklin Technical Institute
 - 1957: Legislature authorizes school to grant degrees
 - 1961: Franklin Technical Institute becomes Franklin Institute of Boston
 - 1995: Board of Higher Education authorizes school to award Bachelor of Science degrees

2001: Franklin Institute of Boston becomes Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology

2003: College closes in April for a month and reopens in May

2012: College awarded NEASC ten-year accreditation

2019: College closes on property in Roxbury, MA—site of future location

CHIEF INSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Function or Office	Name	Exact Title	Year of Appointment
Chair Board of Trustees	Turahn Dorsey	Board of Trustees, Chair	2021
President/CEO	Dr. Aisha Francis	President/CEO	2020
Executive Vice President	NA		
Chief Academic Officer	Dr. Marvin Loiseau	Dean of Academic Affairs/Chief Academic Officer	2020
Deans of Schools and Colleges	NA		
Chief Financial Officer	Kevin Hepner	CFO	2021
Chief Student Services Officer	Jackie Cornog	Dean of Students	2016
Planning	Kristen Hurley	Chief Strategy Officer	2021
Institutional Research	James Klasen	Assistant Dean of Records and Research	2008
Assessment			
Development	Courtney Roy-Branigan	Chief Campaign Officer	2021
Library	Sharon Bonk	Director of Information Literacy	1998
Chief Information Officer			
Continuing Education	Liem Tran	Assistant Dean of Academics/DPCS	2021
Grants/Research			
Admissions	Calvin Conyers	Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruitment	2015
Registrar	James Klasen	Assistant Dean of Records and Research	2008
Financial Aid	Shani Wilkerson	Director of Financial Aid	2020
Public Relations	Denterlein	Outsourced	2019

Preface

Knowing that the self-study is a decennial endeavor, it would seem inauthentic to approach this heavy lift without acknowledging the fact that Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) has had a rocky two years.

Over the past twenty-four months—at exactly the time BFIT was scheduled to prepare to put our best foot forward for this review—the college has been buffeted like never before. During this time, the college has tested one of its pillars and found it strong: collaboration is still the lifeblood of the college community.

First, BFIT faced significant financial challenges; then the college was met with a novel public health crisis. Moreover, the college community was rocked by societal stresses of epic proportions as the streets of the neighborhood in which the college and its students reside became a battleground for the modern-day civil rights movement. Finally, BFIT fended off a merger in favor of independence, which is precisely what one of the nation’s Founding Fathers provided for in leaving half of his estate to the city of Boston, and led this college to be founded. Through it all, the BFIT community came together, shared its collective expertise and creativity, identified resources, problem-solved, and found a way to move forward.

From March 2020 until summer 2021, the BFIT community, while separated due to quarantine orders, gathered online to support each other’s efforts to continue delivering on our unique educational mission. BFIT did this while protecting the health of students and staff and mitigating the potential financial and social consequences of a once-in-a-century pandemic with an impact that was disproportionately borne by people from the very demographic that the college serves most. In tandem with this global crisis, BFIT had to maintain college operations and prepare for this self-study—all while endeavoring to manage a complex social environment, while maintaining personal wellness, too. And, along the way, a long-serving leader of the college retired, was celebrated and thanked from afar, and a new President and CEO was secured.

This report is written with not only a new President, but also an almost entirely new senior leadership team. Indeed, six of the seven members of the President’s Accountability Council—or as we call it, PAC—are new to the college or were promoted into their roles within the past year. Against this backdrop, BFIT thanks NECHE for the commission’s support of this organization’s important work over the past decade. Despite the recent whirlwind, the college has viewed this planning period as a time of reflection and recommitment to the promise of its mission.

There are many thumbprints on this document from individuals who are no longer with the college as unforeseen life circumstances, personal choices, or a 30% reduction in force called them away during the writing. In working on this Self-Study diligently, the authors have come to appreciate the outstanding and invaluable work that it takes to bring this institution closer together. Only through rowing in the same direction will BFIT’s stakeholders be able to provide that unique environment where no one feels alone in navigating uncharted waters. Only through connectedness and intentionality can BFIT ensure that the non-stop planning that many colleges do is accompanied by action and an infrastructure to make sure that these plans can come to fruition. The road ahead for BFIT is not for the faint of heart. Yet, it should not be as difficult as the past two years have been. Still, the college expects this road to present new challenges that will offer new opportunities to influence the lives of the future leaders training at BFIT every day.

With this in mind you will notice three recurring themes in this self-study:

- Collaboration is key to the college's success.

- We are in the middle of a pivot; our students remain the fulcrum.
- We know where we are headed.

There is little doubt that the collective innovation and collaborative spirit of BFIT's students, alumni, faculty, and staff are a powerful engine of change. The college is charging ahead—not blindly, but with a road map for excellence over the next decade making meaningful progress toward institutional goals, with eyes fixed on the Future Forward.

However, before getting to this point, the college was at a crossroads with its leadership considering whether to proceed with long-held plans to build a new campus in the heart of Roxbury, or to merge with another institution of higher education. The process by which the college considered this decision is important to outline here so that it does not subsume the content of the Self-Study.

By late spring 2020, just as the strategic planning process was ramping up, the COVID-19 pandemic magnified the college's challenges. BFIT—like so many other technical and community colleges confronting unprecedented challenges and suffering severe financial losses exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic—was boldly staring down several negative outcomes if the college did not make difficult decisions to curb fixed costs. Given the fact that revenue was reduced significantly in the pivot to an online learning environment, the college was tasked with significant cost reductions, to avoid even more dire consequences. Knowing that many colleges are loathe to make tough choices, BFIT did not head into this decision path lightly. Simply put, if BFIT did not significantly reduce costs by 20-25%—and soon— the college would place itself at risk of becoming a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic. To be proactive, the college's leadership swallowed the bitter pill of undergoing a reduction in force; the alternatives would be to an even greater detriment of its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the greater Boston community.

To shore up access to cash, the institute engaged in various cost reduction measures including: securing a \$5 million extension on a \$10 million line of credit that the college secured in late 2019; instituting a hiring freeze; outsourcing several departments including Human Resources, Campus Security, and IT Managed Services; reducing certain salaries; and reducing contributions to employee retirement plans by 50%. In addition, BFIT reached the difficult conclusion to discontinue enrollment and let go of faculty in certain programs to maintain operations. Albeit painful to implement these changes, drastic cost reduction was necessary to weather the financial and COVID-19-related challenges BFIT was facing. The college had to demonstrate that it could operate within its means to continue to serve students who would most benefit from the training that BFIT provides.

These emergency changes were carried out in parallel with a deliberative strategic planning process. In preparation for a Reduction in Force (RIF), the institute engaged in a careful process that involved evaluating its program offerings, student enrollment, retention rates, and job placement after graduation, in addition to realigning the proportion of full-time and adjunct faculty to realize cost savings and promote faculty specialization and flexible course schedules.

The restructuring and layoffs were formulated and implemented in April, May and June of 2020 by the President, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Staff, and other senior leaders in consultation, where feasible, with department chairs and others. Internal research on the cost and revenue from each program began in fall of 2019 and was reviewed at the January 2020 meeting of the Board of Trustees. Although drastic changes were not anticipated at that pre-pandemic date, the Board asked the President and CFO to continue this analysis and to include examination of student success

measures (retention and placement) along with college and industry trends.

In March 2020, like thousands of other colleges, BFIT abruptly shifted to 100% online operations. The full impact of the pandemic on recruitment, retention, and fundraising was unknown but feared to be dire. By April, the Board Chair and the President had convened an “Executive Committee Working Group” (ECWG) that met weekly to review the status and forecast of finances and operations. The ECWG put three scenarios on the table: normal operations for the 2020-2021 academic year; recruitment of students into a smaller set of programs; and teach-out (in the event of the college’s temporary closure). Senior staff then provided analyses to support these scenarios—namely liquidity projections, recommendations for reduced programming, and estimated costs and savings if the school were to go into a teach-out.

The CFO met with department heads to build a budget for fiscal year 2021. Projecting current expenses and expected revenues showed that the college was in danger of running deficits that would exhaust its line of credit in two years if enrollment were to drop by 20 percent, something that seemed quite possible at the time. In early May 2020, the CFO and President presented to the Board an expanded contribution by program analysis highlighting those with decreased enrollment, high expenses, and poor student outcomes. If these programs were discontinued, the payroll savings would keep operating losses within the College’s available credit at least through the 2023 fiscal year even accounting for the cost of teaching out the discontinued programs and even projecting a 20 percent drop in enrollment. Past 2023, the College is projected to break even. The line of credit will be paid off out of proceeds of the sale of BFIT’s old campus.

The College imposed the reduction in force and restructuring plan in May 2020. In June 2020, the Board approved a budget for fiscal year 2021, which included a reduction in payroll expenses of \$2.1M. Ultimately, academic programs and faculty positions were selected as part of the RIF based on low student demand, as well as the institute’s pressing business and financial need to make decisions based on what the data was reflecting about historical enrollment and graduation rates rather than keep programs based on hope for their potential growth.

Having postponed decision-making about a commitment to the college’s operations past the 2020-2021 academic year pending the results of continuing strategic planning process, on September 17, 2020, the strategic planning team presented the Board of Trustees with an extensive overview of two options: independence or merger. Soon afterwards, [The Boston Globe](#) broke news of this highly confidential discussion, which spurred an intense community outcry urging the board to do everything possible to preserve the independence of the college.

Faced with these responses, while still mitigating the challenges of COVID-19 and the institute’s own fiscal pressures, the board took two months to carefully evaluate the strategic options with which they had been presented. This period was also punctuated with several public meetings and hearings with BFIT stakeholders including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and companies that rely on BFIT graduates as employees through a series of town-hall style meetings and interviews. [Documentation of these activities is on the college website.](#)

Ultimately, [in November 2020 the board voted to pursue independence and forgo all merger conversations.](#) With that decision made, the trustees commissioned an executive summary of the five key shifts required for independence to successfully become the bedrock of the new strategic direction of the college as a standalone entity. Having accepted the basic tenets of the Future

Forward BFIT Strategic Plan, there was a clear expectation set that the tactics underlying execution of this strategy would be developed in 2021.

Thank you for reading about BFIT's past, our appraisal of the college's accomplishments, and our projections about where BFIT is headed.

Introduction

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) submits this ten-year comprehensive report to the New England Commission of Higher Education in support of the college's regional accreditation by the Commission. The college has had a thorough and inclusive process to prepare this report and the supporting documentation.

The process to prepare this report began in May 2018 with the President appointing a steering committee to lead the reporting process. The steering committee first comprised the former Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Students, and the Director of Information Literacy. With the resignation of the Dean of Academic Affairs in June 2020, the Director of Learning joined the Steering Committee. The members of the steering committee have extensive knowledge and history of the college, having served at BFIT for over 70 combined years in faculty, staff, and administrative roles. Each had previously been involved with the NEASC comprehensive evaluation in 2010-2011, the five-year progress report in 2016, as well as other substantive change reports. Members of the steering committee, along with the President/CEO, the current Dean of Academic Affairs, and Interim CFO, participated in the NECHE 2019 Self-Study Workshop held in October. The former Dean of Academic Affairs and the then Director of Institutional Reporting attended the January 2020 NECHE Data First Workshop. Updates on the NECHE Self-Study process were provided to the BFIT community at kick-off, end-of-year, Town Hall, and Board of Trustee meetings throughout 2019-2021.

In December 2019, the Steering Committee, Assistant Dean of Records and Research and the Director of Institutional Reporting began the work of organizing each section of the report, assigning standard chairs, and developing a system for data collection. The Steering Committee met monthly through June 2020, then met weekly thereafter. The summer 2020 meetings were focused on refining the timeline, building out the Teams workspace, and creating resources for standard chairs. In August 2020, Dr. Carol Anderson from NECHE met with the Steering Committee, Standard Chairs, and Data Team, to introduce the work of the self-study process. Administrators of each relevant department were chosen as standard chairs. Standard chairs were expected to work with other members of the college to ensure inclusivity.

Given that each of the administrators was new to their role and to the NECHE comprehensive self-study process, the Steering Committee scheduled working sessions throughout the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters to review each standard. To revise the second draft of the standards, each member of the Steering Committee was assigned oversight of three standards for which they met individually with the standard chair, and provided extensive revisions as needed. The Steering Committee brought together a larger team for Standard Eight, Educational Effectiveness, to incorporate the work of Academic Affairs and Student Services. After the second revision process, February through April 2021, the Steering Committee sent the self-study draft to NECHE for input. Subsequent to incorporating this input, the Steering Committee shared a modified draft with the Visiting Team Chair in advance of the June 15th visit to the college. The draft report was shared with the BFIT community for feedback in July 2021 and another draft was submitted to NECHE in advance of the September submission deadline.

NECHE Steering Committee

Sharon Bonk, Professor and Director of Information Literacy
Jackie Cornog, Dean of Students
Sally Heckel, Director of Learning
Jeff VanDreason, Former Dean of Academic Affairs (until June 2020)

NECHE Data First Team

James Klasen, Assistant Dean of Records and Research
Amanda Marstaller, Director of Institutional Reporting (until July 2021)

Standard Chairs

Standard One: Mission and Purposes, Steering Committee
Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation, Dr. Aisha Francis, President/CEO
Standard Three: Organization and Governance, Dr. Aisha Francis, President/CEO
Standard Four: The Academic Program, Dr. Marvin Loiseau, Dean of Academic Affairs
Standard Five: Students, Jackie Cornog, Dean of Students
Standard Six: Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, Dr. Marvin Loiseau, Dean of Academic Affairs
Standard Seven: Institutional Resources, Scott Steele, CFO (until June 2021), Kevin Hepner, CFO
Standard Eight: Educational Effectiveness, Dr. Marvin Loiseau, Dean of Academic Affairs
Standard Nine: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure, Marie Gendron, Marketing Coordinator

Standard Narrative and Data First Contributors

Tracey Arvin, Electrical Technology Department Chair
Shawn Ayala, Assistant Dean of Student Success
Anthony Benoit, President Emeritus
Calvin Conyers, Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruitment
Alan Blair, Controller
Sharon Bonk, Director of Information Literacy
Jackie Cornog, Dean of Student Services
Mary Duggan, Director of Information Technology
Dr. Gerald Elysee, Health and Information Technology Program Chair
Michael Felix, Lead Student Success Coach
Michael Grigelevich, Director of General Education
Sally Heckel, Director of Learning
Mozhgan Hosseinpour, Director of Curriculum Development & Assessment
James Johanson, Mathematics & Physics Professor
Peter Kang, Mathematics & Sciences Program Chair
James Klasen, Assistant Dean of Records and Research
Marisa Meldonian, Board of Trustees Governance Committee Chair
Emma Michalowski, Director of Student Wellness and Support
David Protano, Former Automotive Technology Department Chair
Dr. Lisa Shatz, Electrical Engineering Department Chair
Liem Tran, Assistant Dean of Academics/Director of Div. of Professional & Continuing Studies
Leslie Tuplin, Construction Management Department Chair
Brett Wellman, Assistant Dean of Student Life
Shani Wilkerson, Director of Financial Aid
Blair Wong, Opticianry Department Chair

Editors

Sharon Bonk
Jackie Cornog
Aisha Francis
Sally Heckel
Kendra Stanton-Lee, Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty (until July 2021)

Institutional Overview

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology is a private, not-for-profit college located in Boston's South End neighborhood. The college was chartered in 1905 and opened in 1908 as the Franklin Union. The college became the Franklin Technical Institute in 1961 and subsequently in the 1980's became the Franklin Institute of Boston. In 2000, the college changed its name to Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology. BFIT has delivered technologically focused curricula since its inception. The college began enrolling students in degree programs in 1958 and awarded its first degree in 1960. The college is authorized to award associate and bachelor's degrees from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

BFIT has held accreditation from the Commissions on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) of New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) since 2006. Previously, the college was accredited by the Committee on Technical and Career Institutes (CTCI) of NEASC from 1970 to 2006. Additionally, the Automotive Technology associate degree program at the college is accredited by the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Education Foundation, formerly the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF); the Opticianry program is accredited by the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA); and the Electrical Engineering program is accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

In fall 2020, the college had 402 matriculated students enrolled in the six academic divisions of the college: Automotive Technology, Construction Management and the Trades, Electrical Engineering and Engineering Technology, Eye Health, General Education and the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies. The college also enrolled 69 students through Strategic Partnerships and 50 in the Early College program. All programs are focused on preparing students for employment in industries critical to the Massachusetts economy. The student body remains largely composed of those enrolled in associate degree programs (59% of matriculated students). However, the past year has seen a sharp increase of certificate students (26% in FY 2021 up from 10% in FY 2020). The college saw an increase in the 2020 graduation rate (2017 cohort) up 4% to 52.1%, from a low of 48.1% two years prior.

BFIT caters to students that are largely underserved by other private colleges in Massachusetts. 74% of the student body identifies as ethnically or racially diverse. 57% are first-generation college students. The majority of students are low income and in fall 2019 over 90% filed for FAFSA and received federal and institutional aid and 72% were Pell Grant recipients. As of fall 2019, the median family income was \$23,059. Most students are residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. 55% of students are from the City of Boston, with 97% residing within 20 miles from the college.

The faculty and staff share a passionate commitment to the mission of the college and the students it serves. To carry out the institution's mission, 110 individuals were employed by the college in spring 2021. Of these, there are 31 full-time faculty and approximately 31 adjuncts. Of the staff, 39 are full-time and 5 are part-time. Seven administrators comprise the Performance and Accountability Council (PAC), including the President/CEO, Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruitment, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Campaign Officer, and Chief Strategy Officer. Many employees serve in capacities beyond their primary teaching or administrative roles. For example, there are many faculty members that serve as tutors in the Academic Success Center (ASC). Employees contribute to the college through service including committee membership, academic advising, and participating in Admissions events and student orientation sessions. These various opportunities allow faculty and staff to gain a deeper perspective on college operations and the students that are served.

Table of NECHE Areas of Special Emphasis

Area of Special Emphasis	NECHE Letter Date	NECHE Standard Cited for Each Matter	Self-Study Page
Give emphasis to the institute's progress in determining a financial model that will provide the resources required for the institution's long-term sustainability.	April 15, 2021	2.3, 7.6, 7.14	Pg 15 Pg 68 Pg 71
Provide an update on the institution's success in offering its current courses and academic programs via distance education.	January 19, 2021	2.5, 4.45	Pg 34 Pg 41 Pg 86 Distance Learning Plan
Show evidence and emphasis on success in addressing the issues that led to the issuing of the public Notation for <i>Institutional Resources</i> : including a teach-out plan to indicate how the institution would ensure an orderly teach-out of students who may be unable to complete their education at BFIT.	October 8, 2020	4.9, 7	Pg. 33 Pg. 74 Teach Out Plan
Contextualize BFIT's reliance on a line of credit in the short-term to support operations until the 41 Berkley Street real estate transaction closes.	October 8, 2020	7.5	Pgs. 3-4 Pg 67 Pg 68 Pg 71
Address the matters specified for attention in the ARFE report.	May 6, 2020	7	Pg 3-4 Pg 68-71
Engage in integrated financial, academic, and enrollment planning.	May 6, 2020	2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 7.6, 7.13	Pg 33 Pg 70
Demonstrate implementing plans for fundraising to support development of the new campus.	May 6, 2020	2.5, 7	Pg 3-4 Pg 13-15 Pg 69
Emphasis on continuing to develop a baccalaureate culture and enhance capacity to offer baccalaureate programs, including an update on the institution's success in achieving its goals for enrollment and retention in baccalaureate programs.	May 6, 2020	4.3, 4.12, 5.6, 6.3	Pgs 35-36 Pg 54 Pgs 55-56
Review and, as appropriate, revise the general education program for consistency across all academic offerings.	May 6, 2020	4.15, 4.16, 4.17	Pg 37 Pg 38 Pg 90
Give emphasis to achieving its goals to reduce student loan default rates.	February 15, 2017	5.14, 9.25	Pg 59
Provide assurance that faculty who teach in baccalaureate programs have appropriate credentials and qualifications.	February 15, 2017	6.3	Pg 62

Standards for Accreditation

Standard One: Mission and Purpose

Description

The mission of Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, at its core, has remained consistent since the college's opening in 1908 and has evolved from the language in the codicil in Benjamin Franklin's will from 1789. Through the codicil, Dr. Franklin left funds to the city of Boston to support apprenticeship programs because he believed "good apprentices are most likely to make good citizens." As the modality of preparing individuals for the U.S. workforce evolved, so too did the interpretation of the intent of Franklin's gift to Boston. As explained in the college's 1950-1951 catalog, the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts interpreted Franklin's will that "resulted in the appointment of a Board of Managers consisting of nine 'citizens' including the Mayor [of Boston], to serve with the ministers of the [city's] three oldest churches" to determine the future use of Dr. Franklin's gift. The Board of Managers concluded that a technical institute would be the best use of these funds.

Over the past century, while the wording of the college's mission may have changed, the essence of each formally adopted statement has centered on a commitment to educating individuals through relevant technical programs to make positive contributions to the workforce in Boston and Massachusetts. The mission statement is *Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) is an affordable, urban, private, nonprofit college serving the Boston region and committed to student success and career readiness in technology fields. Through personalized support, hands-on learning, and industry-informed curricula, BFIT prepares graduates for work, life-long learning, and citizenship.* As developed through consultation with Bellwether Education Partners in 2020 and voted on by the Board of Trustees in November 2020, the mission, focus of service, and impact of the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology are defined as:

We are a Private, Two-Year Technical College Offering Training and Certifications in High-Paying Fields

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) is an affordable, urban, private, nonprofit college serving the Boston region and is committed to student success and career readiness in technology fields.

MISSION

Through personalized support, hands-on learning, and industry-informed curricula, BFIT prepares graduates for work, life-long learning, and citizenship.

SERVICE

We serve low-income, minority youth in Greater Boston, providing them opportunity for sustained success in high-paying fields in a region grappling with increasing wealth disparities.

IMPACT

We graduate 200 students annually with 80% walking into full-time, in-field jobs and 5% headed to further education. We boast thousands of thriving alumni who have built successful careers in technology and the trades, supporting the Massachusetts' economy and furthering community vitality. All while contributing talent and diversity to the workforce of Greater Boston.

The college builds upon its mission through institutional values that encompass the ideals and expectations of the community.

The institutional values state: *we value our diverse community and the fostering of a supportive learning environment. We are committed to creating opportunity by working closely with industry and community partners to prepare our students for lifelong learning in an increasingly interdependent world. Our academic programs and co-curricular efforts reflect our commitment to the fundamental principles of an educated person.*

We value the following skills and attributes and actively promote their development through college-wide initiatives, so that each student is:

1. Focusing on technical know-how
2. Practicing professionalism
3. Communicating effectively
4. Deploying critical thinking skills
5. Embracing information literacy
6. Understanding sustainable development, and
7. Acting responsibly through civic engagement

Appraisal

In recent years, the college has had the opportunity to engage three external entities, which as part of their work, examined the viability of the college's mission. Those entities, Bellwether Education Partners (2020), The Parthenon Group (2014-2015), and the Harvard Community Action Program (2012), independently affirmed that the college's mission was viable and essential to meet the workforce needs of the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Under new leadership, the college plans to revisit the mission statement and values as a community to refine the language and reinforce the commitment. The mission statement is widely publicized through college publications, including the strategic plan, the college course catalog, the student handbook and planner, and the college website.

The college's mission is woven throughout recruitment, retention, and academic programming efforts. It is reflected in the student demographics regardless of credential or mode, as the college seeks to prepare graduates in the certificate, associate, bachelor, Division of Professional and Continuing Studies, and online learning programs for work, lifelong learning, and citizenship. The college recruits students from throughout Greater Boston. Slightly more than half of students reside in the city of Boston with the specific neighborhoods of Dorchester, Roxbury, Hyde Park and Mattapan yielding the most enrollees. The college offers a widely recognized tuition-free dual enrollment program for Boston Public School (BPS) students wherein students take college-level courses earning them credits that can be utilized to accelerate their college completion at BFIT or that can be transferred to other regionally accredited colleges and universities.

Increasingly, the college's philanthropic support can be directly linked to the college's mission, to the students, and to the industries served by our programs. Beginning in 2018, the college took inventory of its partnerships and articulation agreements with community-based organizations including the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), The Base, LoopLab, Year-Up, and others, and now offers transfer credit for learning gained through credible programs.

BFIT has also established memberships with leading business trade organizations such as the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council, and Associated Industries of Massachusetts, and strengthened connections with industry-specific organizations such as the Opticians Association of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts State Automobile Dealers Association, by sending students and staff to meetings and conferences with these groups where feasible. Three years ago, we took stock of all institutional memberships to make sure they were activated—meaning at least two staff members regularly attended convenings to take advantage of the program offerings and networking opportunities. Where active membership was not the case, the college assessed alignment with the group. If mission alignment and relevance remained high, then specific staff were asked to own these institutional relationships to maximize their potential. These partnerships serve as an extension of the college’s support and career readiness efforts for prospective students, current students, and alumni as well as sources of professional development for participating faculty and staff. These types of relationships afford faculty and staff valuable connections to organizations that employ BFIT graduates.

Individual academic programs embody the college’s mission through commitment to preparing students for careers in technical fields and by engaging in student success initiatives. Each program connects with industry through advisory boards (IABs) that review and provide annual input on curricula. Department Chairs work closely with the Department of Strategic Partnerships and the Office of Career Services to cultivate internship and employment relationships and to bring career readiness skills into the classroom. (See Standard 8 for more information about industry partnerships and career placement data.)

Providing further support of the importance of the college and its mission, Governor Charles D. Baker stated in his remarks at a November 2019 showcase of BFITs programs to community partners that “Ben Franklin, its faculty, its leaders, and its students, are game changers. This organization represents the very best of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.”

Throughout the last ten years, the college has reviewed the mission through each of the three strategic planning initiatives noted above. A college-wide survey of 121 faculty and staff in spring 2021 shows that out of 78 respondents, 93.6% affirmed that they understand the college’s institutional mission and values. When provided with an open field question and asked to “write BFIT’s mission as you understand it to be”, however, the 59 respondents to this question wrote 54 variations of the mission. Notably, each response included language around student support, careers, and affordability or economic mobility. The variability of the responses indicates that our mission, no matter how noble, is expressed in a way that is too wordy for even the most dedicated and longstanding employees to easily recall.

Projections

Responsibility	Projection Detail	Estimated Completion
PAC	The college plans to conduct a review of the mission, vision, and values as part of the Future Forward Strategic Plan Action Steps to simplify the language and to better ensure a college-wide embrace.	June 2022

Academic Affairs and Student Services	Academic Affairs and Student Services will use Portfolium Pathways, a badging tool, to begin tracking student engagement with institutional values through academic and co-curricular programs.	June 2022
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Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

Description

This view of the college is focused on a clear-eyed assessment of our progress, knowing that it takes a community of colleagues working together to make our college thrive. This section will cover past strategic planning as well as the collective development of the Future Forward plan under which we are currently operating.

Planning

Past Strategic Planning

The most recent past institutional strategic plan of the college, *Optimizing the Core*, was produced by The Parthenon Group and covered 2015-2020. In the previous planning process, The Parthenon Group helped BFIT identify its Core Market as Greater Boston, its Core Pedagogy as hands-on learning supported by intrusive advising, and its Core Approach as employer partnerships. The plan proposed that the college first raise significant philanthropic funds and then invest them across three high-level tactics:

- 1. An intentional, deep marketing effort within Greater Boston;*
- 2. Increased employer partnerships in relevant fields...and expand[ed] internships and other workplace learning; and*
- 3. Continued investment in the systems and personnel that support retention and student success.*

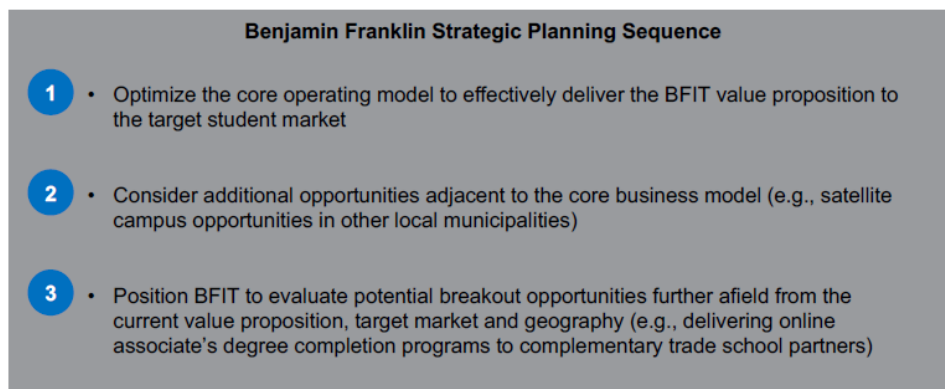
Implementation of these tactics guided the college from FY 2015 to FY 2020 and yielded positive results. First, the college carried out a marketing and rebranding campaign, which yielded enrollment growth by 11 percent, an increase from 484 degree seeking students in fall 2014 to 539 in fall 2019. This same period saw double-digit declines in enrollment at most two-year colleges in the state. Secondly, the college invested in expanding industry partnerships by hiring a Director of Business Development to focus on this effort. The revenue yielded from contract training and government workforce development grants grew from netting less than \$25,000 in 2015 to almost \$1M in FY 2020. This upward trend justified the creation of an Office of Strategic Partnerships in FY 2019 and a Division of Professional and Continuing Studies in FY 2021 to formalize and properly accommodate new aspects of business from industry partners, unions, and municipalities.

Thirdly, the college received an infusion of grant funding through a Title III Systems for Student Success grant. With these funds, the college implemented Canvas as a learning management system, Dropout Detective and Rapid Insight for data evaluation and a suite of other process improvement tools to support retention and student success. While overall fundraising during this time was less robust than called for in *Optimizing the Core*, the college built a solid development infrastructure as evidenced by adopting a Donor Perfect as a constituent management system,

Optimizing the Core also stated that BFIT needed to develop a plan for its “building with significant deferred maintenance.” After years of consultation with real estate experts, the college decided to monetize its real estate in Boston’s South End and move to a new location in the Roxbury neighborhood of Nubian Square. Creating and carrying out this complicated real estate strategy has been a significant set of actions for BFIT’s Board of Trustees and senior staff. So much so that the process overshadowed

work to accomplish other tactics in the 2015 plan. The proceeds from the sale of 41 Berkeley Street, anticipated by mid-2022, will supply substantial funds to support the college's move to a new location, and is a linchpin of implementing the current strategic plan described below.

Optimizing the Core also outlined a central strategic planning sequence to transform the college's business model: which is the foundation of the current strategic plan.



The 2015 plan also included extremely ambitious numerical goals in seven categories. Not all these goals were met, but some were. For instance, the college did increase faculty salaries and reached a high percentage of alumni job placement. (See also Standards 6 and 8).

Current Strategic Planning

In late 2019 strategic planning began anew. BFIT's President and CEO, Chief of Staff, and Chair of the Board of Trustees' Strategic Planning Committee were appointed as Co-Chairs of the Strategic Planning Committee and were charged with hiring a consulting team and leading the planning efforts.

The Strategic Planning Committee hired Bellwether Education Partners to embark on a comprehensive process to help develop a new strategic pathway forward, evaluating the two options of building or merging along parallel tracks.

BFIT formally launched efforts to develop a new strategic plan in early 2020. The context was a unique one. Looking to the future and considering the college's move to Roxbury, there were two primary considerations driving the need for significant change in how BFIT operates: the institution's long-term positive economic impact on the City of Boston and its residents; and the need to ensure the financial stability of the institution.

The most recent strategic planning process consisted of three phases, the first two of which entailed a landscape analysis and a survey of opportunities. Third came an implementation phase to develop the action plan that would animate the strategies. Together, these outputs constitute a three-year strategic plan for BFIT 2021-2024:

1. Organization and Environmental Scanning – create a detailed design for the process and engage key campus stakeholders, including internal and external analysis, data collection, and synthesis of information.
2. Planning and Consensus Building– focus groups, listening sessions, and committee work to identify potential strategic directions and goals; and consensus building – review the general direction of the plan and its options with the college community for comments and feedback.

3. Implementation - finalize strategic targets; assess and evaluate progress on goals throughout implementation.

The adopted plan, dubbed Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology 2021-2024 “Future Forward BFIT”, centers on the college’s independence, and the fact-gathering process involved input from a cross-section of college constituencies, area businesses, industry, education, non-profits, and local legislators. Throughout the spring and summer of 2020, 34 members within the BFIT community-- faculty, staff, students, alumni--participated in focus groups, which served as listening sessions. In addition, 28 individuals outside of BFIT were interviewed to inform the Strategic Planning Committee on their own perceptions of the reputation of, and opportunities for, the college. Those interviewed included sector leaders from the building trades and technical areas related to BFIT fields of study in order to help the college understand its value as an independent entity: specifically what competitive edge BFIT provides their businesses and how the college can better respond to their needs. The Strategic Planning Committee also consulted three former, well-respected college presidents from UMASS Boston, Wheelock College and Suffolk University for input on the key considerations of remaining independent vs. merging and executing a turnaround.

An additional external working group of seven business and community leaders known as the Strategic Planning Steering Committee also participated as a group of advisors throughout the process. This group included well-connected futurists from industries related to BFIT fields who could help the college objectively understand its contributions and value to the community through the eyes of others. The Steering Committee included the former head of the MBTA, the CEO and COO of an influential trade group called the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, the COO of a start-up developer of Augmented and Virtual Reality training and educational partnerships, and a former Boston City Councilor turned entrepreneur whose district was Roxbury—the neighborhood where BFIT is moving in 2023.

The current strategy centers on advancing the college from a nadir and supporting academic success by empowering talented colleagues through a deliberate strategy of cultivating shared leadership and culture. Future Forward BFIT distilled seven months of strategic planning into a concise, five-point framework. In December 2020, the Board approved the plan to proceed with the campus move from Boston's South End to Nubian Square and accepted the concepts of the Future Forward BFIT strategic plan. The Future Forward BFIT plan focuses on five key shifts for the college and includes an aggressive, achievable three-year timeline ending in December 2024:

Future Forward Strategy Areas to Achieve Financial Vitality:

1. Enrollment & Student Success: Restructure to Reshape the Institution for High Value Programs and Student Success
2. Academic Affairs: Program Specialization in Future-Oriented Jobs Market
3. Academic Affairs: Respond to Market Demand for Shorter, Stackable, Flexible Program Delivery
4. Finance and Real Estate: Realize a Purpose-Built Campus
5. Finance and Revenue: Tap Latent Fundraising Potential, Diversify Revenue, and Achieve Financial Stability

Financial Planning

A new Dean of Finance and Administration/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) came on board in early 2020 to head up a period of financial evaluation and restructuring for the college through the end of FY 2021. This CFO came from the finance industry and instituted a collaborative process of financial

planning that involves departments and administration, that had been absent the previous four years in favor of a top-down budgeting approach. For FY 2020 and FY 2021, budgets were developed based on realistic projections to establish the long-term financial viability and stability of the college. A permanent CFO of the college with extensive higher education experience was named in May 2021 and is building on the work of the past 18 months with renewed rigor and expertise in smart growth.

Academic Department Planning and budgets are determined in consultation with the Dean of Academic Affairs, based on departmental needs to fulfill program outcomes. Administrative budgets are developed based on the financial requirements of meeting the goals and objectives of each department. All budget planning is in keeping with the mission of the college. Multi-year financial planning is led by the CFO with feedback and contributions from other members of the Performance and Accountability Council (PAC) on a monthly basis. The CFO, CEO, and other members of PAC have contributed to long-term financial planning, as well as the evaluation of internal and external opportunities and constraints. (See Standard 7 for financial information on academic planning.)

Development Planning is based on achieving these multi-year financial projections. At its April 29, 2021, meeting, the Board of Trustees was presented with and accepted a campaign call to action by the college's new Chief Campaign Officer. The aggressive plan is designed to secure \$30 million in capital and endowment funds while growing the annual fund from \$3.2 million to \$4.6 million by 2024

Information Technology Planning is a priority. In 2019, the college entered into a contract with a new IT managed service provider, Neoscope Solutions, to oversee this function jointly with internal leadership. In 2020 the college fully outsourced all IT services. To coordinate this work, the former Director of Learning Systems, a position made possible by a Title III grant, was transitioned into the newly created role of Director of Information Technology Project Management (i.e., Director of IT). This position prioritizes and directs the flow of internal IT projects, monitors project completion by Neoscope and troubleshoots educational software conflicts and glitches independently where possible.

In FY 2021, the Director of IT reconstituted the college's vital Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC), which serves as an interdepartmental forum for shared review and recommendations on IT as it applies to instruction, communication, institutional data and research, and the administrative needs of the campus as a whole. The committee is partially responsible for strategic technology planning and is thus comprised of representatives from Neoscope and members of BFIT staff, faculty, and senior administration.

Evaluation

None of BFIT's strategies and planning would be possible without the Office of Institutional Reporting, which consists of two full-time staff. BFIT's systems of evaluation demonstrate a commitment to the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of its academic programs, finances, and strategic planning at every level.

The Office of Institutional Reporting has produced a detailed Fast Facts report for the past four years. This report is focused on the make-up of the student body, distribution of students across programs of study, retention and graduation rates disaggregated by ethnicity and gender. Retention data is used to secure funding for specific groups of students or services. The Office of Student Services uses the data to determine appropriate outreach to students.

Academically, there are two systems of program evaluation--the academic programs' Annual Reports and the 5-year Academic Program Review (APR)--designed to ensure programs meet their stated goals and student learning outcomes. In the annual academic reports, each department must include quantitative and qualitative data, with an emphasis on outcome assessment activities. The 5-year Academic Program Review is a deeper, critical analysis of the effectiveness of the program and its outcomes that creates a blueprint for continuous improvement. This data also informs program planning in conjunction with industry demands. (See Standard 4 for a more thorough discussion of the annual review and APR.)

Student course evaluations were integrated with Canvas in 2018. In these evaluations, students report on a variety of experiences, including courses learning environments and how they impact students' learning; the effectiveness of instructors' teaching methods; and whether the students feel that the course made them better students.

Career Services conducts exit surveys and 12-month post-graduation surveys of graduates from which information on students' employment, pay rate, and/or continuation of education is acquired. Data is compiled and put into a report that provides verifiable information, showing what students have gained as a result of their education, as well as evidence of graduate's career success. The information is shared with department directors, faculty, and administration via the institutional shared drive. Department chairs use the information when conducting their APR and for planning and resource allocation. (See Standard 4 for more information on the Annual Program Review.) A general statement of the college's placement rate is located on the landing page of the college's website.

In 2021, the college updated the faculty and staff performance evaluation process, making performance evaluation standardized and mandatory across the college. This includes a common evaluation form and components of a self-evaluation, supervisory assessment, evaluation meeting, and goal setting. The Board of Trustees governance committee conducts a 360 review of BFIT's President and CEO performance every spring.

The college has been proactive in planning for BFIT's future at multiple levels over the past five years. During this period, college leaders focused significantly on the process of moving our campus. This involved meetings with the Academic Chairs and Administrative Directors of the college's departments, and with the Board of Trustees to discuss ideas about the future vision of the campus and the planning process that would achieve our move.

BFIT regularly assesses student demand for departments and programming, including reviewing class sizes and student to faculty ratios, as well as student retention and job placement. BFIT has also realigned the distribution of full-time versus adjunct faculty to become more consistent with the faculty distribution at other local two-year colleges. The full-time to adjunct ratio has shifted from 75%/25% in FY 2017 vs. 50%/50% today.

This realignment is intended to benefit students by allowing BFIT the flexibility to hire specialized adjunct instructors, including those with industry experience, and to teach courses with more varied schedules, including additional night and weekend offerings. The shift also has provided significant administrative cost savings, while maintaining the quality of instruction based on program and position evaluations. In the process of BFIT's transformations over the past two years, three departments, one

degree program, one program track, and twenty-four positions were eliminated.

Appraisal

The college recognizes the importance of efficient planning and evaluation in overall institutional effectiveness and has made considerable progress over the past five years. Data using Rapid Insight's data analytics platform is gathered from the CAMS student information system, and other sources, and easily accessed by many teams to check progress on their strategic goals based on the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. For the purposes of the Future Forward BFIT Strategic Plan, BFIT will make progress toward these goals using the same tools while making goal tracking more transparent through an institution-wide data dashboard.

Successful implementation of the new strategic plan will rely on five common themes:

1. Continuing to build on strength in our student retention and graduation rates.
2. Improving relationships with area community-based organizations to boost enrollment.
3. Creating better opportunities for the college to tell its story and promote its brand and successes.
4. Developing new, more flexible, stackable, and shorter program delivery formats to better meet the needs of area employers.
5. Improving facilities by building a new campus in Nubian Square, set to open in fall 2023.

Planning

BFIT endeavors to respond to the data and information presented by its evaluations in a constructive manner, that builds on the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and aligns with the current Future Forward plan.

The college needs to continue addressing years of deferred IT investment with a comprehensive improvement plan. In 2019, the Board surveyed staff in connection with the performance evaluation of the then President. Two functional areas were identified as causing substantial frustration and interference with productivity: Human Resources and IT. As a result, HR was outsourced and professionalized, and complaints have been significantly reduced. IT was also fully outsourced, yet this area continues to cause dissatisfaction because of glitches and lapses that hinder operations and slow workflow at the college. Recently, the CAMS Student Information System (SIS) that the college relies on was found to be outdated. In the summer of 2021, the college made a system update from an unsupported version of CAMS to a more current version. Reliability of the software improved somewhat as a result. Still, there continue to be challenges synchronizing this system with new software, such as Salesforce, that the college adopted in recent years to improve college operations. With the revival of ITAC under the leadership of the Director of IT, technology planning and solution implementation are being more actively assessed across the college community to ensure the needs of all constituencies are better met.

In its plan to raise enrollment, the Admissions Department implemented Salesforce in 2018 as part of a three-year integration plan. Admissions also expanded articulation agreements and continued to increase student enrollment incrementally by 3-5% a year, until the impact of COVID-19 dealt the college a devastating blow of a 30%, year-over-year enrollment drop in fall 2020, and a 15% year-over-year drop in spring 2021.

As a Minority Serving Institution with more than 60% of our student body being Black or Latinx and 74% being students of color, 57% of our students being first generation college students, and a median household income of \$23,800 a year, our students and their families were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. While BFIT largely retained those students who were already enrolled, the pandemic caused many prospective students to defer or decline enrollment.

To recruit larger incoming classes, in 2019 the college reorganized recruiting efforts to target geographic market strongholds and focus on digital marketing to augment in-person recruiting with more in-bound inquiries. The college also hired two multi-lingual recruiters (Haitian Creole and Spanish) to better reflect our student population and to seize on new prospect opportunities among growing immigrant populations. The college also launched a late fall start in October 2020, which culled an additional 30 students who enrolled in one-year certificate programs proving to be a valuable pilot effort. This late fall enrollment innovation will be replicated in October 2021.

Evaluation

According to an audit conducted in summer 2020, there is only a 30% completion rate for student course evaluations. Academic Affairs has set a goal to increase student evaluation participation rates to 50% by the end of the 2021 academic year. There is an effort underway to embed student evaluation completion into the culture of the faculty pedagogy so that these assessments can become a more statistically relevant aspect of faculty evaluations and a source of consumer feedback about our academic offerings.

In March 2021, to provide a wide variety of perspectives across disciplines and departments, the Board of Trustees initiated a modified 360 evaluation of the President/CEO that will be continued each year of the new President's contract. The evaluation committee selected 31 support staff and faculty to complete an online survey, while direct reports to the CEO completed a more thorough assessment process. Surveys were anonymous, survey data will be aggregated and presented as a larger summary, and results will help lead to a personal, relevant, strengths-based development plan for the CEO. There was a 100% response rate for this 360 review.

In 2013 the college convened an Employee Forum facilitated by the Director of Human Resources. Based on the results, the group worked to strengthen college-wide communication via more frequent announcements with more lead time and began to periodically take the pulse of the BFIT faculty and staff. The work of the Employee Forum was deemed a form of shared governance and is transitioning to the college senate. Meanwhile, Human Resources in collaboration with the President's office, has instituted an annual employee survey, launched in spring 2021, where staff were asked about their understanding of the college's mission and vision, their satisfaction with the level of resources, work/life balance, and college leadership.

Though annual planning takes place across the college, an FY 2022 goal is for the Office of Academic Affairs to train all department directors heads in a uniform approach to multi-year planning. In addition, more detailed evaluation is needed to better analyze internal and external opportunities and constraints. Both administrative and academic staff need to continue to create tactical plans with goals and objectives that serve to meet the goals and objectives of the Future Forward BFIT strategic plan. BFIT has made strategic replacement hires in areas that support revenue growth as well as student retention, such as the Chief Campaign Officer and a Success Coach that serves traditional as well as students in strategic partnership programs. The outcomes of these investments will be tracked to ensure expected

returns.

In the area of Institutional Reporting, the college will transition that department to focus on both institutional research and evaluation. Currently, most of the college's institutional research capability is made possible by grant-funded contracts such as Project Evident, contracted through November 2021 to assist with evidence-based research and institutional planning, or via in-kind partnerships such as a Student Success assessment by Strategic Grant Partners in 2018 and 2019. These partnerships have yielded invaluable, if sporadic, insights. In elevating BFIT's internal research capacity, the college aims to build the capacity to run research and evaluation internally as part of embodying a culture of continuing operational improvement.

Lastly, the college continues to rethink administration and operations. BFIT has made progress in the past two years in streamlining and professionalizing operations. Still, examining the administrative apparatus of the institution (what is core vs. what is context) requires more planning to determine where to pursue further opportunities for operational efficiency.

Projections

Responsibility	Projection Detail	Estimated Completion
PAC	To best implement the Future Forward BFIT strategic plan as a roadmap for success, the college is creating a dashboard demonstrating progress toward our success in the areas of enrollment, graduation rates, job placement and earnings, partnership growth.	Spring 2022
IT Managed Services provided in coordination with BFIT's Director of IT Project Management	Establish and embark on a two-year project through which BFIT can transition to a student information system that is more robust. The new system will be in place by the time the campus opens in its new location.	Fall 2023
Department of Academic Affairs	Train department directors in a uniform approach to multi-year planning in FY 2022.	June 2022
Department of Student Services	Pilot a program with 8-10 students that will more actively connect students to paid work that aligns with their major and/or interferes as little as possible with college attendance and degree attainment. This will help improve the student experience, as many students report difficulty managing academics with work outside of college.	June 2022
Project Evident	BFIT has targeted FY 2024 for the transition of Institutional Reporting to one that focuses on Institutional Research and Evaluation with FY 2022 set as a year of assessment for the department. The	June 2024

and Department of Institutional Research, in coordination with PAC	assessment and the standardization of data governance is being conducted by Project Evident.	
Department of Institutional Research	<p>Establish a comprehensive research agenda for the college relative to our impact on improving the outcomes of workforce development for Boston and Greater Boston by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing organization and administration’s philosophy on continuous quality improvement (CQI). 2. Confirming and affirming the philosophy/mission and objectives of retention and graduation outcomes for each program of study benchmarked with national and local data where possible. 3. Cataloging the various instructional technology resources and services used by the college and indexing them to intended outcomes for CQI. 4. Tracking students’ post-graduation earnings more robustly to indicate BFIT’s impact more accurately on graduates’ performance. 	Spring 2022

BFIT has also identified the following four areas for continued improvement in the next ten years:

1. Invest in academic digitization
 The shift to online course delivery due to the global pandemic will continue to be a relevant part of the educational experience. BFIT recognizes the opportunity to build on the approach to delivering high-quality blended and online learning within the context of hands-on technical education.
2. Bolster relationships with the private sector
 As the college expands its strategic partnerships and training of students who are not enrolling traditionally, it recently established a Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (DPCS) to create an academic and student success home for these learners. BFIT intends to deepen and expand efforts to align expectations of workforce skills, roles, and responsibilities with the evolving needs of students and society.
3. Plan for enterprise risk and resiliency
 Small institutions such as BFIT stand to gain the most from a stress-tested risk and resiliency plan well understood by a strong leadership team invested in change management. More investment in robust continuity of operations planning for the college is needed, as well as a revision of the college's standard operating procedure documents, and a reassessment of procurement approaches for efficiency.

4. Interrogate orthodoxies

BFIT recognizes that an evaluation of the “sacred cows” of the institution—such as staunch adherence to the Cohort Model, a piecemeal approach to IT investments, and an allegiance to the traditional academic calendar —is overdue. A thorough examination of the aggregate costs of these bedrocks of the college is warranted, particularly as they relate to the interrogating the conventional college business model and academic structures in place.

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

Description

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, Inc. is a private non-profit educational institution organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to grant degrees in technical fields. The by-laws of the corporation clearly describe the responsibilities and relationship between the Board of Trustees and the administration of the college. The Board of Trustees exercises ultimate institutional authority as set forth in the by-laws.

The President of the college, whose authority is vested through the Board of Trustees, is the chief executive officer—thus typically bearing the title President and CEO. The President manages day-to-day operations of the college, including fiscal, educational, and managerial affairs, with input and support from senior management, known as the Performance and Accountability Council, or PAC (formerly the President’s Advisory Council), which comprises the Dean of Finance and Administration (CFO), the Dean of Academic Affairs, Director of Strategic Partnerships, the Dean of Students, and the Chief Campaign Officer.

In FY 2020-2021, as part of a planned leadership succession process, the titles of President and CEO were separated temporarily. The former college President became President Emeritus to serve as an advisor and transition guide to the college. Meanwhile, the former Chief of Staff was appointed CEO of the college in August 2020 and vested with the authority to lead and serve as the chief administrator and decision maker for the institution. In July 2021, the CEO was officially appointed to the role of college President.

Board of Trustees by-laws outline in detail the responsibilities, organization structure, and policies necessary for the board members and the senior administration of the college to undertake their respective roles. Communication flows from the Board of Trustees to the college community through the President, and from senior management members to faculty and staff. The Employee Handbook sets out responsibilities and guides expectations of the employment relationship. As evidence of good governance, the handbook is reviewed every year by HR for accuracy and compliance with current employment law. In addition to compliance-related changes, the senior leadership team periodically suggests changes in response to feedback from staff and faculty. Any changes to the handbook are announced at the twice-yearly kick-off meetings that take place at the beginning of each fall and spring semester. Updates are also shared via email with all staff and codified on the copy of the handbook that is accessible to all employees on the shared drive of the college.

Internal Governance

Administrative actions are guided by internal policies and procedures that are developed by college committees and reviewed and adopted by the PAC. Each senior management member provides leadership and support to their staff and develops a tactical plan used to reach the strategic objectives of the college.

The Dean of Academic Affairs serves as the Chief Academic Officer reporting to the President, overseeing the faculty and the academic integrity of the college by providing leadership in support of the college’s mission through program development and evaluation, academic policy formulation, faculty development, and supervision of the Academic Division department directors.

In 2018, the college hired a Director of Business Development and Strategic Partnerships to oversee a growth in income-producing training contracts with external partners—government, industry groups,

companies, and other non-profits – who establish fee-for-service training programs at BFIT in collaboration with our academic departments. In April 2021, due to growth in this line of business, the college established a Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (DPCS) and hired a director to oversee administrative capacities for this growing area. The Director of Strategic Partnerships works with the Director of the Division of DPCS to ensure that all programs established align with the academic programs already offered by the college. This work is carried out in consultation with program faculty members and the Dean of Academic Affairs. Customized programs to date have included partnerships with Apprenti, Access to Recovery, Proctor & Gamble, and the Summer of Boston Internship Program.

Board of Trustees Governance

As part of the Board of Trustees policy and specified in the by-laws, the Board of Trustees has sufficient independence to fulfill its fiduciary duty with a clear conflict of interest policy in effect. The Board of Trustees meets four times a year to review policy, monitor the college’s finances, assess strategic plan progress, approve new initiatives, and evaluate its own effectiveness.

The by-laws mandate three standing committees: an Executive Committee, an Audit Committee, and a Governance Committee. In addition, there are several other committees designed to facilitate proper governance. In 2020, the Governance Committee took on a project to: 1) evaluate the necessity of each committee and see if current committees could be consolidated; and 2) identify areas where it could establish clearer structures, norms, and practices for all board committees.

Each Board of Trustee committee chair and sub-committee chair was interviewed by a subset of Governance Committee members and asked how the Governance Committee could help streamline processes and systems for their and other committees of the board. The interviews also sought out their recommendations for committee consolidation. Based on the findings from these conversations, the Governance Committee presented recommended actions to the Board of Trustees at its meeting on April 29, 2021. The Board of Trustees then voted to adopt eight significant Governance reforms that went into place immediately.

Changes included:

BEFORE	CURRENT
<p>Each trustee served on 2 committees</p> <p>9 Board Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive • Audit • Academic Affairs • Finance • Development • Facilities • Governance • Industry Partnerships • Strategic Planning 	<p>Each trustee serves on 1 committee</p> <p>6 Board Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive • Academic Affairs • Development • Finance, Audit, and Investment • Governance & Strategy • Real Estate & Capital* <p>*Within a year of the new campus being built in Roxbury, this committee will be disbanded as it was intended to sunset thereafter.</p>

Appraisal

The Board of Trustees generally considers and resolves its work within committees before matters are taken to the full Board of Trustees for discussion and final ratification. Committees of the Board include

both Trustee Chairs and at least one senior staff member who partners with them to support the business of each committee. These volunteer leadership groups may also include outside independent experts, thus enhancing the depth of talent and insight, creating a pipeline of volunteer leaders for consideration in the event of a vacancy on the Board of Trustees.

The President communicates Board decisions to the senior staff during the senior leadership team meetings and the senior staff share them with their respective departments. The college president also holds all-campus meetings at the beginning and mid-point of each semester to keep college personnel abreast of institutional updates and the state of the college. Recent updates have included information and timelines on the move to Nubian Square, academic program developments, and fundraising.

To further strengthen shared governance, members of PAC participated in the July 2021 Board of Trustees retreat “Charting Our Path to the Future,” with the goals of reinforcing the strategic plan forward, strengthening PAC and BoT partnerships, and reinforcing a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) plan and commitment. As a kick-off event, on the evening before the retreat, the BoT hosted a Gathering of Leaders, an informal meet and greet, that included Bot and PAC members along with academic department directors.

Faculty and staff have a voice in institutional governance through representation on two college committees (the Faculty Academic Advisory Committee and the Faculty Development Committee) and the College Senate. More detailed information on these committees is discussed in Standard 6.

The College Senate is made up of both BFIT faculty and staff who are elected annually by their peers. Its convening and reconstitution grew out of concern that the college’s shared governance mechanisms had grown lax leading to a reorganization plan and potential merger that occurred with minimal input from faculty and staff. In October 2020, seven faculty and staff members volunteered to serve as the Senate Working Committee and, working collaboratively with the full faculty and staff, created the College Senate charter and by-laws. In November, the College Senate’s first nine members were elected. The College Senate is committed to working with senior leadership on strengthening communication and transparency at the college and determining ways that faculty and staff can support the leadership team’s goals. More specifics on this year’s work can be found in Standard 6.

The Reduction in Force and program changes discussed in the preface and in Standard 2, came as a surprise to many BFIT faculty and staff, as did the Trustee’s consideration of a merger when it was revealed in late summer of 2020. To build more awareness about the school’s finances, this fiscal year the CFO began to meet every other month with the College Senate to address the financial health of the college. The college also added mid-semester Town Hall meetings to the communication schedule to accompany the existing tradition of a Semester Kick-Off. The college needs to build on and continue the work of the President and College Senate and establish regular, transparent communications about the financial health of the college that foster improved understanding and trust between the Board of Trustees and the college community.

Student involvement in governance matters remains underdeveloped. Over the past years, significant effort led to creating a student leadership forum, providing students options and platforms for addressing student-generated concerns, most recently through a Campus Activities Board that met regularly on campus until 2019. Unfortunately, that participation waned with staffing transitions in student activities as well as the pandemic. There remain other opportunities for student engagement - as Orientation Leaders or as mentors in BFIT’s Ambassador program, and new to the upcoming academic year, the Associate Director of Student Success and Leadership will form a student advocacy and leadership group.

Selection of the Board of Trustees has become more strategic. With a skills and enthusiasm assessment conducted last year, and five new Board of Trustees members welcomed, the President and Governance Committee have an eye toward identifying 2-3 additional board members with philanthropic capacity who share the values of the college in the near future.

Operational and financial concerns have confronted the Board of Trustees over the past few years leading to a somewhat strained outlook and perspective on the college. However, the crisis management focus of the Board of Trustees is beginning to shift through an evolution toward more systematic strategic planning adopted by the new board chair and President/CEO. See Standard 2 for more on strategic planning.

The Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (DPCS), in collaboration with Academic Affairs, has recently expanded customized training programs at BFIT. Over the past two years, building new training partnerships has been an area of revenue growth for the college. This fiscal year alone, BFIT has hosted more than 325 non-traditional students through Strategic Partnership programs. The additional funds raised have furthered the college’s mission via general operating support and diversified sources of income.

Projections

Responsibility	Projection Detail	Estimated Completion
The President/CEO and Dean of Students	Identify a sustainable mechanism for appropriate student involvement in college governance.	Spring 2022
Board of Trustees Governance Committee	The Governance Committee is networking to build a Trustee candidate pool that ensures balance in Board of Trustees diversity, expertise and philanthropic giving. In addition, the Governance Committee is oriented toward leadership pipeline development so that the committees are populated with non-board members from whom Trustees can be sourced going forward. Diversity has increased in the past 18 months, moving from 31% to 35% members of color comprising the Board of Trustees.	Fall 2022
President/CEO, Board of Trustees, Development Team	The Board of Trustees has embraced a \$30M capital campaign. The Development team is in the process of soliciting each board member for their campaign commitment.	Spring 2022
President/CEO	The President/CEO will continue to assess existing organizational and reporting structures to improve communication, align administrative work with strategic objectives, and create an overall more efficient organization.	Fall 2022

Standard Four: The Academic Program

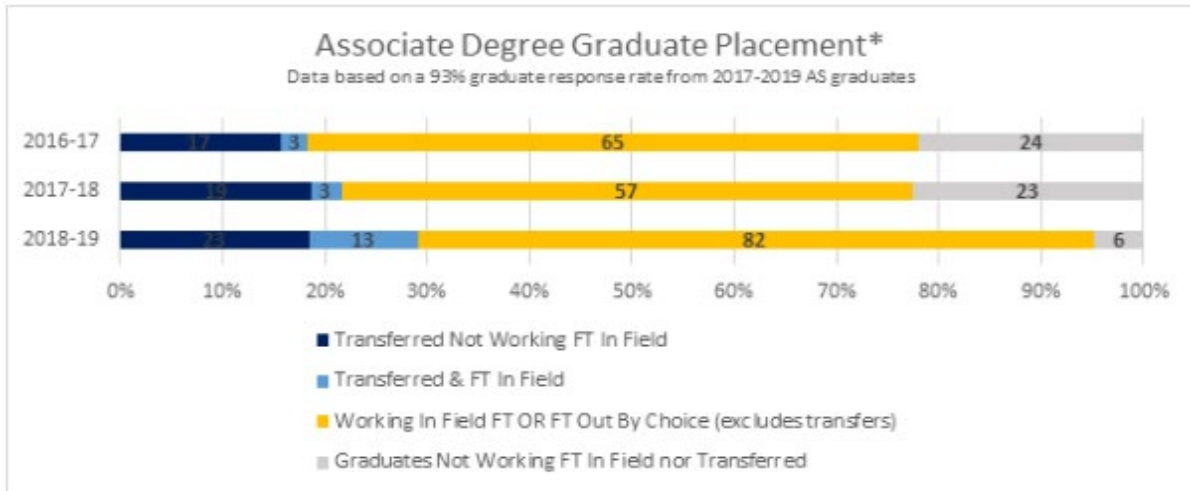
Description

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology is driven to provide affordable and accessible education in technology fields. The academic program of the college focuses on student success and career readiness at the bachelor, associate, and certificate program levels. As concisely stated in our mission, “through personalized support, hands-on learning, and industry-informed curricula, BFIT prepares graduates for work, life-long learning, and citizenship.” The college achieves its mission through curricula and instruction that are informed by both industry and college-wide initiatives and core values and through academic, wellness, and career readiness support through the Division of Student Services. BFIT focuses on educating skilled technicians and engineers while fostering professionalism, effective personal and professional communication, the skills of critical thinking and problem solving, information literacy competencies, sustainable development awareness, ethical responsibility, and civic engagement. These initiatives are embedded across the spectrum of BFIT programs and courses and are evaluated in departmental annual reports and internal academic program reviews.

The college currently offers ten associate degree programs, three bachelor of science two-plus-two programs in Automotive Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and Health Information Technology, one bachelor of science program in Electrical Engineering, and eight certificate programs. Certificate programs run for 9 to 12 months, while the associate degree and bachelor level programs follow two- and four-year paths.

All degree and certificate programs at the college are tied to student learning outcomes. These outcomes reflect the college’s mission to support students’ lifelong learning and citizenship, and they also support the acquisition of the technical skills necessary to be job ready. [BFIT’s Course Catalog\(s\)](#), available from the BFIT website provide an overview for each program, its curriculum and student learning outcomes, including specific technical skills to be mastered, special admission requirements (if applicable), degree requirements and course sequence, faculty, and the facilities utilized by each program. Specific course descriptions can be found at the back of the catalog. General admissions requirements and the process for admission are also available in the course catalog and on the BFIT website. (BFIT admissions is covered in greater depth in Standard 5.)

Although 16-19% of graduates who earn an associate degree continue directly to advanced higher education, the primary objective of BFIT’s programs is immediate employment, reflected in associate degree graduate placements as illustrated below.



Assuring Academic Quality

The Dean of Academic Affairs is responsible for academic oversight in coordination with the Assistant Dean of Academics/Director of Division of Professional and Continuing Studies, the Director of Curriculum Development & Assessment (DOCD&A), the Registrar, the Faculty Academic Advisory Committee (FAAC), program chairs and directors, and full-time faculty. All parties work to ensure program integrity and adherence to BFIT’s academic standards through departmental Annual Reports, internal Academic Program Reviews (APR’s) and external accrediting boards such as ABET, the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA), and the ASE Education Foundation (formerly NATEF).

The Office of Academic Affairs promotes a culture of continuous improvement in which faculty from all academic areas benefit from various methods to improve teaching and learning. The position of Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment (DOCD&A) was created in 2020 to evaluate and lead the faculty in systematic processes that improve teaching, learning, and assessment of student learning outcomes. The DOCD&A works with the Director of Institutional Reporting & Registrar, the Assistant Dean of Institutional Research and Records, and the FAAC to collect and analyze data, and to ensure licensure standards are being met.

The FAAC, a committee of 3 full-time faculty members elected by their peers and led by the Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment, is charged with reviewing all program changes and new program development, seeking input from the from the broader college community, and providing recommendations to the Dean of Academic Affairs. Additionally, the FAAC reviews course sequencing, oversees the student course evaluation process, ensures program level commitment to student learning outcomes and college-wide initiatives, and assists with annual revisions of the college catalog.

Under the direction of the Office of Academic Affairs, each department director and program chair complete an annual report at the end of each academic year (called retention plan in 2019-2020). The goal of the annual reporting process is to help departments evaluate how they are performing in relation to the college’s larger strategic goals of increasing enrollment, improving retention and student success, and adding employer partnerships. Both quantitative and qualitative, the report includes an annual review of: student learning outcomes and college-wide initiatives; program enrollment; student-to-faculty ratio; analyses of student grades and library usage; and faculty use of the college retention tool, Dropout Detective. Performance evaluations for each full-time faculty are also part of the annual report. These reports highlight areas of success, concern, retention, and job placement, leading to

recommendations for program review and improvement. FAAC reviews any action items in departmental reports that could result in program improvements. This yearly process is part of the college's Annual Performance Review, guided by Human Resources. Sample Annual Reports are available in the workroom.

Over the past three years, 50% of program chairs and directors reported adjusting their programs in response to analyses in their annual report. The director for the Department of Engineering and Technology reported that results from the annual reports led to: the design and implementation of a 4-course IT Business Analyst training for Apprenti-Massachusetts; the expansion of the Associate of Science (AS) degree program in Computer Technology to include three individual certificate options (Network & Systems Support, Software Development, and Web Development); and the creation of a new hybrid Health Services Administration (HSA) program in collaboration with partners such as Boston Children's Hospital (BCH). The Program Coordinator for HVAC&R reported the process identified the need for and ultimate addition of bilingual instructors; and the program coordinator for Electrical Engineering reported the process led to scheduling changes that were more amenable to student work/school life balance.

The internal Academic Program Review (APR), developed in 2007, allows the college to assess the effectiveness and value of each program to the college, to the student, and to the graduate. Each program, or department, undergoes this deep dive evaluation on a five-year cycle. Of the nine department chairs and program directors currently at the college, five report having completed a review within the past five years: Computer Technology; HVAC&R; Opticianry; and Humanities/Social Sciences (now General Education). The Electrical Engineering bachelor's degree program underwent an ABET accreditation that served as their APR in 2019 and the Automotive Technology program underwent an ASE accreditation (formerly NATEF) program review in 2019. The complete APR calendar is available in the workroom.

The APR process assesses how well each program accomplishes its own goals and objectives as well as the mission and goals of the college, how well it serves the current needs of business and industry, and how the program can be improved or modified. It measures student enrollment and achievement of learning outcomes, rates of retention, course completion, program completion, and graduation and/or transfer to continuing education. The new DOCD&A is reviewing the status of each program's annual report and determining ideal ways to incorporate APR data and analysis into the annual reporting cycle. The systematic and recurring assessment of academic programs is a vital element of BFIT's ongoing effort to promote serious reflection, self-assessment, and strategic planning toward both our financial stability and academic goals.

In May 2020, faced with the prospect of an unsustainable financial shortfall, the CFO and President presented to the Board of Trustees an expanded analysis by program that showed areas suffering from decreasing enrollment trends, high expenses, student outcomes that were below average for the college, and lower than expected job placement outcomes. BFIT leveraged this information to carry out a substantial restructuring plan across all areas of the college. The restructuring included a Reduction in Force (RIF) and a reorganization that consolidated twelve academic programs into five. The Department of Library Services was repositioned as part of Student Services. As indicated in the college's organizational charts, the new academic departments are the Department of Automotive Technology, the Department of Construction Management & the Trades, the Department of Engineering & Engineering Technology, the Department of Opticianry, and the Department of General Education. Each department is led by a director under whom there are coordinators who manage individual programs.

The Division of Continuing and Professional Studies (DCPS) comprises a sixth unit of Academic Affairs that was established in 2021.

The following programs suspended enrollment: Electronics Engineering Technology (AS), including its Biomedical track, Mechanical Engineering Technology (AS, BS), Technology Business & Management (BS), and Electrical Technology (AS). As an example of the rationale behind the changes, in the case of Electrical Technology (AS), the industry requires that to become a licensed electrician, a candidate needs 600 classroom hours of code instruction and electricity theory, plus 8000 working hours. The Practical Electricity Certificate program at BFIT offers the required 600 classroom hours, making an associate degree for this occupation akin to overqualification that costs students unnecessary time and money. Students enrolled in any of the suspended programs are completing their degrees with no disruption to their course schedules or dates of completion.

In its letter dated October 8, 2020, NECHE requested additional information from the college for a teach-out plan indicating how the institution would ensure orderly academic accommodation for students who may be unable to complete their education at BFIT. To help students impacted by the suspension of programs, the Director of Institutional Reporting generates a report, annually, or as needed, that includes ongoing enrollment data for each suspended program and the number of full-time/adjunct faculty required. Each department chair reviews the data on continuing students in their program (i.e., enrollment numbers, student progress within the curriculum) and, depending on faculty, staff, and financial resources available, makes recommendations. For example, the chair of the newly named Engineering Technology Department met with students individually to provide options to either complete their current program at BFIT or to complete a certificate and newly approved associate of science. Chair recommendations are shared with academic advisors, known at BFIT as Success Coaches, who communicate the plan to each student through outreach and provide information regarding the two-year timeline to either complete their programs or to transfer to other programs within BFIT. Coaches also provide details about tuition and fees to help inform students' decisions. For all curriculum changes, as in the case of the recent academic restructuring, the academic department directors, and program chairs, along with the Director of Curriculum Development & Assessment, lead the revision and improvement of curricula in their areas. Curriculum change proposals are submitted to the Faculty Academic Advisory Committee, which provides guidance to department directors and program chairs to ensure the inclusion of the college's core values in all courses offered in their respective programs and to keep the college community informed of curriculum changes.

Industrial Advisory Boards (IAB's) also inform program curricula so that students' educational experience is reflective of the marketplace. Their mission is to ensure graduates meet both current industry requirements and the needs of regional employers. Each technical major program has an IAB comprised of employer partners as well as community-based organizations who work with department chairs and other key BFIT team members. At annual IAB meetings, members share industry insights and trends impacting the evolution of technical workplace skills, review curricula for relevance to the workplace, and evaluate relevant equipment needs. In addition, members act as liaisons to their companies offering a wide range of guidance to BFIT students. IAB members connect BFIT students to internship and work placement opportunities, host students at job sites or lunch-and-learns at BFIT, assist with student and adjunct faculty recruitment, help obtain in-kind equipment and scholarship donations, and participate in semi-annual career fairs.

In its May 6, 2020 letter, NECHE requested additional information on how the college is integrating academic programming with other departments at the college. To integrate academic programming with other areas of the college, faculty participate in recruitment events such as Open Houses and

Student-for-a-Day visits and inform recruitment strategy for their areas. During COVID-19, when enrollment services began to hold online information sessions by major, technical program faculty participated to help potential students understand career paths that align with that major. After the sessions, faculty helped make phone calls to attendees and encouraged them to apply. The Division of Academic Affairs has also engaged with enrollment services to facilitate articulation agreements for BFIT's bachelor's degree programs with local community colleges, such as Roxbury Community College, Bunker Hill Community College and Massasoit Community College. On a regular basis, faculty works with the Student Services team to help increase retention. For example, faculty utilizes the Dropout Detective retention tool to provide feedback and alert success coaches about students who struggle in class (See Standard 5). In addition, all divisions of the college participate in New Student Orientation, with faculty welcoming new students in Meet-Your-Major sessions.

In fall 2020, the DOCD&A and the Director of Information Literacy formed an academic/student services partnership, with the Associate Professor and Director of General Education (who also serves as the college's Canvas Specialist) joining them in Summer 2021. Named the Collaboration for Instructional Technology Teaching and Learning Effectiveness (CITTLE), its first task is to assess BFIT's teaching and learning tools, such as Canvas, Dropout Detective and Portfolium, a platform for measuring student outcomes and program assessment, and to provide guidance to faculty and staff on best practices for utilizing these tools to aid in overall retention strategies and student success. Their long-term aims are broad and ambitious:

- Ensuring effective communication as it relates to student retention between faculty, advisors, and other student services staff.
- Instituting measurable outcomes for each department and program at BFIT (academic and co-curricular).
- Overseeing faculty and staff use of and training on the college LMS, college retention systems, and other learning management tools.
- Working in cooperation with the Faculty Development Committee to implement faculty and staff training.
- Working with faculty and staff to grow and enhance distance education support services such as the online library, information literacy outreach and online tutoring.
- Initiating strategies around curriculum mapping and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

While still in its initial stages, this closer collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Services anticipates becoming a standing committee and expanding membership to include the Director of Learning and representation from the Faculty Development Committee (FDC).

In late 2018, BFIT hired a Director of Business Development and Strategic Partnerships to expand programming to include workforce development training opportunities. Through the combined efforts of Academic Affairs and Strategic Partnerships, the college has now partnered with six local employers and trained more than 200 employees. Building on the success of this effort, in April 2021, the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (DPCS) was established. DPCS is focused on lifelong learning opportunities that provide affordable, accessible, hands-on education and training to professional and non-traditional adult learners looking to gain new skills, pursue career advancement and obtain academic credentials. Overseeing this division is the new Assistant Dean of Academics/Director of Division of Professional and Continuing Studies who will lead work with trade unions, union affiliated industry associations and community-based organizations to create tailored programs that meet their members/employees' needs. Additionally, a designated Success Coach has been hired to support Strategic Partnerships and DPCS students.

Building on its experience with the sudden switch to online education during the pandemic, BFIT submitted to NECHE a substantive-change proposal requesting general approval of distance education courses and programs in October 2020. In February 2021, NECHE approved an extension of distance education offerings for current programs through January 2022. The college has developed distance-learning programs that it seeks to deploy indefinitely and will be submitting a Distance Learning Plan to NECHE in September 2021. It is also pursuing SARA membership as recommended by NECHE.

BFIT responds to industry and market needs by developing relevant new programs while retiring less relevant ones. To this end, one of the key performance indicators of the Academic Strategic Plan is to evaluate existing programs and curriculum and consider the adoption of new programs that respond to technology industry needs. The process of approving a new program is a multi-stage process. With the support of the IAB's, academic divisions may recommend a new program based on industry demands. The relevant department chair composes a full proposal, including employment data, and submits it to the FAAC for review. Once the review process is complete, the new program is presented to the Board of Trustees' Academic Affairs Committee, which then takes a vote. If passed, the new program proposal is submitted to the state. If approved, the program goes to NECHE for review.

In April 2017, the college was evaluated and approved by NECHE to offer a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and in April 2018 approved to offer a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering Technology. In its May 6, 2020 letter, NECHE requested an update on the college's success in continuing to develop a baccalaureate culture and enhance its capacity to offer baccalaureate programs, including an update on the institution's success in achieving its goals for enrollment and retention in baccalaureate programs. In compliance with NECHE requirements, Academic Affairs has set a policy that the college will hire candidates with terminal degrees for faculty vacancies. Shifting the culture from an associate degree institution to a bachelor's degree institution requires the college to develop and offer 300 and 400-level General Education courses. BFIT is currently exploring cross-registration agreements with other institutions, whereby BFIT students could register for 300 and 400-level courses in exchange for their students registering for STEM courses at BFIT. At the same time, the department of Humanities and Social Sciences is in its initial stages of developing additional 300 and 400 level social science electives for FAAC approval by the spring of 2022. In addition, BFIT has become one of almost 100 small college members forming the national Lower Cost Model for Independent Colleges Consortium, which provides affordable cross-registration opportunities for students in a wide variety of majors.

To help promote BFIT's bachelor's degree programs, academic departments work with Enrollment to develop and carry out recruitment activities. For instance, during the pandemic, the department of Enrollment with the department of Electrical Engineering and Engineering Technology, introduced a digital information session with the Electrical Engineering program faculty sharing recruitment responsibilities with their IAB members. During this session, prospective students learned about the newly ABET-accredited Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering, which is Boston's most affordable private Electrical Engineering bachelor's degree. Prospective student participants learned that high achieving students can apply directly to the bachelor's program and BFIT also provides a Certificate to B.S. degree pathway for students who might not otherwise consider pursuing an engineering degree. That pathway is as follows: A student who earns a Certificate in Electronics Technology may continue into the associate degree program in Mechatronics Engineering Technology. When that degree is complete, there is an optional junior-year transfer into the BFIT Electrical Engineering bachelor's degree program.

Academic Affairs has created a cost-effective model to help build additional bachelor's degree programs by leveraging existing courses from BFIT's recently suspended programs to reduce the costs of

curriculum development. For example, extracted courses from the suspended Technology & Business Management program that are still relevant to industry needs can be combined with 300 & 400-level courses from the Automotive Management program, for use in a new Business Management degree. The aim is to have this program approved and launched by 2023. In another example, the college is considering combining relevant courses from the suspended Mechanical Engineering Technology degree program with current Electrical Engineering courses to create a new Mechanical Engineering program. The aim is to have this program approved and launched by 2024. The expectation is that for both degrees, there will be just three new courses to be developed, with the goal of leveraging in-kind support from the Industrial Advisory Boards. Other initial funding sources will be based on future enrollment.

While students enter BFIT with varying levels of academic preparation, all students are expected to achieve collegiate level skills. A student is considered sufficiently prepared to enter a degree program if that student is deemed ready for College Composition I and for the first math course in the sequence required for the degree. Students not ready to enter their major are offered developmental classes in math and/or English to prepare them for courses in their program of study. Approximately 39% of students in the last five years have required at least one developmental course. Students must earn a minimum grade of C to move from these developmental courses to college-level offerings.

All degree programs require English Composition I and II, and the reading and writing required in all entry level degree courses is expected to be at least at the level of a student entering English Composition I. The required math sequence varies by degree program: Technical Math for Automotive Technology, Construction Management, and Opticianry; College Algebra & Trigonometry for the Engineering Technology programs; and Calculus I for Electrical Engineering. The combination of the advancing classroom technical concepts, the increasing hands-on laboratory work, and a robust general education component, lead to a variety of careers and further educational opportunities.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Associate and bachelor degree programs have a coherent design with the associate programs requiring 64 to 73 credits for graduation and the bachelor's programs requiring 124-135 credits. Both programs include a balance of major-specific technical and general education courses. On average, technical courses make up approximately two-thirds of the total credits, and credits for each course are apportioned based on lecture and lab hours. Course sequencing follows a progression from basic concepts and skills in introductory courses to more advanced in later semesters with prerequisites in place to ensure that students have the necessary preparation for advanced courses. Certificate programs require between 17 to 29 credits, and curricula follow a scaffolded sequence of skills as well. The requirements and curricula for all degree and certificate programs are published in the [course catalog](#) and are held to academic standards that reflect the college's core values.

BFIT's Core Values, first articulated in 2006 and updated in 2013, encompass the college's definition of an educated person. The values statement highlights the importance of "lifelong learning in an increasingly interdependent world" and affirms BFIT's commitment to produce graduates who are career-ready, ethically responsible, and civically engaged. All programs have measurable outcomes that reflect the theoretical knowledge needed in the field, the technical skills necessary for entry-level positions, and the self-knowledge required for students to advance themselves professionally and personally. Each department creates opportunities for students to acquire the attributes of an educated person, and these efforts are documented in the Annual Reports submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs.

As students move through sequential semesters of technical study, courses within their majors increase focus on further development of the skills appropriate to the field of study. In most cases, this involves increased hands-on application of knowledge, which utilizes increased use of analysis, troubleshooting, mathematical calculations, synthesis, and communication skills.

Mathematics and science courses are sequenced and designed around the specific needs of the technology fields and teach appropriate level of skills for students' further academic work. Every effort is made to align course content with the application of math and science skills in the technology courses and to equip students with problem-solving procedures. Instruction emphasizes identification of appropriate solution techniques when a problem arises, and logical application of these techniques by creating assignments that use practical problems related to student's lives and to the industrial and engineering mathematic calculations, synthesis, and communication skills they are employing. For example, in geometry, the concept of perimeter is used to demonstrate how much fencing one needs to surround an area; in a physics course, the conservation of energy helps explain why brake pads wear out. A foundation of the technical disciplines, these courses promote critical reasoning, creative thinking, and logical analysis, skills that are vital within the classroom and in everyday life.

All Humanities and Social Science courses – composition classes and electives – are designed to promote strong written and oral communication skills by means of short written responses, essays, reports, class discussion, group projects, and presentations. In College Composition I and II, students move from writing memoirs to working in groups on a substantial research project about a contemporary work or social issue. Electives in Humanities & Social Sciences offer a variety of opportunities for students to gain historical, cultural, social, and global awareness, while utilizing the skills from earlier composition courses. For instance, the Introduction to Anthropology elective walks students through culture and all its complexities, such as how historical artifacts and contemporary ones express key aspects of the societies that created them and how these aspects (i.e., social values, technical literacies) have changed over time.

As part of the college's Writing Across the Curriculum Initiative, the Director of Information Literacy provides information and resources necessary to meet the needs of the college's education programs through integration with the BFIT curriculum of both general education and technical programs. Services and instruction are provided in multiple formats to enhance research and learning. This support has historically been completed through in-class and online presentations, Canvas integrated modules, video tutorials, and one-on-one reference services offered at the BFIT library's reference desk, via email, and through embedding a librarian in the BFIT tutoring center.

General Education

General education courses serve to complement the acquisition of technical skills, and together they form the basis for a well-rounded student to enter the workforce, go on to further education, and learn throughout life. Depending on the degree program, credit hours in BFIT's general education range from 21 for associate degree programs to 50 in bachelor programs. These credit hours include a minimum of two courses to develop writing and communication skills, a minimum of two courses in mathematics, and, for most programs, at least one course offering in physics or other science related to the field of study. Associate degree programs also require one to three social science electives.

In their May 6, 2020 letter to the college, NECHE noted for special emphasis that the college would benefit from "a general education model that is 'consistent across all academic offerings and a centerpiece in the BFIT undergraduate experience'". The college restructured its academic departments in July 2020, merging Humanities & Social Sciences (HU/SS) and Math & Sciences under the banner of General Education. The Director of General Education oversees the academic operations of both

departments and currently chairs Humanities & Social Sciences, while Math & Sciences has a separate chair that reports to the director. The new structure allows for a more centralized and collaborative way of working together to systematically assess and revise curricula and increase student engagement with BFIT's Core Values. For example, Humanities and Social Sciences is collaborating with Math & the Sciences on writing instruction and citations as they pertain to lab reports for physics.

In spring 2021, a survey of faculty was conducted to identify college-wide communication and writing applications and needs. The analysis of the survey is under review and will result in recommendations for curriculum improvements and potential ways to collaborate with technical programs to serve their students better.

The Major or Concentration

BFIT's technical programs provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to start successful careers in a variety of fields (See also Standard 8). BFIT'S majors are built around concentrated and specialized knowledge and skills germane to entry-level positions in each technical discipline. Students are introduced to basic technical concepts and technical applications in their first year of study. At the same time, they are working to develop and improve upon verbal and written communication skills that, together with mathematical skills, form the foundation for further academic work. Subsequent years of study build on these skills, while placing a greater focus on the further development of technology skills. In most cases this involves an increase in the hands-on application of knowledge. Math and science courses are sequenced and designed around the specific needs of the industrial and engineering technology fields. Students in their second year of study are presented with increasingly complex technical and communication assignments and through their social science electives explore relevant contemporary issues.

BFIT's academic catalog and website provide a description of and learning objectives for each academic program, along with a list of required and elective courses. The plans of study define a sequence of courses, and the college schedules classes so that a full-time student can follow the plan and graduate in two, four, or eight semesters, depending on the program. Students who start in January can take second semester courses over the summer and graduate the following May. Students who become out of sequence or who need to retake courses may require an additional semester or year of study depending on the sequence in which courses are offered.

Transfer Credit

BFIT has established policies specific to the transfer of credit and has worked in collaboration with other institutions of higher education, and NECHE, on developing undergraduate articulation agreements and transfer pathways within systems of higher education. Currently, the Electrical Engineering program has articulation agreements with Bunker Hill Community College and Massasoit Community College to formalize transfer credit. In these cases, the EE chair will work with the corresponding chairs and instructors at the two schools to ensure student preparedness and provide feedback after the first semester to the community colleges on how their graduates perform in the BFIT EE program. Students who receive credit for international collegiate-level coursework taken prior to admission to BFIT must submit a course-by-course evaluation of their educational credentials and coursework from an accredited credit-evaluation service such as World Education Services and may be required to submit English language course outlines or descriptions as well. All credit evaluation is overseen by the relevant academic departments, both at the associate and bachelor's degree levels.

Credit is awarded for work completed at other accredited colleges that is equivalent in content and credit hours to BFIT courses. No grade of less than C is transferable. Fifty-one percent of the total credits required for graduation must be taken at BFIT. In limited cases, the college has awarded credit for

experiential learning as evidenced by military training or professional licensure, at the discretion of the Academic Dean and in coordination with the Registrar. BFIT's transfer process is available on the BFIT website.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

BFIT programs are appropriately named and offer curricula that match, meet, or exceed comparable programs at other local and national post-secondary institutions. Comparable associate degree programs in the Northeast, such as those at New Hampshire Technical Institute, Springfield Technical Community College, Vermont Technical College, the New England Institute of Technology, and Mass Bay Community College, employ course designs and requirements like those at BFIT. The number of credits required for degrees and certificates are equal or comparable to programs offered by other colleges.

BFIT publishes program requirements and electives in the Course Catalog and on the BFIT website. Students who follow the program outline and successfully complete courses in each semester graduate at the end of four semesters since programs are designed to flow sequentially. In some cases, starting out in a developmental course or retaking courses might necessitate an additional semester or year of study. The college is pursuing ways to embed developmental courses to reduce the time to completion for those who need to take them.

In addition, the Course Catalog contains information on graduation requirements, termination from and readmission to the college's academic programs, satisfactory academic progress, and other related academic policies, e.g., the grading system, attendance, incomplete grades, course withdrawal, probation, and the academic honesty policy and procedure. The Student Handbook includes many of these same policies, including a detailed description of the academic honesty policy and procedure. The Assistant Dean of Student Life heads a Student Conduct Hearing Board to address issues of academic honesty. The Board includes representatives from staff, faculty, and students. (See also Std. 5)

The Faculty Academic Advisory Committee (FAAC), in conjunction with the Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment, continues to oversee the format and requirements for the BFIT Course Syllabi used in all courses of all academic programs. Considered a contract between the college, the instructor, and the student, the syllabus serves to document sufficient academic content to warrant awarding of credit. In addition to relevant information about the instructor, the syllabus notes the criteria that substantiate credit awarded and course outcomes. It includes learning objectives, evaluation criteria, class policies, and language from the BFIT Student Handbook regarding academic honesty. The syllabus also includes information on learning accommodations offered through the Office of Student Learning & Academic Support as well as resources available through the Wellness Office, Online Library, Tutoring Center and Career Services.

The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for upholding a culture of continuous improvement in which each department uses various methods to improve teaching and learning, including systematic assessment processes. All students receive regular and consistent feedback from their instructors through a variety of instructor-generated assessment methods, including written and oral comments, rubrics, portfolio review, teacher-student conferences, and traditional examination grades.

Students must meet all academic requirements to be awarded degrees. The college maintains only one instructional location.

Appraisal

Assuring Academic Quality

Due to the college's restructuring, the subsequent change in the Dean of Academic Affairs position, and the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, program chairs and directors did not complete annual reports for Academic Year 2020 to allow faculty time to make the transition from in-person to online course delivery. The Dean of Academic Affairs required submission of annual reports for Academic Year 2021, to be reviewed by the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment, and the FAAC, in coordination with program chairs and directors, to determine the need for appropriate changes at the course or program level. On an annual basis, each chair also meets with the Academic Dean and the Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment to discuss plans for the upcoming academic year and identify areas for improvement. The goal is a more thorough, continuous, and systematic improvement process.

In summer 2021, the Math and Sciences department (APR under revision) and the Computer Technology (CT) department completed Academic Program Reviews. Reviews solicit input from faculty and students to obtain an honest appraisal of an academic unit's strengths and weaknesses. Per BFIT procedures, the review included a forum for internal constituents to hear results and facilitate discussion on the proposed changes. To increase student input specifically, a student focus group was organized by Student Services to yield their feedback on CT course content, faculty teaching style, and support services. The information gathered will be used to foster academic excellence within the unit, identify methods for increasing quality, and provide critical guidance for administrative decisions. These systematic assessments of academic programs are used to improve academic quality and effectiveness, as required by BFIT's Office of Academic Affairs and outlined by NECHE.

The position of Dean of Academic Affairs has undergone significant turnover in the past 10 years, with eight deans serving during that time. As a result, several initiatives that various deans have instituted have come and gone or significantly changed. For example, the previous academic dean began the process of having each program add a Retention Plan as part of its annual report using data provided by the Office of Institutional Research (i.e., overall course retention and completion rates by ethnicity, gender, etc.). Unfortunately, the onset of COVID-19 and BFIT's pivot to online programming, coupled with that Dean's release due to staff restructuring, left this undertaking incomplete.

The current team holds the promise of staffing continuity. The Dean of Academic Affairs previously served as BFIT's Dean of Enrollment for 10 years. The newly created position of Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment (DOCD&A) was filled in July 2020, by a faculty member from the Department of Electronics Technology with 30 years at the college, teaching and participating on various faculty and college-wide committees. The collective experience and institutional memory of this team will allow for a substantial review of past efforts and a reformulation of academic planning and policy.

The college Reduction in Force and resulting restructuring caused low morale for many faculty members who, in two May 2021 surveys of all full-time and adjunct faculty as well as program chairs and directors, identified not only the stressors of teaching during COVID-19 – increased administrative work, preparing for both in-person and online teaching and labs – but also the challenges of an increased workload due to a decreased staff. Faculty identified the increased workload as having a negative effect on their ability to prepare for classes, work with students on an individual basis, and provide in-depth feedback on assignments.

The college is committed to regularly upgrading its technology and computer labs and utilizing software applications to improve work processes and enhance student engagement and learning. In 2019, the college renovated the HVAC&R labs and purchased new robotics equipment and 3-D prototyping machines for Electronics and Mechanical Engineering Technology programs, respectively. The new

robotics equipment was used to develop nine additional lab projects in the Robotics I course, and the course curriculum was revamped by incorporating a software-based training module with direct integration to two models of articulated robots. These additions to the curriculum provide firsthand experience with a wide range of operating and programming skills in industry-aligned robotic processes. BFIT invested a substantial portion of funds from the Department of Education's Title III Strengthening Institutions grant in technology designed to enhance the college's systems for student success, with the overall goal of improving retention and graduation rates. Significantly, the college used Title III funding to purchase the learning management system Canvas and to provide training sessions for faculty and staff in 2019. Additional assessment tools embedded into Canvas include A+ Attendance, Instructor Insight, and Dropout Detective, all of which allow Academic Affairs and Student Services to assess student progress.

The Collaboration for Instructional Technology Teaching and Learning Effectiveness (CITTLE) is working to ensure faculty utilization of these tools in a manner that provides increased organization of class materials for students, accurate and timely reporting of attendance, analysis of student risk in each course, and increased reporting by faculty to alert advisors when students need intervention for academic or personal issues. CITTLE will also be able to evaluate quantitatively the effect of the usage of these tools on retention and graduation rates and measure instructor/advisor communication.

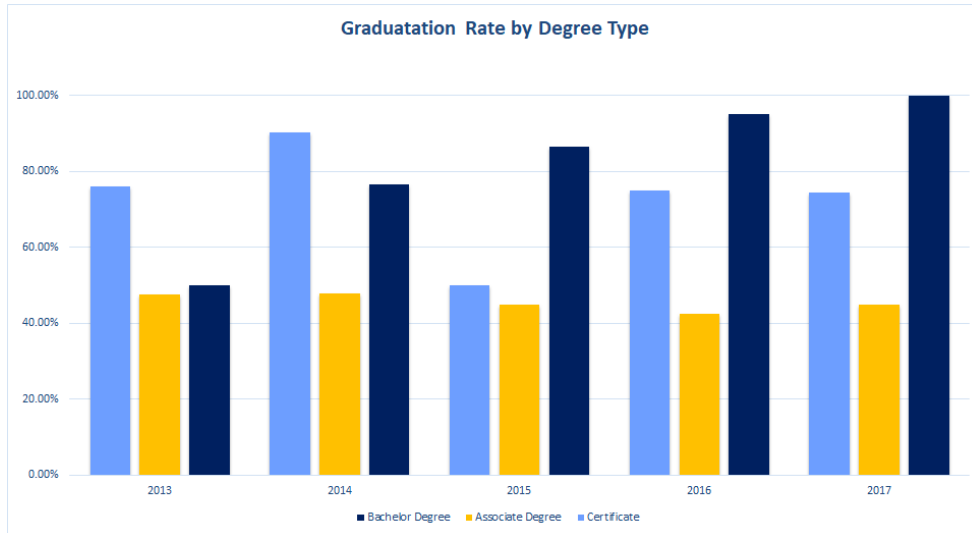
Over the past two years, building new training partnerships has been an area of revenue growth for the college. These programs have brought in over one million dollars of additional income, which has helped support other functions of the college and built pipelines of students into other BFIT programs through stackable certificates. This fiscal year alone, more than 325 non-traditional students were served through the collaboration between the Strategic Partnerships Department and Academic Affairs. Continued growth in the area of customized corporate training over the next five years is essential to BFIT's strategic expansion plans, and the college is committed to making moderate investments now to strengthen the infrastructure that will allow it to offer these accelerated training programs more efficiently.

With the collaboration of BFIT faculty and industry experts, the workforce development initiative through DCPS can offer a wide variety of affordable training opportunities to support the local workforce. These training opportunities are designed to ensure the local workforce can keep up with industry trends and changes and remain productive and satisfied, while also aiding employers' goals of obtaining and retaining talented employees. DPCS leverages these practices and plans to expand its offerings with new non-credit and credit programs in multiple modalities including accelerated, online, hybrid, and on/off work sites. The college strategically created the new Director role to develop partnerships with trade unions and industry associations and to customize degree programs and short-term certificates for this target population. Union members will be able to transfer credits earned from their apprenticeship training toward an associate degree in the accelerated model designed by DPCS. Through the work and relationship development of the new director, BFIT inked its first union training partnership (with IBEW local 103) in August 2021, accomplishing within four months of his hire something to which the college has aspired for five years.

In their letter of January 19, 2021, NECHE requested an update on BFIT's success in offering its current courses and academic programs via distance education as evidence that the institution has a demonstrable record of success in implementing its plans. The results of distance education programming are available in the college's Distance Learning Plan and indicate successful and consistent delivery of this learning modality. There was no significant difference in the final GPA scores within all programs regardless of delivery method and the overall DFW percentage rate for distance learning students was higher, but not significantly.

In addition to its renewed ABET accreditation and implementation of the two-plus-two pathway, the Electrical Engineering BS program has created a mentoring program with the goal of increasing retention.

From 2013-2017, data indicates that the graduate rate of BFIT's bachelor's degree programs were trending higher than associate degree and certificate programs. COVID-19 reversed this trend.



Undergraduate Degree Programs

BFIT's technology and trade programs continue to create a solid educational foundation so that students are introduced to their field while developing skills that enable them to assimilate higher-level technology concepts and applications. To that end, each department regularly reviews its initial course offerings to provide the best foundation possible. For example, the Electronics Engineering Technology and Electrical Engineering departments created an Introduction to Electro-Mechanical Systems course starting in fall 2021 that will serve as an introduction to both fields.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced BFIT to pivot to 100% online education in late March 2020. Since then, with support from the college, programs have built upon their infrastructure to support digital learning. The information technology (IT) department offers training to students, faculty, and staff. The college's Canvas Specialist, a faculty liaison/trainer, and the previous Assistant Academic Dean facilitated a series of robust training workshops that focused on the following topics: effective uses of Canvas to create accessible online learning; primarily teaching live online with one of two conference tools, Big Blue Button (a Canvas application) and Zoom; basic principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL); and, finally, how to use the Canvas learning outcomes tool for assessment. All these workshops have been archived on a Canvas course page so that faculty can access the materials at any time. As BFIT plans more online/distance programming, the Collaboration for Instructional Technology Teaching and Learning Effectiveness (CITTLE) will organize and offer more workshops including self-paced training modules through Canvas.

As evidenced by Library Student Use Surveys from 2012-2019 and Library Annual Reports from 2016-2019, students used the library predominantly for computer use and quiet study space. Less than 30% of students each year indicated using the library's reserve collection, less than 20% used the library to receive reference assistance, and less than 5% used the library's physical collection. As a result, in 2016, the library started a substantial weeding project to reduce the amount of shelf space to expand

seating and computing areas. Over a 3-year period the collection was weeded from over 8000 titles to 500 core titles. During this time, in addition to the library's Academic eBook subscription (since 2012), the library expanded individual eBook purchases, specifically for each major.

While Information Literacy (IL) endeavors have met with some success, in-person reference services have been declining steadily since 2016-17 when 707 reference transactions were recorded; in 2019-20 the total number of reference transactions occurring in the library was 363. This number includes students seeking computer help, which accounted for about half of the total number. Even as the total number of in-person reference transactions was declining, the library recorded increased online reference transactions via email and through integration into Canvas course discussion boards.

The information literacy program at BFIT was disconnected from the physical library, which was eliminated as a separate department in September 2020. The Director of Information Literacy is now a member of Student Services overseeing BFIT's Online Library and information Literacy Services. (See also Standard 7.)

For the past three years, the library has partnered with academic departments to create integrative opportunities for students to develop information literacy skills relevant to their major. This collaboration has resulted in the implementation of projects including:

- Collaboration with instructors from a Technical Communications course that resulted in a video about the importance of [communication in the workplace](#) and featured an interview with a project manager at Google.
- Collaboration with instructors from the Electronics Engineering Technology department that resulted in videos on [Breadboard Basics](#) and [Measuring Current and Voltage](#)
- Collaboration with an instructor from the Electronics Engineering Technology department that resulted in a design project requiring students to meet with a librarian, through Canvas, to conduct research and demonstrate real world applications for their design.
- Collaboration with the Success Seminar coordinator to workshop assignments that support familiarity with major-specific resources by directing students to work in teams and uncover clues hidden in library online resources.

The Director of Information Literacy is working with faculty to support additional collaboration opportunities and will continue outreach to both faculty and students to expand the non-traditional pathways for information literacy competency at BFIT.

Each department creates measurable student learning outcomes for individual courses. These outcomes funnel into departmental outcomes and reflect BFIT's college-wide initiatives. BFIT has taken steps to have the entire faculty follow this process/way of thinking when writing and measuring outcomes. In October 2019, the Faculty Development Committee (FDC) held a college-wide workshop on the outcomes process and added a discussion of how to use outcomes to drive the creation of assignments: using outcomes as the starting point, faculty designs assignments that guide students to the desired result. The FDC followed up with two subsequent workshops examining the tracking of course and department outcomes in Canvas. Tracking provides each department with detailed records of achieved outcomes and will play a critical role in assessment through annual reporting and academic program reviews.

All General Education courses have clearly measurable outcomes that reflect department and course goals and funnel into BFIT's Institutional Values/College-wide Initiatives. These outcomes guide students toward the college's definition of an educated person. For example, the Humanities & Social Sciences

department has started tracking Information Literacy through Canvas, as it is both a departmental outcome and a BFIT Institutional Value. General Education will make Canvas outcomes a standard operating procedure for assessment starting in the fall of 2021.

General Education

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences made recent major revisions to its curricula that seek to connect its developmental courses to its standard composition courses and electives as steps toward creating a unified experience for first-year students. The sequence of skills and content students learn during their developmental coursework functions as the centerpiece of their learning, as they become stronger readers, writers, researchers, and communicators while they pursue a technical degree. College Composition 1 features a professional inquiry unit in which students learn practical information literacy skills through current technical journals and resources such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook. Students complete this unit by researching and drafting a report that details the educational requirements for their majors, reviewing and commenting on two or more articles about contemporary issues in their field, and, finally, summarizing key aspects of their fields, such as salaries and job growth rates. General Education recently started to focus on ways to lessen, and ideally eliminate, the siloed working styles used by its two departments when they were separate. In pursuit of this goal, the department took a significant step toward improvement: in April 2021, the chair of Math & the Sciences and the director of General Education started an Academic Program Review (APR) of the math program in response to some concerning retention and graduation rates of students who went through, or withdrew from, developmental math.

The Major or Concentration

Each academic department is responsible for its curricular content, instructional methods, scheduling of courses, and assessment of student learning outcomes. Over the past two academic years, the Faculty Development Committee worked with academic departments to establish learning outcomes for all majors. Work is ongoing to make these learning outcomes more accessible through curricular mapping through the Portfolium platform.

Curriculum requirements for many majors are based upon discipline-specific accreditation standards or licensure requirements. For example, the Opticianry program has full accreditation from the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation, while the Practical Electricity program fulfills the Massachusetts Board of State Examiners of Electrician's academic requirement for Journeyman Electrician licensure by providing 600 hours of classroom instruction. Upon successful completion of the HVAC&R program, graduates are credited with 2000 hours towards the requirement to sit for the MA Refrigeration Technician Licensing exam; in addition, students can earn up to six individual certifications within the field.

Some BFIT majors include college-friendly employment opportunities or require internships for graduation to provide students with in-field job experience. The Automotive program has built BFIT-specific employment partnerships with Prime Motor Group and Village Volvo, while the Opticianry program offers a Cooperative Education Program whereby courses are offered three days a week freeing up two days to enable students to obtain work assignments in eye health care settings. Students benefit from paid work experiences related to and integrated with their academic studies and career interests. Construction Management, Practical Electricity, and HVAC&R students are invited to participate in the Compliance Mentor Program, which offers students in this division career exploration, job shadowing, and internships. Students in other majors engage with professional organizations to connect students to professionals as well as professional and ethical standards appropriate to their

chosen fields. For instance, the Electrical Engineering students are invited to attend monthly professional IEEE PES (Power & Energy Society) meetings as well as the annual Boston chapter dinner, and the department has sponsored students' attendance at events and workshops hosted by the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and the Society of Hispanic Engineers (SHPE).

Transfer Credit

Transfer pathways and policies and articulation agreements are regularly reviewed and updated by the Division of Academic Affairs, with input from faculty, to ensure transparency and consistency in the transfer of credit. The college actively seeks to create meaningful pathways for students who want to continue their education, and it currently has articulation agreements with Bunker Hill Community College, Roxbury Community College and Massasoit Community College.

BFIT has clearly defined paths of further education for students in automotive, engineering technology (ET) and computer technology. Through the college's two-plus-two program in Automotive Management, students can pursue a bachelor's degree to expand on their previous study of Automotive Technology at BFIT or elsewhere. Students in ET can begin with a Certificate in Electronics Technology, then build up to an associate degree in Mechatronics Engineering Technology before transferring into the junior year of the Electrical Engineering bachelor's program.

While the BFIT transfer policy states that students may transfer up to 49% of the total credits, a special, more flexible agreement was established to accommodate students transferring from ITT, after its 2016 closing.

For Advanced Placement (AP) credit, BFIT requires a numeric score of 3 or better submitted on an official AP transcript or email. For military experience, BFIT accepts ACE transcripts (which give a brief course description and recommended credits) provided the material covered is equivalent to the program course requirement. Test Out or life experience credits require the authorization of the specific department chair and the Academic Dean; written authorization of this credit is kept in the student's academic file.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

With the addition of an automated degree audit system, the registrar can keep track of students' academic progress and perform an audit before a student graduates to ensure that all requirements have been fulfilled. There is a preliminary audit in February and then a final audit after all grades are due in early May. The department chair decides on any course waivers and substitutions and provides justification for the deviation in an email to the registrar. Students and their advisors also have access to their Degree Audit on the Student Portal at any time, and students are advised to run degree audits periodically, especially during their senior year.

Projections

RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECT DETAILS	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
Dean of Academics/Chief Academic Officer	Submit a new program proposal for a BS degree in Technology, Business & Management to the Board of Higher Education. This program will be a plus-two platform for graduates of any of BFIT's associate degree programs, a generalization of	Fall 2022

	the successful two-plus-two model used for the Bachelor of Science in Automotive Management.	
Department of Academic Affairs	Industrial Advisory Board membership is under review and the college seeks to onboard new and innovative companies that can support the college through curriculum development as well as provide BFIT students with mentorships, internships, summer employment, scholarship opportunities and job placement. IAB structure is also currently under review and a process to provide more guidance to program chairs, directors, and faculty is being created.	Spring 2022 and Ongoing
Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment with Faculty Academic Advisory Committee	The DOCD&A and the FAAC are reviewing the APR process, and the Dean of Academic Affairs expects that all departments will undergo an in-depth review over the next five years. Programs will be selected for review based on total enrollment, retention and graduation rates, and job placement. This will be a data driven process in which the collected data explicitly speaks to clear performance benchmarks. The goal is increasing student enrollment and success as measured by student learning outcomes; course completion and retention rates; and the rate at which students earn certificates, graduate, and/or transfer to four-year programs. By engaging in this proactive process of assessing curricular rigor and relevance, the college demonstrates and facilitates its commitment to ensuring the opportunity for success for every student.	Each program will undergo review within 5 years. Developmental English will complete its review by spring 2022.
Canvas Specialist/Director of General Education in collaboration with Human Resources	In response to feedback from new hires regarding the need for additional onboarding, including areas for faculty improvement, such as best practices for working specifically with the BFIT student population, a standardized orientation for all new faculty (adjunct and full time) was created in 2021 and is in the process of being rolled out.	Fall 2021 and Ongoing
Department of Professional and Continuing Studies	DPCS plans to create an Industry Advisory Board (IAB) focused on short-term and continuing and adult education in the trades and technology	Spring 2022

	<p>fields generally. This interdisciplinary IAB will help explore new industry demands and develop specific professional development training programs for working adults who want to earn stackable credentials. Having inked its first training contract with a major union in August 2021 just four months after being established, this division will launch multiple new programs in academic year 2021-2022.</p>	
<p>Department of Professional and Continuing Studies</p>	<p>DPCS plans to offer programs with multiple delivery models—online, hybrid and on-site—including customizing programs, creating accelerated degree programs, creating workforce development training programs, programs providing professional development for working adults, and creating stackable certificates. The vast majority of these students will be part-time vs. the traditional BFIT student who attends full-time.</p> <p>DPCS is currently working on creating a website that will be launched in spring 2021.</p> <p>The additional programs built through DCPS are projected to add about 160 part-time students with additional net revenue of about \$400,000 in academic year 2021-2022.</p>	<p>Spring 2022</p>

Standard Five: Students

Description

The BFIT student body continues to be highly diverse in terms of race and ethnic origin with a slow decline of white non-Hispanic students and a steady increase in the Black non-Hispanic student population over the 2015-2020 five-year period. The college also has seen an increase in first generation college students, having reached 57% in 2020. Currently, 66% of the student body is under 25 years of age, with 75% under age 30. Additionally, the college has realized a measurable increase in the number of female students from 10% in 2016 to 16% today, which can be attributed partly to hiring a dedicated Admissions team member to focus on growing the female demographic and establishing a Women in STEM campus activities club and scholarship fund. Of the 56 female students in 2020, 63% were represented in two academic departments, Opticianry and Computer Technology/Health Information Technology, with the remaining 21 students enrolled across six additional programs.

As seen below, the fall 2020 semester saw 26% of the student enrollment in certificate programs, 59% in associate degrees, and 15% in bachelor's degree programs. Fall enrollment by major can be found on the Fast Facts Enrollment Report.

	2018	2019	2020
Total Enrollment By Degree - Main Campus			
Certificate	83	76	102
Associate	415	383	233
Bachelor	53	66	58
	551	525	393

While most students continue to attend full-time, by 2020 the percentage of students attending part-time had increased from 67 to 91 students (14% to 23%), over a five-year period.

Educating students, placing them in good jobs and preparing them for lifelong learning, citizenship, and careers in growing industries inform the work of all departments at the college. Like the technical majors themselves, BFIT takes a hands-on approach to meeting the needs of its diverse student body. Each new student receives personalized attention throughout the admissions, financial aid and student accounts processes and through onboarding with a Success Coach. Student needs, whether financial, academic, career or life-related, dictate policies and processes in such areas as financial aid discounting and counseling, advancement and strategic partnership efforts, modes and methods of instruction, curriculum development, and all aspects of student support: academic success efforts, student life offerings, wellness initiatives, and career preparedness. BFIT truly is a student-centered institution.

All students take their courses at BFIT's only campus, located in Boston. For fall 2020, 63% attended their courses entirely online and 35% attended a hybrid version of at least one lab course on campus

and their lectures online. In spring 2021, 43% attended online only with the rest of the students attending at least one lab course on campus and their lectures online. As a result of the May 2020 reorganization of academic programs, the college saw a 39% increase in the number of enrolled certificate students in fall 2020, 102 compared to the five-year average of 73.4. Students enrolled in the associate degree decreased 37% from the average, with fall 2020 enrolling 233 compared to the five-year average of 372.6. In the past decade, certificate-seeking students increased from 10% of the student body to 27% of the student body in FY 2021, while bachelor's degree enrollment saw an increase of 8%, with 58 students enrolled.

Admissions

The Admissions Office markets the college and recruits students without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, veteran status, political belief or affiliation, CORI check results, mental or physical disability, pregnancy, retaliation, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and genetic information and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state and federal law.

Admissions Counselors participate in college fairs, school presentations, visitor programs, and online marketing using tools such as Facebook and other social networking platforms. Various marketing materials, including the college website, program brochures, and tour videos, give prospective students information about the benefits of attending BFIT. Online and social media ad campaigns produced by an external firm, Overdrive Interactive, are commissioned by Admissions to drive in-bound leads. In addition, the college subscribes to Naviance, a college search product that many secondary school guidance offices and students use to research higher education opportunities. The subscription is a significant investment that the college made four years ago, and the Naviance system has since been adopted by most area public school systems, including Boston Public Schools (BPS). Naviance complements BFIT's grassroots admissions approach. Because of concerted efforts to develop stronger relationships with the largest public school system in the state, BPS enrollment at BFIT has grown from 33% of the student body in 2015 to 37% in 2020.

Over the past three years, while the size of the Admissions prospect pool has declined, the new student yield rate has increased because of the targeted focus by the Admissions counselors on student prospects. Prospects totaled 3,641 in 2017 and yielded 267 new students (a yield rate of 7%); in 2019, prospects totaled 2,495 and yielded 299 new students (an 11.9% yield rate).

The Admissions Office coordinates multiple special events throughout the year, including open houses, Accepted Student Day, Women in Technology Day, and a "Student for a Day" tour program that allows prospective students to shadow a current student, attend classes in the major that interests them, and have the chance to immerse themselves in BFIT culture. In addition, the Admissions staff coordinates high school guidance counselor events to generate awareness of the college. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Admissions team was able to pivot quickly to weekly online Zoom counseling sessions, online video tours, online information sessions, and a robust call/text/email program to engage and inform students and guidance counselors. The college's anti-discrimination

policy is clearly stated on the college website as well as all Admissions marketing materials. In addition, the racial/ethnic breakdown of the student body is published on the Fast Facts page of BFIT's website and in the academic catalog.

BFIT is an open enrollment institution. The priority deadlines are May 1 for fall enrollment and December 1 for spring. Applicants with a high school diploma, a GED/HiSET, and the ability to benefit from our education are offered admission to the college. Students' readiness for the rigor of their program is assessed to ensure each student is placed into the appropriate level courses and is set up for academic success. BFIT had traditionally used the Accuplacer tool to assess students, but determined that many students faced major technological barriers when the assessment process had to be conducted remotely in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. Instead, Admissions counselors now review a student's high school transcript to determine class placements. BFIT's policies for re-admission to the college are detailed in the Course Catalog.

The college sets institutional goals each year for a specific enrollment number per major. To encourage and support female applicants, who, as indicated above, make up a small minority of the BFIT student body, the Admissions team has appointed a dedicated Women in Technology recruiter, offers a special scholarship to promising female applicants, and hosts an annual Women in Technology seminar. The Admissions team and the college are also dedicated to ensuring that the cost of college is not a barrier for low-income students. To that end, since 2019, BFIT has been included in the City of Boston's [Tuition Free Community College program](#), through which qualified low-income Boston residents can receive up to 3 years of free college tuition.

The college's [application for admission](#) is available electronically on the college website. Applicants must provide an official high school transcript (and college transcripts if applicable), or official GED certificate. It is recommended, but not required, that applicants submit standardized test scores (such as the SAT or ACT), a personal statement, and a letter of recommendation to the Admissions Office to support their candidacy. Once the applicant has submitted the required application and supporting documents, an Admissions Counselor explains the acceptance procedure and starts the financial aid process. The Financial Aid office follows up with every student who indicates they plan to seek financial aid to ensure they understand and complete the financial aid process. The Admissions staff ensures that applicants complete proper immunization paperwork before entering the college.

Student Services and Co-Curricular Experiences

The Department of Student Services coordinates services and activities for students outside of the classroom, including academic and learning support, wellness support, career preparedness, and engagement and leadership opportunities. The department is dedicated to the holistic support of students through efforts that enhance academic, social, personal, and professional growth.

Led by the Dean of Students, the Department of Student Services is a diverse team of ten full-time staff, one AmeriCorps Ambassador. Each staff member holds the necessary educational degree, in areas such as Higher Education, Social Work, and Library Science. Each has professional work experience in their area of expertise, such as Advising and Student Success, Learning and Information Literacy, Wellness, Student Life, and Career Services. Staff professional affiliations and professional development include

associations such as the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education, Mass Mentoring Partnership, National Association for Social Workers, Massachusetts's Coalition of Single Point of Contact Professionals, and National Partner for Educational Access.

The length of service of the department members demonstrates commitment to BFIT's mission, with half of the staff having worked at BFIT for over five years, four of those over ten years, with one over twenty, and one with over thirty years of service to the college. To aid retention, graduation, career placement, and personal and professional growth, the student services team works collaboratively at various weekly team meetings and through robust use of MS Teams to stay in touch throughout the day. To effectively provide a network of student support, the team meets regularly to discuss student progress, plan programming, share best practices, and support one another's work

To provide more continuity in advising, Student Services eliminated advising roles for faculty and staff in summer 2020 and embedded this function solely in its department. Through additional restructuring, Career Services shifted from a standalone department to merging with the Department of Student Services. Currently, Success Coaches advise all students both academically and in their career preparation and job placement pursuits. The coach who onboards a student will remain their advisor throughout their academic career, thus developing a rapport and providing accessibility to career services resources from the onset of enrollment. The reorganization also brought the Department of Library Services, now named the Division of Information Literacy, into the Department of Student Services.

Student Conduct, Emergency Management, Commuter Services, Title IX, and Student Life and Engagement all fall under the umbrella of Student Life. The [Student Handbook](#), available on the BFIT Website as well as the [Course Catalog](#) outline all academic and campus policies and procedures, including the [BFIT Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) (Title IX), [FERPA](#), [Equal Opportunity](#), [Academic Honesty](#), and [Student Code of Conduct](#). The Assistant Dean of Student Life oversees student conduct and emergency management, and employs the RAVE emergency notification system for weather alerts, etc. In August 2019, in collaboration with the Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Student Life assisted in the creation of a Return to Campus Covid-19 Safety Guide training for faculty, staff, and students.

[Leadership and Involvement opportunities](#) for students include AmeriCorps Ambassador Peer Mentoring, Franklin Honor Society, Student Veteran's Association, and the Orientation Leader Program. These organizations focus on students' personal growth and are designed to promote leadership and socialization skills. The Franklin Honor Society (FHS) continues to be a leader of service to the BFIT and the local Boston communities. Prior to COVID-19, the FHS had been involved with Citizen's Schools, the South End Neighborhood Association, and Bikes Not Bombs, as local ways of connecting BFIT students to service and volunteerism. During COVID-19, the FHS continued to offer service-related involvement by partnering with the Student Wellness and Support Office in programming for the BFIT food pantry, as well as exploring online service opportunities, such as "Be My Eyes" an application for visually impaired persons seeking help over the phone with quick tasks.

Students are made aware of programming and student services through the onboarding process where they meet with a Success Coach, who are assigned to designated majors. The onboarding work with students begins with a warm handoff from Admissions. Students are then welcomed by their Success Coach to a “Getting Acclimated to BFIT” one-on-one onboarding session. Coaches review academic curriculum and assist students in course registration. A 45–60-minute intake survey is administered, and services such as disability support services, the wellness office, peer mentoring, and career services are all introduced at this time. Students are familiarized with the technical platforms they will need to be able to navigate (Canvas, Student Portal, O365). Once onboard, students can participate in Meet Your Major sessions and new student orientation, which include additional information about services available to help them be successful academically, professionally, and personally. Some offices, including the Office of Wellness Support, Division of Information Literacy, and Division of Learning also visit student classrooms, online or in-person, to introduce their services to students. (See Standard 8 for more information about co-curricular support.)

Given that students enroll at BFIT with a goal of gaining the skills needed to pursue a sustaining career in technology, emphasis is placed on career-readiness in student services. Through Career Services, Success Coaches work with students, recent graduates, and employers to provide the tools necessary for students to start and advance in their careers. All students are given access to the BFIT Career Readiness Resources Canvas page where they can access modules on resume writing, job searches, interviewing, and networking resources. Employer Forums and an annual Career Fair promote awareness about prospective employers and help connect students to industry recruiters seeking to hire BFIT students and future graduates for internship and employment opportunities.

To support students in the new Division of Professional and Continuing Studies, a Success Coach was recently appointed to work 50% of the time with matriculated students and 50% of the time with students entering BFIT through DPCS. This coach also works closely with the Directors of Strategic Partnerships.

The college’s Financial Aid Department provides financial aid awards based on published criteria to ensure the equitable distribution of scholarships and grants to students; the department also meets with students to ensure their understanding of the financial aid process, including information about borrowing, college costs, debt management, and the expectations of loan repayment.

Students are oriented to the Financial Aid process by the Director of Financial Aid as well as an online team of Financial Aid professionals from Financial Aid Solutions that provide guidance on all aspects of the process. Approximately 95% of BFIT students receive financial assistance and 67% receive Pell Grants. The college combines federal, state, and institutional funds to create a financial aid package designed to help students afford a BFIT education. To be considered for financial aid, applicants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as any other necessary forms required by the Department of Education used to determine their eligibility. The Financial Aid Office offers FAFSA workshops which students and parents are encouraged to attend. Once the FAFSA is complete and the student is accepted, the Financial Aid Office reviews the information for accuracy and full completion. If conflicting information appears, the college will request additional documentation for verification. Once the full review has been completed, a financial aid package is created using the Federal Methodology (FM). Based on their eligibility, students can be awarded a combination of the Pell Grant, MA State Scholarship, Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Direct Subsidized and

Unsubsidized loans and one of several BFIT need-based grants. As our financial aid awards are not guaranteed or automatically renewed from one year to the next, all students are encouraged to complete the FAFSA so that their financial aid eligibility can be re-determined. If a student does not want to complete the financial aid process or wants to cancel or reduce any part of their package, they must formally notify the Financial Aid Office in writing. In 2019, the college also began providing Income Sharing Agreements (ISA's) through a partnership with Mentor Works Education Capital to provide an additional form of college financing for some programs in fields with the highest retention, graduation, and job placement rates.

All newly admitted students are required to complete both the Master Promissory Note (MPN) and the Entrance Loan Counseling (ELC) before choosing to borrow Federal loans. Upon exiting the college (graduation or withdrawal), each student is required to complete Exit Loan Counseling so that they are aware of all obligations tied to their borrowed funds.

Opportunities for co-curricular activities are coordinated through the Office of Student Life in collaboration with relevant offices or academic programs. Women in Technology, Students Veteran's Association, Campus Activities Board, Orientation Leaders, Franklin Honor Society, BFIT Ambassador Peer Mentoring, and the IEEE Student Branch are some of the ways students can get involved with the community and gain leadership skills. As a career college, leadership skills are important to student success; thus, the Lead Success Coach position has become the Associate Director of Student Success and Leadership, who, while continuing to serve as a Success Coach, will implement and oversee student leadership opportunities including a Student Advocacy Group, which aims to prepare students for advocacy work on Beacon Hill.

As noted in Standard 8 and throughout this chapter, the Department of Student Services uses several methods to assess student support and co-curricular activities. In addition to direct student feedback, weekly meetings to review data, and employment and student services surveys, the department also holds a retreat each summer to review and refine processes and programming and set goals for the coming academic year.

Appraisal

Admissions

The Admissions Office is the first line of contact for potential students. To create a coordinated experience for students, the Admissions, Financial Aid, and Student Accounts offices are co-located in the same suite of offices. There is also close coordination with the Registrar's office located one floor above. Students visiting campus can complete all necessary paperwork and ask questions about enrollment without having to visit different areas on campus. During COVID-19, the financial services and admissions teams have met regularly to ensure a seamless process for students. The teams also established regular joint Zoom counseling sessions, during which students can ask questions about admissions or financial aid. The BFIT community strives to foster an environment that allows easy access to the resources available to help students during their educational journey.

The Admissions office has improved and continues to refine its approach to targeted marketing to prospective students. New student enrollment declined by more than 30% in fall 2020, due to the general negative impact of COVID-19—especially on low-income, male students of color—and the college’s summer 2020 restructuring plan (which suspended seven of the 14 associate degree programs). This percentage comprises a decline in new first-year enrollees from 211 to 138 students and a drop in enrolled transfer students from 93 to 50. The college’s total degree-seeking student enrollment for fall 2020 was 402 students, down 20% from the 5-year average of 504 students. The hardest hit programs were Automotive Technology, which saw a 16% decrease in new students from the previous year (from 67 students in 2019 to 42 students in 2020); and Opticianry, which dropped by almost 50% (from 23 students to 12).

However, before COVID-19, the college’s yield rate had been steadily increasing despite a drop in total inbound leads. For the 5-year period ending fall 2019, BFIT saw a 6% increase in the compounded annual growth rate in new students enrolling in the fall, despite an 11% compounded annual decline in total prospects over the same period.

To bolster enrollment in the Automotive programs, the Admissions team is conducting a focused outreach campaign to prospective partners at vocational high schools that teach Automotive to develop pipelines from their programs into ours. For the Opticianry program, the Admissions team, along with the college’s Office of Strategic Partnerships, is reaching out to optical shops and professional associations to strengthen partnerships and create new potential student pipelines. This outreach yielded a new partnership with Warby Parker, through which the company will provide up to \$10,000 in tuition reimbursement to employees who earn a BFIT associate degree in Opticianry, and could serve as a template to grow the program.

The Admissions team is also working closely with our digital marketing team to create digital ads that explicitly target under-enrolled programs. We have also conducted—and will continue to conduct—major-specific information sessions and other recruitment events featuring faculty and alums from key programs.

Because the intensity of studies and pre-requisites at BFIT varies by major and program and because we offer certificates through bachelor's degrees, the level of high school preparation for admission differs accordingly. The specific admissions requirements for all majors are detailed in the annual Course Catalog available on the BFIT website. As part of BFIT’s special focus on enhancing baccalaureate culture (in response to NECHE’s May 6, 2020, letter), the college has established clearer pathways for students to attain their bachelor’s degree. For example, the BS degree in Electrical Engineering, as one of the College’s most academically rigorous programs, requires students to have completed four years of high school math through pre-calculus or statistics with a minimum 2.5 average GPA in math to enter the program directly. However, the college offers developmental math courses and a certificate program that can serve as a pathway to the EE BS program for students who do not initially meet the programs’ admission standard but do exhibit potential and drive. The Automotive program has had a similar Certificate to AS to BS pathway for more than a decade. The same pathway is now available in the college’s restructured Computer Information Technology, Health Information Technology, and Engineering Technology programs. The Admissions team counsels students about these pathway

options before they enroll at BFIT. The team reaches out again—in close partnership with the Student Services team—when enrolled students are close to completing a Certificate or Associate Degree that offers credit toward one of BFIT’s bachelor’s programs.

Over the past year, Admissions has specifically promoted the Electrical Engineering BS program through website and social media news items about the success of our EE students and faculty such as: [BFIT Engineering Student Takes 1st Place in MIT Hackathon](#), [BFIT Students Chosen for NASA Scholars Program](#), and [Professor Shatz Honored by Latino STEM Alliance](#), as well as through online information sessions featuring faculty and students from the program.

The college's enrollment plan calls for an increase in new student enrollment to reach or exceed 310 by 2025. To this end, early work toward this goal includes strengthening relationships with community-based organizations and developing MOUs that will create a pipeline of interested applicants. BFIT now offers major-specific informational sessions, which allow prospective and current applicants an opportunity to dive deeper into their major with their program chair.

A major part of the Admissions team’s ongoing efforts to improve the quality of leads is our contract with the digital marketing agency Overdrive Interactive, which began in July 2020. In partnership with Overdrive, BFIT launched a series of sophisticated and targeted digital marketing campaigns that heightened brand awareness and attracted a much stronger pool of candidates with high interest in BFIT programs. This digital media strategy continues to be refined based on the results of several key performance indicators that are reviewed on a weekly basis.

Student Services and Co-Curricular Experiences

The college offers accessible and effective programming and student services designed to provide opportunities for enrolled students at a variety of learning levels. Student Services resources and support respond to the characteristics and needs of the BFIT student population. For example, the college enrolls a large population of first-generation college students, who might require additional support to navigate the academic path. All matriculated BFIT students work with a Success Coach from the Student Services department. Student Services provides a cohort based academic advising model via Success Coaches, each of whom oversee one to three academic program cohorts. Three additional members of Student Services-- the Director of Learning, the Assistant Dean of Student Life, and the Dean of Students—also serve as advisors. Each coach works with students within specific academic programs or tracks. This cohort model was initiated in 2014 and allows the coach to develop a deeper understanding of program requirements and work with specific faculty. This high-touch model allows coaches to not only be academic advisors, but also provide support to students throughout their time at BFIT-- to encourage, to help get back on track, and to recommend resources.

Supporting baccalaureate students was noted as an Area of Special Emphasis in the May 6, 2020, letter from NECHE, and Student Services continues to work diligently on improving enrollment and retention in its BS programs. Students in BFIT’s baccalaureate programs also receive advising through a Success Coach designated by major. These coaches understand the expectations of these programs and work closely with the department chairs and the students on their transition to upper-level coursework and career readiness needs. The coaches for these programs are experienced advisors, being the Dean

of Students, the Associate Director of Student Success and Leadership, and the Director of Career Services.

As indicated, BFIT has a long history of supporting first generation, racially diverse, and low-income students from Boston and the surrounding neighborhoods. The goals of the Office of Student Wellness and Support, established in 2013-14, directly correlate with the needs of BFIT students, by providing counseling services and assisting students with off-campus issues that could inhibit academic success, such as food and housing insecurity, financial vulnerability, stress, and personal challenges. Food insecurity initiatives were expanded in 2018 when BFIT began to partner with a local restaurant to offer three lunches weekly to select students. This program, funded by private donations, has served 97 students to date. Participation in the program not only provides meals; students are also required to meet with financial and career advisers throughout their time in the program. Since its inception, the programming and services provided by the Office continue to grow. Beginning in April 2020, BFIT has received four CARES Act tranches, with two designated for student emergency funds. A substantial focus of the Wellness Office this past year was on evaluating need, creating processes, and dispersing these funds.

Based on both quantitative and qualitative data, gathered through surveys and one-on-one discussions with students, the Office of Student Wellness makes a substantial impact in the lives and academic success of BFIT's students. Of note are the Emergency Fund, the Food Pantry, and the Emergency MBTA program. While Wellness Office tracking and data analysis are in their initial stages, it is estimated that supporting students with the challenges they face outside the classroom has a clear influence on retention. Wellness Office retention data indicates in FA19, there was a 73% semester-to-semester retention rate for students who utilized any services in the Wellness Office. In the spring and fall 2020 semesters students who received emergency funding through the Wellness Office had a semester-to-semester rate of 94%. Further analysis of the Wellness Office service utilization is planned for FA21-SP22. In Summer 2021, the Director of Student Wellness became certified as a Financial Social Worker and will combine traditional social work methods with money management skills and asset building knowledge, to support students as they work towards financial health. This approach helps students develop sustainable, long-term, financial facility, and furthers BFIT's financial literacy efforts.

Student Services continues to be nimble and goal oriented, striving to provide quality support services that lead to student success in the classroom and beyond. Immediately following the abrupt pivot to online learning in March 2020, Student Services deployed a survey to assess students' preparedness to work remotely; most pointedly, did students have the technology needed to work from home? Based on the responses, the college was able to quickly garner financial support to supply students in need with Chromebooks and wi-fi service, much of which was organized through the Wellness Office and with the outreach and support of Success Coaches and faculty.

For fall 2020, 108 of 188 incoming students (57%) and for spring 2021, 35 of 84 incoming students (42%), were coded as having gone through the onboarding process. Student Services has recently developed systems for tracking Success Coach student touchpoints. This data system will inform

benchmarks (80% of incoming students participating in full onboarding for fall 2021) and analysis. For example, is there:

- An increase in retention rate of students who have gone through the full onboarding process versus those who did not?
- An increase in early uptake of student support from the offices of Learning, Wellness, and Career Services?
- A reduction in student “holds” within the first month of enrollment?

In fall 2020, absent the ability to meet on-campus for new student orientation, an online orientation session was created and introduced via Canvas. Of the 120 students who participated in the online orientation, 89 students (47%) were interactive with the modules, and 60 students (32%) were strongly interactive. The department assessed which elements of the orientation to retain online (student success, academic support, career readiness, online library, wellness, and financial aid) and which to return to in-person formats, to further enhance student engagement. One principal element of orientation is an introduction to the BFIT staff who will remain the students’ support network throughout their time at BFIT. Through a 15-minute introductory video, students meet the team that will guide them through their academic careers and on to their professions. Elements of the online orientation will remain on Canvas so that the students who attend in person can reference the many resources detailed therein, and so those who do not attend in person can still participate. This also provides an important opportunity for BFIT students to become familiar with Canvas before the start of classes. Assessment is needed to evaluate the effects of onboarding and orientation on student retention.

Approximately 30% of students enroll at BFIT needing development coursework. The Office of Student Learning coordinates disability support services, the Office of Information Literacy coordinates programming for student acquisition of information literacy skills and use of library resources. Together, these offices coordinate the Academic Success Center (ASC) for online and in-person tutoring. Since moving to online instruction and support, the ASC has averaged 175 participants a month, with the lowest participation being in June 2020-- 18 students-- and the two highest being March 2020 and October 2020 at 343 and 344 participants, respectively. While these numbers do not clearly reflect the total number of students who received tutoring in a given month, it does indicate the amount of traffic to the ASC page. The highest number of participations occurred immediately after the college went online. This is most likely the result of students familiarizing themselves with the newly available online tools. Also, March and October coincide with midterm coursework and exams. In summer 2021, the college partnered with TutorMe, a 24/7 online tutoring platform, and now offers that service along with its in-house tutoring from BFIT faculty. Success Coaches know from personal observation that students who frequently take advantage the ASC’s offerings are more likely to succeed at BFIT; however, more data analysis is needed to quantify this correlation.

Students with disabilities who may desire accommodation connect with the Director of Learning in several ways. During the intake process with a Success Coach, students are asked a series of questions that allow them to disclose a disability and describe accommodations they may have had in the past.

The Director of Learning reviews these surveys prior to each semester and reaches out to students via email and/or phone to introduce available services, and to invite students to make an appointment. In some cases, a student discloses a disability to an Admissions Counselor who will refer the student to the Director of Learning. At any time throughout the year, success coaches and faculty may also refer students with disabilities to the Director of Learning. Students utilizing these support services are tracked confidentially. The most frequently requested accommodation is Extra Time on Tests, roughly 45% of total requests, while the requests to Record Lecture and/or for a Notetaker make up 27% of accommodation requests. Other accommodation requests include: separate distraction-free test site; digital versions of written materials (texts, handouts, tests & quizzes) for use with a screen reader; and extra time for in-class work.

While it can be difficult to encourage student engagement and involvement at a commuter college, Student Services continues to offer online programming via a weekly newsletter highlighting cultural themes, notes on programming in and around Boston, introductions of faculty and staff, discussions of black history and culture through music, film, television, and small businesses, and other topics. In spring 2021, social media engagement highlighted Black History Month, Women in Technology during Women's History Month, and provided stress management tips in April during Stress-Free Month. Student Services also sees online engagement as providing a wider reach to those students who might not have been engaged previously. Data from Constant Contact shows that an above average amount of 45-50% of newsletter emails were opened and of that number, about 30-35% had interactive engagement. As part of the annual staff retreat, Student Services outlined the "ideal path" of a BFIT student. The staff note that involvement and participating in leadership opportunities correlate to student success. Tracking of much of student activities is done through the CAMS SIS, but further analysis is needed to quantify the benefits of student engagement.

The availability of BFIT Fast Facts data and the use of Veera Bridge from 2016-2020 reflect how the college's collection and dissemination of data has vastly improved since the creation of the Director of Institutional Reporting position. Student Services bases student outreach methodology on data pertaining to attendance, registration, grades, holds, early alerts, withdrawal, graduation, and employment placement data. For example, a daily Ready to Register dashboard in Veera Bridge allows Success Coaches to track the number of their incoming students by whether they have been registered and have gone through the onboarding process. Success Coaches review the dashboards as part of their daily outreach work; data from these dashboards are also reviewed by Student Services and Admissions in weekly meetings to strategize student outreach and adjust admissions statuses as needed. Student Services also examines data trends from the past ten years, such as student demographics, enrollment numbers, and financial aid status. The work of evaluating these trends is ongoing, as are reviews of student retention and graduation rates by academic program, which can be used to identify areas that would benefit from targeted support. The Director of Information Literacy developed a student services survey, first administered following the 2020-21 academic year, that demonstrated satisfaction with student support. Other areas of focus include:

- Increased emphasis on academic program review;
- Development of a predictive enrollment model by the CFO;

- Data analytics partnership with the newly contracted Project Evident team. The goal is for Student Services to use data to further systematize, and in some cases automate, student support and outreach based on student need at the onset.

The college has made significant improvement to the financial aid process, as evidenced by increasingly fewer findings on DOE audits of Financial Aid practices, culminating with an FY 2020 audit that had no findings. Improvements to the process include working with a third-party financial aid service provider to assist the Director in guiding students through the financial aid process, from the application for admission through completing the FAFSA, and including Entrance and Exit Counseling. Additionally, the institution has made significant upgrades to its financial aid system, including a migration to The College Board’s PowerFAIDS platform.

In August 2021 BFIT participated in a Virtual Title IV Technical Assistance workshop under the Minority-Serving and Under-Resourced Schools Division. The three-day workshop included sessions on Satisfactory Academic Progress, Consumer Information, Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Default Rate, and a general Financial Aid policies and procedures review. The Director of Financial Aid, as well as college deans, the CFO, and President/CEO were in attendance, demonstrating a college-wide commitment to implementing best practices in administering federal financial aid.

Continuing to achieve the college’s goal to reduce the student default rate, as noted in the February 15, 2017, letter from NECHE, the institution will continue to refine the financial aid process and its goals for reducing default rate by educating students on the importance of fiscal responsibility as part of the overall education of the financial process. Progress has been made in that regard, evidenced by a decline in the default rate from 18.5% in 2015 to 17% in 2017.

Projections

Responsibility	Projection Detail	Estimated Completion
Admissions	Growth in enrollment in all existing programs that reflects increased capacity in the new Nubian Square campus, with total enrollment rising to approximately 600 students.	FY 2026
	Working closely with the Student Success team to continue to improve processes affecting retention after students enroll.	Ongoing
Financial Aid	A 2% decline in the overall default rate	8/30/2023
	Full implementation of the Net Partner and IDOC capabilities in Powerfaids.	8/1/2022

	Continuous partnership between Student Success Team and Financial Aid in providing overlapping support services to students to continue the positive results of the decreased holds in 2020-2021.	Academic Year 2021-22 and ongoing
Student Success/Academic Advising	Systematize data collection and analysis to assess early alert risk factors and the ideal student path to guide student support initiatives Integrate DPCS support services into the office of Student Services.	By June 2022. In Process with Project Evident. By December 2021
Student Wellness and Support	Further marketing efforts and creative programming to allow for a greater number of students to benefit from the resources the Wellness Office has to offer. Increase student engagement to 10% with assistance of AmeriCorps VISTA.	By June 2022. In process with the addition of some contract support from a Government Affairs specialist to coach staff in this area.
Student Life	Increase student engagement in leadership, service, DEI, and mentoring opportunities by 10%. Create Student Advocacy Group. Integrate AmeriCorps VISTA and Ambassador volunteers to supplement the work of student success.	By July 2022
Career Services	85% student engagement with Handshake. 200 employers engaged with Handshake. 75% student engagement with career opportunity programming—Career Fair and Employer Forums.	By spring 2022 By spring 2023

Standard Six: Teaching, Learning and Scholarship

Description

Faculty and Academic Staff

The 31 full time and 31 adjunct faculty of Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) possess a broad range of industrial, technological, and educational experience and knowledge relevant to their academic programs. Faculty hold: 11 doctorate, 24 masters, and 2 bachelor's degrees. Seventy percent of full-time faculty members have taught at BFIT for at least five years, and this longevity is an asset to the college. Especially at an institution without a tenure program, institutional knowledge gained through faculty retention is invaluable. This stability and dedication provide a strong and consistent network of learning and support to accomplish BFIT's mission. BFIT is committed to equal opportunity and affirmative action in all personnel policies and practices, including recruitment, application for employment, hiring, promotion, compensation, and all conditions of employment at the college, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. BFIT encompasses a diverse faculty. In spring 2021, 23% of BFIT's faculty were female, including faculty in Computer Technology, Construction Management, Practical Electricity, Electrical Engineering, and General Education. The ethnic backgrounds of faculty include 9 Asian, 6 Black or African American, 1 Hispanic/Latino, 50 White.

Faculty ranks include Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor. In spring 2021 six faculty held the rank of professor, six the rank of associate professor, six the rank of assistant professor, and three the rank of instructor. Additionally, 41 faculty were employed at BFIT with the titles of lab assistant, teacher, and lecturer. Expectations for each rank and requirements for promotion are available in the Employee Handbook. Within each rank exists preferred qualifications that include alternate criteria for faculty with industrial experience. This approach allows BFIT to hire outstanding professionals within their technical fields who may not have a teaching background. Department directors and program chairs work closely with faculty to provide direction in understanding the best teaching methodologies to meet the learning styles of BFIT's diverse student population and to facilitate alignment with the college's mission and purpose. In most cases, new full-time faculty members are hired at the rank of Instructor, unless they arrive with a higher rank from another institution, or the Academic Dean determines that a higher rank should be assigned based on an applicant's educational or industrial experience.

Adjunct faculty members are hired as Lecturers and receive letters of appointment each semester specifying the terms and duration of employment. Hiring of adjunct faculty is based on an individual department's enrollment. Adjuncts are added to staff courses available after full-time faculty reach their workload and to add expertise in specialized areas. Faculty vacancies are filled when a need is determined, and the process is outlined in the employee handbook, along with a detailed description of the criteria, guidelines, and process for each step of faculty rank. Candidates for promotion to the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor can be advanced by the Academic Dean when the Faculty Development Committee (FDC) concludes that the candidates demonstrate outstanding performance and commitment to teaching, contributions to the BFIT community, and professional development.

Appraisal

Faculty and Academic Staff

In FY 2018, 2019, and 2020, full-time faculty remained consistent with an average of 42 during those academic years. The reduction in force explained in Preface and Standard Four reduced the full-time faculty number to 31. The number of adjunct faculty was trending upward from 31 to 41 from FY 2018 through FY 2020 but decreased to 31 in FY 2021. This shift was due to lower enrollment amid the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the strategies of restructuring has been to shift the percentage of adjunct faculty higher so that BFIT can focus on adding staff who are professionals working in their field. The number of full-time faculty with doctorate degrees has remained consistent with a four-year average of 10 faculty holding a PhD as a terminal degree. Slightly more than 80 percent of full-time and adjunct faculty members possess bachelors or more advanced degrees. Many faculty members also possess professional licenses or certificates of proficiency in their specialized disciplines.

The Faculty Development Committee (FDC), which hosts a Canvas-based FDC hub, offers professional development workshops that provide faculty with opportunities to skill up with workshops on effective uses for Dropout Detective, Canvas, and Zoom. Recognizing that faculty have not always had a formal orientation program similar to that of staff, beginning in January 2020, new faculty are integrated into their departments and/or division and the college through an orientation process. Faculty are kept in the loop on college initiatives during monthly faculty meetings and all-college kick-off meetings at the beginning of each semester, and last year, mid-semester town hall style meetings were added as well to ramp up cross-campus communication.

BFIT is fortunate to have approximately 45 percent of dedicated adjunct faculty participate in additional campus activities including tutoring, committee work, and volunteering for student events. Their involvement allows full-time faculty to prioritize program planning and development alongside the Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment. Adjunct faculty, as stated in the Employee Handbook, is invited to attend meetings, events, and professional development opportunities sponsored by the college, although it is not mandatory.

As part of the internal and external research conducted in support of strategic planning in academic year 2014-2015, the college identified that faculty salaries were low in comparison with peer two-year institutions. BFIT set a goal of increasing faculty salaries in its strategic plan adopted in June 2015. Specifically, the plan included a goal to raise the average salary for full time faculty from \$52,700 in FY 2016 to \$61,500 in FY 2020. As recorded in annual agreements with each full-time faculty member, the average annual pay for full-time faculty in FY 2020 was \$61,515. Payroll records indicate that actual pay to each full-time faculty member, including summer pay and overload, averaged \$70,200 by the 2019 calendar year; thus, the strategic goal for raising salaries of full-time faculty was met. Full-time faculty members receive an employment agreement annually stating their academic title, the terms of appointment, and annual salary payable over a twelve-month period. As described in the Employee Handbook, there is a probationary period for new faculty members of one year. Subsequent reappointment of faculty comes in the form of a one-year employment agreement issued annually, typically in May.

As a result of the restructuring in May 2020, 13 faculty positions were eliminated including one librarian. In addition, 2 programs and departments were consolidated, and 5 programs suspended enrollment (Electrical Technology, Biomedical Engineering Technology, Electronics Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology and Technology Business & Management). The college library was

eliminated as an academic department and merged with the Department of Student Services Division of Learning, with the Director of Library Services becoming the Director of Information Literacy and responsible for overseeing online library services, including collection oversight and reference services.

Honesty in all academic work is expected from every student. Faculty and the administration have clearly defined roles in responding to potential academic dishonesty. The academic honesty policy is on the college's website and in the Course Catalog, the Student Handbook, and on course syllabi. The policy is discussed with all incoming students during new student orientation. Faculty members are responsible for identifying suspected breaches of academic honesty and reporting the possible violation to the Assistant Dean of Student Life. The Assistant Dean conducts an investigation that can include administrators, other faculty, and students. Following discussion with all parties involved, the Assistant Dean decides if the student is responsible for a lapse in academic honesty. Documentation of all alleged student violations, proceedings, and any resulting sanctions are kept on file in the office of Student Life. A survey of full-time faculty and adjuncts, and a survey of program directors and department chairs, conducted in spring 2021 revealed that additional training is required to keep the process consistent and to provide faculty, particularly adjunct faculty, with an understanding of the college's policy on academic honesty.

Description

Teaching and Learning

Although faculty has several important responsibilities, the primary role is classroom teaching. In pursuit of effective teaching, faculty takes part in workshops and forums that deal with a broad spectrum of teaching methods and modalities of learning. For example, beginning in April 2021, several workshops were offered on Teaching the Teacher: Creating interactive lectures remotely, managing absent students during COVID-19 times, creating positive learning environments, and teaching in 2021 using innovative technology to one's advantage. A series of cultural pedagogy training sessions began in spring 2021.

Appraisal

Teaching and Learning

The mission and values of the college are reflected in the curriculum. Course content and learning outcomes are created collaboratively and approved by the division director and program chair in consultation with an industrial advisory board as appropriate. Differences in assessment techniques and teaching methodologies between sections of the same course can exist, provided they are approved by the division director or program chair.

In January 2021, the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Director of HR updated the faculty evaluation process, which occurs at multiple levels at BFIT. The Academic Dean annually evaluates each department director and addresses strengths and areas for improvement. In turn, each department director annually evaluates the Academic Dean and addresses strengths and areas for improvement. At the end of each academic year, faculty members complete their own reflective evaluation report based on the three principal areas of faculty involvement: teaching, professional development, and contribution to the college as outlined on the Faculty Self-Evaluation form. The department director evaluates each full-time and adjunct faculty based on the Faculty Self-Evaluation form, classroom observations, and student evaluations. In addition, each faculty member's goals going forward are

discussed, as well as the achievement of the faculty member's goals from the previous year. The department director's reports are shared with individual faculty before they are submitted to the Academic Dean.

Students participate unevenly in the evaluation of all full-time and adjunct faculty and courses at the end of each semester—typically during the last week of class—and the number of students completing their surveys is much lower than ideal. The rate of student participation in course evaluation decreased from approximately 40% to 28% for fall 2020. The FAAC is working to improve the content of the evaluation as well as implement additional means by which to ensure student participation. Each student completes an anonymous on-line instructor and course evaluation form for each course in which they are enrolled; however, the course evaluation is not required. The student evaluations are then made available to the Academic Dean. The Office of Academic Affairs transmits the appropriate student evaluations to the specific department directors after all semester grades have been posted. The department director distributes evaluations to faculty members and, in accordance with the updated faculty evaluation process, the results of the evaluations are discussed during each faculty member's performance evaluation. All these processes were strengthened in the academic year 2020-2021. Course evaluations have undergone substantial changes over the past four years, particularly regarding the tool through which they are distributed and the ability to share and use results.

In addition to teaching and curricular duties, additional expectations of full-time faculty include contributions to the college community. Faculty is encouraged to join a campus-wide committee like FAAC, FDC, the College Senate or ITAC, to lead a student committee, or to tutor in the Academic Success Center. Participation in diverse training made available to or sought out by faculty also serves to demonstrate a commitment to one's professional development.

The Faculty Development Committee (FDC) serves the BFIT community by providing means to allow faculty to become better teachers. In March 2020, the college needed to quickly change how we deliver instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This required significant training for faculty on how to deliver their classes remotely. The Faculty Development Committee together with the Director of Information Literacy created weekly training sessions on how to use Canvas, Dropout Detective, and Zoom workshops to ensure faculty had the tools they needed to teach remotely. BFIT recently invested in a new platform called Instructor Insight that allows the CITTLE team (Collaboration for Instructional Technology Teaching and Learning Effectiveness) to work together and monitor faculty usage in Canvas and on Dropout Detective. Faculty not using Canvas effectively are recommended to seek training from the Canvas Specialist. In August 2021 CITTLE designed and ran an orientation program for new and returning faculty, and produced a Canvas-based course on the use of Canvas and online teaching.

Though BFIT is not a research institution, faculty members are encouraged to pursue scholarship that helps them stay current in the theory, knowledge, skills, and pedagogy of their discipline or profession. BFIT faculty members have both attended and presented at regional and professional conferences, including: Conference on Health IT and Analytics (CHITA); e-Health Conference and Tradeshow; robotics workshops; New England Faculty Development Consortium; Cassola Conference on the Teaching of Communications; Connecticut Association of Educational Opportunity Programs; and the National Federation of Opticianry Schools (NFOS) conference. Faculty members have used what they learned to improve curricula, launch new courses, enhance teaching, and enlighten the broader college community. Resulting changes have included the redesign of the Electronics Engineering

Technology program to focus on mechatronics, the creation of a license exam prep course for optical students, and a college-wide forum sharing the techniques of trauma informed pedagogy. While the faculty focus is on teaching and service, BFIT’s industrious faculty members somehow find a way to produce scholarship. Recently, a faculty member from the Health Information Technology program published an article on the impact of Electronic Health Records that appeared in a peer-reviewed journal. Another faculty member in Computer Technology has published peer reviewed articles over the past few years on Demodulation of Faded Wireless Signals using Deep Convolutional Neural Networks and Energy Consumption and the Throughput-Efficiency of TCP in Adhoc Networks.

Projections

RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECT DETAILS	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
Department of Academic Affairs	Hiring faculty with experience in multiple disciplines will be beneficial to the college as we grow new programs; Hiring additional adjuncts who can be promoted to full time status once enrollment requires additional faculty	Present through 2025
Department of Academic Affairs	Address challenges with faculty satisfaction beyond competitive compensation and parity. Analyze recent campus climate survey for approaches to ensuring faculty satisfaction.	Ongoing
Dean of Academic Affairs	Finalize updated template for the faculty agreements which are currently under review. There is recognition that our standardized contract template needs further adjustments across the faculty ranks for them to be uniform.	By the end of FY 2022

Standard Seven – Institutional Resources

Description

Human Resources

In early 2020, BFIT outsourced its Human Resources department to better fulfill its mission and to ensure best practices and timely compliance with all regulatory and legal requirements. The Vieras, an outsourced professional services firm, oversees all Human Resources activities including employee recruitment, on-boarding, policy review and implementation, benefit plans administration, and supervisor training.

Working with The Vieras, with input from the college's Deans and department heads, BFIT reviews staffing requirements to ensure the college has sufficient resources to deliver a quality education and that all staff are adequately supported. In addition, the Vieras ensures that all employees are aware of the college's employment policies. The Vieras worked with the CEO and CFO to develop a new format for annual performance reviews and provides guidance and structure on the process of performing reviews throughout the institution. Reviews are conducted directly between employees and their supervisors throughout the organization.

Appraisal

Human Resources

With the reorganization, the college has moved forward with standardizing policy and procedures across departments. There is a formal process in place to review policies to ensure that they are up to date and in compliance with changes in federal and state laws and meet the needs of the employees.

During FY 2021 the college began bidding out payroll processing services. Many processes of hiring and on-boarding new employees and processing terminations were completed manually, and the goal was to identify a provider that would allow the college to automate many human resource and payroll functions with a single source of data entry. It was also hoped that benefits management could be integrated into the payroll systems. A new vendor was identified in June of 2021 and the migration to the new vendor is underway. The new system is scheduled to come online effective October 1, 2021. This system will include self-serve time and attendance and will improve the entering and approval of time for all employees. Subsequently, the college is moving all employees to a bi-weekly pay period to replace the two-tiered system in place today whereby some employees are paid weekly.

The CFO, working with the Dean of Academic Affairs, has begun the review of faculty compensation and contracts for parity and uniformity across titles and types of roles. The goal is to standardize the definition of full-time faculty and the requirements across all departments. This ongoing work also includes a review of the salary structure and pay scale for all full-time faculty.

While the college's student population is extremely diverse, the demographics of the staff is less so and does not yet reflect that of the student body. In July 2020, the Board approved a DEI resolution and appointed a task force comprised of Board members, staff, faculty, and students, to develop recommendations for putting the resolution into action. In June 2021, the task force issued its report and recommendations for implementing the college's DEI agenda. At its annual meeting in June 2021, the Board elected a new slate of directors, creating a board that is now majority minority, and

appointed a female president of color as its new President and CEO. Over the next 12 months, the college will work to develop an integrated strategy to recruit and retain a diverse staff.

Description

Financial Resources

In response to continuing financial challenges, the college has made considerable progress in managing and structuring its operations and financial resources to ensure the college is able to carry out its mission over the long term. Despite stable enrollment, over the last five years, BFIT has faced increasingly difficult financial circumstances due largely to increasing expenses while revenue has remained flat. For the five-year period from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2020, BFIT’s net revenue declined by 0.1%, while operating expenses increased at a cumulative average growth rate of over 12% (totaling over \$4.5 million). The following table summarizes the college’s financial results and Net Assets over the last five fiscal years (\$000’s):

Fiscal Year	Net Assets	Endowment Value	Outstanding Debt
2016	\$ 3,824	\$ 4,152	\$ 3,005
2017	\$ 3,929	\$ 3,509	\$ 2,993
2018	\$ 4,038	\$ 2,343	\$ 2,895
2019	\$ 803	\$ 131	\$ 4,283
2020 ⁽¹⁾	\$ 5,945	\$ 275	\$ 5,235

⁽¹⁾ Net Asset change reflect recharacterization of real estate deposit as described below

Over the last five years, BFIT had negative operating cash flow of over \$10 million. These cash losses were funded by a variety of one-time sources of capital, including liquidating the endowment (as approved by the Massachusetts Attorney General in October 2017), the sale of the campus real estate, and continuing draws on the college’s line of credit.

The most significant change to the college’s Net Assets occurred in FY 2020 with the re-characterization of the \$10 million deposit received as part of the real estate sale in November 2019. Per the terms of the sale, the deposit was refundable to the buyer in the event certain closing conditions were not met. As a result, the deposit was previously classified as Deferred Revenue and was included as a liability on BFIT’s balance sheet. Based on the completion of the various closing conditions, the deposit was determined to be non-refundable and was reclassified as Other Revenue during fiscal 2020, increasing the change in Net Assets and the Net Asset account.

To position the college for long-term sustainability and enable the institution to carry out its mission, the Board of Trustees (“BOT”) and BFIT leadership have taken proactive actions including:

- Beginning in 2019, the BOT initiated a significant management restructuring plan to place increased accountability on the day-to-day operations and finances of BFIT. Changes to management included hiring a new Chief Financial Officer with extensive corporate turnaround

and financial management experience. The BOT also created a new Chief Executive Officer position, responsible for the day-to-day management of the college and appointed Dr. Aisha Francis, BFIT's former Chief of Staff to the CEO position. Dr. Francis and the CFO have brought clarity and accountability to the college's finances while overseeing a major restructuring of BFIT's operations, as further set forth below. In June 2021, Dr. Francis was appointed President of BFIT.

- In November 2019, BFIT executed an agreement to sell its campus for \$66 million and structured the sale in two stages. The first stage of the sale provided a \$10 million deposit (non-refundable, except under a narrow range of unlikely circumstances), with the balance to be received upon completion of final permitting by the purchaser, Related Beal. Related Beal has moved aggressively toward a final closing, including completing environmental diligence and filing its Letter of Intent with the Boston Property Development Association on July 13, 2020. The closing process, however, was delayed by several months during the permitting and review process when the City of Boston municipal offices were closed due to the pandemic. The process was further delayed when the Mayor of Boston accepted a position in the Biden administration which led to staff changes at the city's planning and development department. Related Beal and BFIT management are working closely with community groups and key governmental stakeholders to move the project forward, and it is estimated the final sale will close toward the end of December 2021.
- In May 2020, the BOT approved a restructuring of BFIT's operations which included a reduction of approximately 20% of staff and the realignment of several programs. As part of the restructuring, the college implemented annual expense savings of more than \$2 million and introduced new Certificate programs to drive enrollment. Each of these new programs are "stackable" into existing degree programs and were designed to provide shorter on-ramps into BFIT programs for new audiences who have determined that shorter-term college credit bearing programs are more accessible for their needs. These Certificate programs have subsequently been approved by the Department of Education to receive federal financial aid and are currently accepting applicants.
- BFIT established a \$10 million line of credit, with Brookline Bank in 2019, which is secured by the college's underlying real estate. In December 2020, BFIT received a commitment to expand this credit facility to \$15 million. The additional credit is supported by the equity value in the underlying real estate assets that are currently under contract to be sold. The incremental borrowing capacity will provide BFIT with sufficient liquidity to continue as a going concern and to deliver on its mission, through the end of fiscal 2022 in the unlikely event the real estate transaction is delayed.

Financial Management

After starting in February 2020, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) began a process of improving the college's financial management practices, focusing on both short-term liquidity and longer-term financial planning. The CFO also re-implemented a "bottoms up" budgeting process that solicited input from a broad section of the institution's faculty and staff. The budgeting process for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, involved initial meetings with the college deans, senior staff, and academic department chairs. Department chairs worked with the Dean of Academic Affairs in preparing individual programmatic budgets while the remaining deans and directors worked directly with the CFO and Controller. As part of the ongoing budgeting process, participants are expected to submit budget requests for personnel,

operating expenses, and capital expenditures for their departments. Once all preliminary budget requests are submitted and reviewed by the CFO, a department-by-department meeting is conducted to review each budget for final submission. The budget's objective is to accurately forecast expense requirements based on assumed enrollment levels, as well as fundraising activity and revenue from the new Division of Professional and Continuing Studies. The budgeting process implemented during the most recent fiscal year began in late May after the completion of the operational restructuring and, after a series of iterations, was formally approved by the Board of Trustees in early July 2020.

The annual budget is updated monthly to provide a rolling forecast for the fiscal year, based on changes to operating results and circumstances impacting the college's operations. Actual results are also tracked monthly and shared with senior leadership and the Finance Committee. The BOT is informed of actual results and updates to the forecast at quarterly meetings. Particular attention is paid to liquidity and the impact of current year results on multi-year financial forecasts.

The college's approach to multi-year financial planning is focused on maintaining the high-level of educational quality for its students, while also enabling the institution to achieve financial sustainability. Primary drivers of financial sustainability are enrollment, fundraising, and personnel costs. Enrollment forecasts for each upcoming semester rely on a holistic review of the applicant pipeline, reviewing historical student retention averages, and program length. As described more fully below, recently implemented longer-term revenue forecasts conservatively project enrollment levels in line with those achieved prior to the onset of COVID-19. The college also only forecasts modest increases in fundraising and other business development activities.

Both short-term and long-term financial plans are reviewed on a regular basis by the Finance Committee as well as the full BOT. The CFO meets regularly with the Chair of the Finance Committee to review current year performance and updates to longer-term financial planning. The CFO employs an integrated financial model that incorporates expected changes in enrollment, development revenue, and operating expenses. In addition to operating performance, the multi-year forecasting includes projected liquidity and compliance with regulatory requirements (e.g., NECHE Composite Score). Actual results are integrated with the monthly budget for the current fiscal year and are shared on a regular basis with the full BOT.

Substantially all of the institution's operating resources are used directly to support BFIT's educational programs. For the year ending June 30, 2020, over 61% (\$9.9 million) of operating expenses were directly related to the provision of educational programming. Administrative expenses, which represented approximately 36% (\$5.8 million) of total expenses were incurred exclusively to support the educational programs provided by the college. Approximately 3% of expenses were incurred for fundraising activities. All fundraising activities support students through either funded scholarships or funds provided to support education-related operations. The institution has no operations outside of its educational activities and the college's financial results clearly demonstrate that focus.

In addition to the efforts at continuous improvement on internal financial management, BFIT is also committed to providing student financial aid support through the College Board PowerFAIDS financial aid system. The college implemented PowerFAIDS in 2019, and has noted substantive improvements in SFA Audit Results, including an audit that resulted in no findings for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020.

To complement this new system, the college entered into an agreement with FA Solutions in July 2020 to support the overall financial aid process. FA Solutions is a third-party service provider for many colleges

and universities across the country. They provide telephone support to guide students and applicants through the financial aid application process, document collection processes and provide counseling to students to minimize disruption through the process. Since starting with FA Solutions, the entire financial aid process has become more streamlined and has improved the student experience by improving access and response times. Specifically, FA Solutions has:

- Managed all email correspondence and all inbound phone calls, thus adding capacity to improved student access and processing times.
- Executed substantially all outbound email/phone campaigns in the effort to move students through the Financial Aid process to completion.
- Assisted students with completing the FAFSA, verification, Master Promissory Note, Entrance/Exit Loan Counseling sessions.
- Maintained one-on-one counseling in an online environment with students to ensure continued communications with students while offices are closed due to COVID-19.

BFIT's financial aid department continues to be supported by a Director of Financial Aid with over 20 years of experience. As part of her responsibilities, the Director of Financial Aid manages FA Solutions to ensure compliance with the college's policies and procedures. She also plays a vital role in counseling students through the financial aid process, providing direction on how to apply for federal funds and grants, institutional aid, and private funding.

This comprehensive approach of a new system, partnering with FA Solutions and the support provided by the Financial Aid Director is part of an overall improvement plan designed to enhance the student experience and adhere to federal policies and guidelines.

Audit

The Audit Committee is responsible for ensuring that the college's finances are audited in a responsible manner in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards. External auditors perform annual financial statement audits, audit the internal control structure, prepare the annual financial statements, and recommend procedural improvements in a management letter. The Audit Committee reviews both the audited statements and the management letter, and reports to the Board of Directors concerning any issues or exceptions to the management letter.

Financial Resources

As described above, since March 2020 the BOT has worked to ensure that BFIT has adequate financial resources to support its mission and to ensure that incoming students are provided with the opportunity to complete their studies. The biggest contributor to this effort was the decision to monetize the college's underlying real estate, initially through debt financing, followed by the sale of the real estate in November 2019. The resources provided by the credit facility and the sale of real estate have provided (and will continue to provide) sufficient capital to enable the college to continue to fulfil its mission. While the sale of the real estate is in process, the BOT and College leadership have worked to generate additional financial resources to ensure the college can continue to operate and respond to any financial emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. These include the following:

- An expansion of the college's line of credit from \$10 million to \$15 million. The additional debt capacity is backed by the underlying value of the institution's real estate, which is currently under contract. Based on the terms of the sale, BFIT will receive approximately \$56 million upon

the final closing of the real estate. The \$15 million credit facility represents a loan-to-value of only 26.8%, which is well below that maximum typical for most commercial mortgages. In the event additional capital is needed due to a delay in closing, real estate equity would be further accessed through future expansions of the credit facility.

- The institution created the Director of Strategic Partnerships position in December 2019 to provide third-party training to corporations, government programs, and programs sponsored by community-based organizations. These programs typically leverage existing programs offered by the college and are taught, when appropriate, by existing faculty. Since the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies was established, the college's revenue from this effort has consistently grown and is expected to become a meaningful contributor to BFIT's operations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. For the first nine months of FY 2021, these efforts have generated \$1.1 million of revenue and a contribution margin of approximately 70%. This high-margin initiative recently added personnel to both improve execution and to generate training opportunities in additional end markets.
- The college relies on annual fundraising to augment revenue. The Development team, which oversees all fundraising activities, was recently restructured, with a new Chief Advancement Officer joining in April 2021. The Chief Advancement Officer is supported by a three-person team. With a focus on raising financial support for the college, and on building BFIT's network of supporters in the fields of education, business, politics, and philanthropy, the Development team implemented processes and accountability in a variety of areas, including alumni outreach, Foundation/Grant funding, and outreach to individual donors. The Development database of alumni and prospects has more than quadrupled in the past year and a half while the pool of donors is growing (with new and returning donors alike). Development efforts require additional research and outreach efforts to the charitable giving community. BFIT Development staff has implemented goals to arrange initial meetings with key philanthropic leaders to increase awareness of BFIT's work and outcomes, which is expected to lead to increased opportunities to apply for funds in the private and public sectors. Additional outreach efforts are underway to increase solicitation of individual gifts.
- Annual Development efforts are being executed at the same time the college is embarking on a \$30 million Capital Campaign, proceeds from which will be used to help fund the construction of a new campus as well as build an endowment to support student tuition. This will be a four-year campaign and the college has raised \$2.6 million to date not including a recent National Science Foundation grant of \$1.6 million received to expand scholarships for Electrical Engineering students of color. For more information, please see the redacted schedule of campaign dollars raised, the campaign impact statement, and campaign timeline.
- BFIT's administration and Board of Trustees consistently review the college's academic offerings to ensure that the college's commitment to excellence is maintained, and that the institution offers up-to-date programs that reflect changes in technology and the hiring demands of potential employers. During the last year, the BOT approved the addition of several new programs expected to drive incremental enrollment. The college's administration routinely evaluates new programs to supplement existing offerings and works to identify emerging programming opportunities.

Financial and Strategic Planning

Based on the steps taken: monetizing the college's real estate, the operational restructuring, the professionalization of fundraising activities, and the development of high-margin ancillary revenue, the institution is on a path to financial stability. Annual costs savings of over \$2 million, the proceeds from the sale of the real estate, and expected fund raising will enable the college to locate to a new facility, establish an endowment, and reverse its operating losses by over \$3 million annually, without increases in enrollment beyond those achieved in fiscal 2020.

The CFO maintains a long-term forecasting model that incorporates expected changes in enrollment, other revenue categories, and operating expenses. This has become particularly important given the upcoming move to a new location, currently expected to take place before the fall 2023 semester. The model provides a comprehensive roadmap for the college to achieve financial stability and identifies key benchmarks that need to be achieved to reach a point of financial sustainability. The BOT and leadership team at BFIT have dramatically increased the amount of financial planning performed at the college. In addition to the on-going review of financial performance, the BOT has continued to dedicate resources and attention to further improving the operating performance of the college, while also evaluating a range of possibilities to ensure the long-term viability of the institution. The long-range forecasting also includes assumptions related to the timing of the final sale of the real estate, expenses related to the construction of a new facility and the establishment of an endowment.

Financial Projections

Financial projections for the college reflect the outcome of a program-by-program review of enrollment, as well as incorporating the success of the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies along with upgrades to fundraising personnel. It is worth noting that certain programs – Practical Electricity and Electrical Engineering -- experienced enrollment growth in fall 2020 despite the impact of COVID-19. Additionally, the college's HVAC&R program enrollment remained constant in fall 2020, demonstrating the underlying strong demand. Programs discontinued as part of the May 2020 restructuring, accounted for approximately 75% of the year-over-year fall enrollment decline and 88% of the total decline in enrollment. The college's ability to rebuild enrollment relies on continuing strong and growing demand from Practical Electricity and HVAC&R, continued growth in the newly ABET—accredited Electrical Engineering program, and growing demand in newly introduced Certificate concentrations in Computer Technology and Engineering Technology. The college also expects increased enrollment to pre-COVID-19 in Automotive, Opticianry, and Construction Management, as those have high demand. The tuition revenue projections do not include any increases in tuition rates.

Based on a program-by-program review of enrollment trends, total enrollment is forecasted to return to pre-COVID-19 levels over the next three years. Additionally, the enrollment forecast incorporates changes to the student mix, as more students are expected to enroll in shorter-duration Certificate programs relative to prior years.

The Division of Professional and Continuing Studies has performed above initial expectations during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. For the nine months ending March 31, 2021, total revenue from DPCS has exceeded \$1.3 million compared to a budget of under \$700K for the entire fiscal year. BFIT has invested in additional personnel to further grow revenues. The college recently hired a director of the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies to augment existing efforts by focusing on union-affiliated entities, a market that was previously not targeted by the college.

Annual fundraising is expected to increase due to the efforts of the recently hired Chief Development Officer. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, annual development, excluding the impact of legacy Title III funds received to complete an upgrade to information technology infrastructure and Cares Act funds, totaled \$1.8 million. Annual development goals in fiscal 2021 were budgeted at approximately \$3.2 million and are expected to increase 5% to 8% per annum over the next five years, to \$3.97 million by FY 2026. The college's revenue is expected to benefit from the sale of the existing building in two fundamental areas. First, the sale of the existing real estate will enable the college to move to a new, modern campus in Roxbury, scheduled to open prior to the fall semester 2023. The new facility is expected to boost awareness and positively impact enrollment. Further, the move to the new facility will be included in a capital campaign, which targets raising \$30 million. Proceeds from the capital campaign will fund the move to a new campus and establish an endowment, estimated to approach \$35 million by the end of fiscal 2028. Investment income is anticipated to grow as campaign pledges are received and channeled toward the endowment.

Personnel expenses forecast to increase both as a result of inflationary increases (assumed at approximately 2.0%) as well as additions to the faculty as enrollment increases. Other expenses are reviewed on a line-by-line basis and forecast to increase due to changes in enrollment as well as inflationary pressures.

Strategic Planning

Final decisions for BFIT's new campus grew out of several months of strategic planning. From February through October 2020, the BOT engaged in a strategic planning process to identify the optimal operating model for BFIT going forward. This process included input from industry consultants, students, community leaders, faculty, and staff. The planning narrowed the number of operating models BFIT has evaluated for its new campus location. The strategic planning process transitions into a final determination and implementation phase. Factors considered as part of this process have included reducing capital intensity, broadening community-based partnerships to drive enrollment, and expanding BFIT's relationship with corporate partners to increase both development and career placement opportunities for graduates.

To explore and develop contingency plans for the long-term success of the college, the BOT has engaged in discussions with other educational institutions about potential partnerships. This process started early in early 2020 and involved initial discussions with four institutions. Each of these institutions signed a two-way Non-Disclosure Agreement, was provided with access to a data room and was presented an instruction letter asking for clarification of each institution's interest in BFIT, how each institution planned to maintain BFIT's current mission, and initial thoughts on a transaction structure. As has been publicly reported, BFIT engaged in a dialogue with Wentworth Institute of Technology (WIT) about a possible strategic combination. The BOT-led due diligence discussions with WIT were substantive, leading to the development of a preliminary transaction structure. In November 2020, the BOT voted to put merger discussions with WIT on hold in favor of pursuing options for a new location that will include non-merger affiliations with other institutions including WIT. Merger conversations could start again if implementation of the strategic plan falters or other circumstances change. To date, neither of the Board of Trustees at BFIT or Wentworth Institute of Technology has reviewed or considered any final merger proposals.

As part of the BOT's efforts to evaluate go-forward options for the college, the BOT reviewed financial projections incorporating a "teach-out" scenario for existing students. While the BOT decided that pursuing the teach-out path would not be required, the process and steps required to do so have been

preliminarily identified and could be implemented if circumstances change. Actions identified as part of a teach-out scenario include further reductions in personnel as various programs are concluded and reductions in all expenses related to new student recruitment including all Admissions staff, and marketing expenses, and the elimination of all positions associated with various programs as students in those programs graduate.

Strategic planning has included BFIT's CEO being actively engaged in supplemental fundraising activities. To date, several organizations have been presented with information about available programmatic support opportunities and are actively considering supporting the college. The BOT has also entered into a letter of intent to sell a portion of the property in Roxbury, which is expected to provide additional proceeds of approximately \$7 million. BFIT expects to receive these funds after the purchaser receives permitting approval. Based on the terms of the letter of intent and the expected permitting process, BFIT anticipates receiving funds from the sale of the real estate approximately 15 months after initial permits are filed, estimated to be at the end of the third quarter of 2022.

Appraisal

Financial Resources

As a result of the interruption to operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting federal dollars received by the college to help overcome the added costs/loss of revenue resulting from the closure of the building, fiscal year 2021 will end with a slight surplus. Over the coming months, the leadership team will need to gain a better understanding as to what the true operating results would have been if there were no pandemic. While there has been much progress in budgeting and controlling costs the college still needs to do a deeper dive into the understanding of the impact on finances of its "cohort model" of education. Leadership will need to have a greater understanding of the cost drivers and develop models for mitigating them. Examples of cost drivers include faculty load calculations, average class size, classroom utilization rate, and student support services.

An important component of the BFIT academic program is ensuring that students who traditionally have not fared well—or even pursued—higher education receive the necessary supports to ensure academic success. This focus is what has allowed BFIT to achieve a 52% graduation rate, which is two times higher than the state average for two-year colleges. It has become clear that to adequately fund these extensive services as a private institution, BFIT needs to substantially increase its fundraising capacity. Currently, the College has a fully staffed development office and was able to increase its annual fundraising revenue from a historical level of \$2 million a year to \$3.1 million for FY 2021. BFIT has completed planning for its first major comprehensive campaign and is in the process of rolling this out with a goal of \$30M, of which \$3M has been raised. As part of the campaign the College is looking to raise \$7.5 million in scholarship funds, which will significantly increase our financial standing since the bulk of "scholarships" in the past have consisted of unfunded tuition discounts. Please see the campaign timeline and scholarship plan attached.

During FY 2021, fiscal year the college implemented a bottom-up budgeting process to include department heads. For FY 2022 the college will implement budget monitoring at the department level with PAC members receiving budget-to-actual financial statements on a monthly basis so that they can monitor their spending against budget and make adjustments during the year to ensure a balanced budget.

The senior leadership team continues working to complete detailed implementation plans for making its Future Forward strategic plan a reality. The work includes developing benchmarks for measuring success with key indicators and reporting dashboards. The Board of Trustees will review progress against goals on a quarterly basis. There will be a complete mapping of all the college's business processes to ensure maximum efficiency and will include a review of job functions and job descriptions.

During FY 2021 the college outsourced Human Resources, the back-office operations of Financial Aid, accounts payable, security, student payment plan processing, and IT services. During FY 2022 these services will be evaluated to determine if the cost savings/improvement in service goals are being achieved and modify the plans accordingly.

Description

Information, Physical, and Technological Resources

During the restructuring of the college the physical library was eliminated, and two librarians were laid off. Library services were transferred from the Department of Academic Affairs to the Department of Student Services. The Director of Library Services was retained as the Director of Information Literacy. The BFIT library is now a wholly digital collection with library services being offered online. Overall use of the library's physical services (reference, reserves, circulation) has been declining over the past five years. However, use of the library as a physical study space and computing area has been steady and on average the library space supported 1000 students per week. The library space will continue as an area for tutoring and quiet study until the college relocates. Currently talks are occurring with the Boston Public Library (BPL) Roxbury Branch (walking distance from the new college campus) to integrate some library services, as well as an allotment of space for BFIT students. In fall 2020 all new BFIT students were mailed a Boston Public Library card in preparation for this collaboration. (Information about library services and information literacy is available in Standards 4 and 8.)

The library's materials budget remains intact with \$22,000 or \$53 per FTE available in FY 2022 for current subscriptions to online databases. This amount is reduced from the previous year's \$75 per FTE due to the elimination of in-print magazine subscriptions, the library's catalog subscription, the return of two automotive specific databases (Mitchell Management and All Data) to the budget of the automotive department, and ProQuest Research Companion becoming freely available through our membership with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) consortium. Funding for this current fiscal year is also likely to increase with access to funds from the Federal Government CARES Act, which will allow for spending on resources to better equip students with the skills of information literacy and a database with resources to integrate the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (and a BFIT college-wide initiative) within course curriculums.

Library services currently provide online access via EZProxy authentication to 48 databases that are purchased by the college specifically for the programs we offer, as well as through our membership with the MBLC consortium. Through these databases BFIT provides full-text access to over 190,000 eBooks and 20,000 journal titles. In 2018-19 eBook circulation was 653 full-text retrievals, up from 393 the previous year, but on average with data from 2015-2017. Collection development will continue in the areas where the online library lacks resources, especially for bachelor's degree programs. From 2015-2020 the library spent \$46,087 on individual eBook collections focusing on those bachelor's degree programs most recently approved by NECHE and the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. In 2015

and 2016, eBooks were added in Mechanical Engineering and Robotics, in 2016 Healthcare Knowledge and Management, and Leadership and Management, and in 2019 Electrical and Electronic Engineering. In total from 2015-2020 460 eBooks were added specific to BFIT's program offerings and in addition to the previously mentioned, subject sets were purchased in electronic format for Automotive Technology, Energy and Green Technology, Biomedical Engineering and Business. As new associate and bachelor's degree programs are added, funding will need to be identified for allocation toward library resources in support of those programs.

The college has taken several steps to improve the functionality, stability, and scalability of its information technology. Most importantly, the college has invested significant resources into its information technology infrastructure over the last several years. With over \$2 million invested from a Title III grant received in 2016, the college implemented Canvas, its learning management system. In addition, other software programs were updated, as described above. improved the efficiency of Financial Aid, student retention, and overall student outreach. Title III funds and other donations were also used to update the college's IT infrastructure, dramatically improving the stability and scalability of the network.

We are making strides with Bill Pay and Transact software, which were both implemented this year. These systems are saving a combined 20 hours of staff time per week so staff can attend to higher order projects and tasks that are not able to be automated. These changes also allow for more precise accounting and recordkeeping in the Business Office and the Student Account Offices.

Since 2020, Neoscope, the college's outsourced IT provider and BFIT have implemented several upgrades to its IT infrastructure including:

Enterprise Software & Applications

- Redesigned and upgraded the VMWare clustered server environment and architecture. This process consolidated two clusters into one
- Implemented an on-premises Microsoft Exchange to Microsoft 365 migration for all student email
- Upgraded CAMS, the college's main student information system
- Began migration of on-premises file servers to Microsoft 365 SharePoint/OneDrive (this was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic)
- Created automated SQL query job to pull data from PowerFAIDs into Active Directory/M365 and send new BFIT email accounts to students when they enroll
- Created SSO with Azure AD for Canvas, Salesforce, Form Assembly and PowerFAIDS.
- Implemented Google G-Suite for student accounts and Chromebook administration

Enterprise Infrastructure & Projects

- Completed a comprehensive server room re-design and update. Condensed four racks into two neatly rewired racks
- Implemented Disk Based Backup with Offsite Cloud Replication
- Replaced out of warranty and unsupported servers with two new servers

Facilities

While the college is in the process of planning a move to its new location in Roxbury, significant resources and attention have gone toward ensuring that the existing facility enables BFIT to fulfill its mission. Capital expenditures have been made to replace outdated equipment to ensure access for all students (wheelchair lift and related accessories) as well as replacing the air conditioning units throughout the school and the main air conditioning unit in Union Building.

Further efforts have been made to maintain the existing facilities, including installing a new ADA compliant wheelchair lift, repairing the boiler, and other routine repairs. The onset of COVID-19 also resulted in a comprehensive redesign of the college’s cleaning protocols, including multiple room cleanings per day and the purchasing of disinfection equipment which is used daily.

As mentioned herein, the Title III grant enabled the college to implement Canvas, a student learning system. Combined with access to Zoom and Teams, Canvas enabled BFIT to seamlessly move to on-line classroom instruction.

Appraisal

Information, Physical, and Technological Resources

With Title III funding the college has been able to make major upgrades to its technology infrastructure. However, these projects and decisions were made pre-COVID-19, the college is now reassessing its technology needs to consider post-pandemic needs. The work that has been done was mostly siloed by department. Moving forward efficiencies will be achieved by working more collaboratively across program areas through ITAC. The number of systems being used to collect, store, and report data are too numerous for a college our size. BFIT faculty and staff will consider ways to consolidate these systems. The college will be assessing the next phases of its IT overhaul and developing a new three-year technology plan over the next four months.

Facilities

The primary focus of the next two years will be the design and construction of the new BFIT campus. The property was purchased in September 2019 and the Project Notification Form filed with the City of Boston in summer 2021. The schematic designs have been completed and have been sent to the cost estimators for pricing. An RFP for general contracting was issued in mid-August 2021 to a curated list of general contractors for the project, which is being bid as a value engineering project.

A great deal of thought and collaboration has gone into reviewing space needs to ensure that the new campus is designed with an efficient use of space. Classrooms are being designed to be multipurpose in nature with the goal of achieving a minimum of a 65% utilization rate. The building is also being designed to ensure that it can be operated in a cost-effective manner and will have solar panels to reduce electricity costs.

PROJECTION

RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECT DETAILS	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
Chief Financial Officer	Complete construction of new campus	8/2023
Director of IT Services	Complete new 3-year technology plan	11/2021

Chief Financial Officer	Complete business model review and pricing restructuring	12/2021
Chief Financial Officer	Complete 5-year Financial Plan	12/2021
Chief Financial Officer/Chief Academic Officer	New faculty compensation system	6/2022
Members of PAC	Complete Future Forward implementation plans	10/2021
Chief Financial Officer with Board Finance Committee	Set up investment policies for investment funds	6/2022
Chief Financial Officer/Controller	Complete operations manual	12/2022
Director of IT	Complete Technology policy manual	12/2022

Standard Eight: Educational Effectiveness

Description

In the words of BFIT's CEO to the graduating class of 2021, *"Through your studies, you have achieved success by focusing on your technical know-how, practicing professionalism, communicating effectively, deploying critical thinking skills, embracing information literacy, understanding sustainable development, and acting responsibly through civic engagement."* Guided by our mission, and through personalized support, hands-on learning and industry-informed curricula, BFIT successfully prepares graduates for work, life-long learning, and citizenship. BFIT consistently surpasses the state and national two-year college graduation rates, with BFIT's rates remaining consistent over the previous four years ranging from 48% to 51%. BFIT's 4-year job placement rate of graduates employed in-field or continuing their education has ranged from a low of 79% in 2018 to a high of 85% in 2019, with a 4-year average (2017-2020) of 82.4%, with 6 programs achieving 100% student placement (or continuing their education) in 2019, and 8 programs achieving 100% student placement in 2020. Statements of student learning in each department include outcomes that are field specific, as well as outcomes that encompass measures related to our seven institutional values, with a particular emphasis on lifelong learning and professionalism. These statements are included in the Course Catalog and are listed below. Examples from several programs include:

- Automotive Technology: Effectively diagnose, repair, and adjust various subsystems including suspensions, brakes, transmissions, heating and air conditioning, and lighting systems.
- Opticianry: Utilize and operate all forms of ophthalmic devices and instrumentation including keratometers, lensmeters, biomicroscopes, corneal topographers, pupilometers, and digital image measuring devices.
- Electrical Engineering: Design a system, component, or process to meet desired needs within realistic constraints such as economic, environmental, social, political, ethical, health and safety, manufacturability, and sustainability.
- Math and Physics: Use mathematical reasoning to solve problems, demonstrating the ability to use symbolic, graphical, numerical, and written representations of mathematical ideas.
- Humanities and Social Science: Demonstrate awareness of global, social, and ethical issues in their historical and cultural contexts through written work and discussion.

Appraisal

Assessment of student learning outcomes was institutionalized during the college's 2011 NEASC Self-Study through the development of academic annual report templates and cyclical academic program reviews.

The format and consistency of reporting has varied through the years mostly due to a decade of leadership transition in the Office of Academic Affairs. The current Dean of Academic Affairs has 10 years of longevity with the college, which is a strength since he knows the college in ways the previous deans did not. Under his year of leadership, the assessment processes have strengthened with the creation of the Director of Curriculum Development & Assessment position assigned to give more dedicated attention to this area (See Standard 4).

Academic Affairs conducts an annual academic review process led by its dean. The Assistant Dean of Records and Research/Registrar and the Director of Institutional Reporting work collaboratively to produce reports that analyze graduation and retention rates and enrollment trends by major, as well as an analysis of final grades. Grades are aggregated by major, course, faculty, degree level, and student entering cohort. This data is provided to department chairs to be used in program reviews for purposes of continuous improvement. These reports are submitted to the Dean of Academic Affairs annually, and the Dean meets with each department chair to review reports, discuss salient issues, set goals, and plan resources based upon data from the annual report.

One example of planning and resource allocation resulting from these departmental reviews was the creation of new areas of academic focus for the Computer Technology department to improve student preparation for successful completion of industry-recognized Certifications or Credentials (IRC's). The IT department now supports embedded training for the following IRCs:

- Google IT Support Professional
- Cisco CCENT
- Microsoft Technology Associate: Fundamentals of Networking
- CompTIA A+
- CompTIA Linux,
- C++ Certified Associate Programmer
- CIW Site Development Associates
- Introduction to Programming Using Java

BFIT is a member of the Microsoft Imagine Academy and an official Certiport testing site, allowing students to prepare for key certification exams using Microsoft Official Academic Curriculum (MOAC), as well as take exams onsite at a discounted price.

Now that prep for IRCs have been standardized, the college needs to track the number of students sitting for and passing certification exams before graduation. One barrier to pre-graduation certification has been the cost of the certifications. Additional student support funds that can help with affordability of these tests has been identified as key for resource development.

Assessment of student program learning outcomes is also integrated into each department's annual report. For example, in the 2018-2019 Opticianry annual report, the chair included the following student learning outcome assessment inventory, observation, and plan.

Table 4.2: Learning Outcomes Inventory	
Total number of courses in the department*	19
Number of courses with all learning outcomes setup and complete	19
Number of courses with all learning outcomes setup but some outcomes incomplete	0
Number of courses with some learning outcomes setup	0

Number of courses with no learning outcomes setup	0
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Upon review of the report, as well as based upon a review of the curriculum by the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation in October of 2018 and the fact that students' performance on national boards are more than 25 percentage points above the national pass rate, the learning outcomes for each individual course and the program as a whole are relevant to current day industry requirements and that academic comprehension of the learning outcomes by the student are achieved. Going forward the department plans to increase industry partner collaboration with course learning outcomes.

For the 2020-2021 academic year, department chairs are linking student learning outcomes to specific courses, evaluating if the learning outcomes are effectively being met, and setting goals to further ensure outcome effectiveness.

In addition to student learning outcomes, BFIT commits to the fundamental principles of an educated person through its institutional values, which were formalized in the late 2000's and include technical skills, professionalism, communication, critical thinking, and problem solving, information literacy, sustainability, and global mindedness. Through the past decade, the college has used various formats to promote and evaluate students' understanding of these values. A recent example is the college's investment in the Sustainable Development Goals Online database, which includes teaching and learning resources for each of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. This tool was introduced to the faculty Spring 2021.

The college's commitment to student success and career readiness goes beyond educational effectiveness in the classroom and is prevalent throughout the college experience. Once accepted to the college, each student is assigned a success coach according to their major. The success coach model is interdisciplinary in that coaches serve as both the student's academic and career coach throughout the student's BFIT education. The effectiveness of the co-curricular learning activities of Student Services career coaching are measured through employment placement data.

Through success coaches, Career Services provides career seminar courses, resume writing assistance, job search assistance, mock interviews, and internship placement and guidance. To track progress, BFIT collects placement data on recent graduates through surveys and personal outreach by career coaches. Outreach to recent graduates is conducted through the Graduate Exit Survey, completed just prior to graduation, and again in the Graduate Outcomes Survey completed at 6-, 9- and 12-month intervals post-graduation. The graduate outcomes survey is consistent with the NACE First Destination Survey and with the implementation of the Handshake platform at BFIT. The NACE survey will be utilized beginning with spring 2022 graduates.

Due to BFIT's strong personal relationships with graduates, outreach through both surveys and personal contact has yielded positive results with a 5-year average response rate of 89%. Included in this data are BFIT's associate and bachelor's degree programs as well as certificate programs for Automotive Technology, Practical Electricity and HVAC&R.

Job placement data as a measure of student achievement is included in the academic program review process and is analyzed by academic department chairs, PAC, and the Dean of Academic Affairs to identify ways to further connect with industry and broaden the employment opportunities for graduates. In addition to internal assessment and evaluation, three academic departments, Electrical Engineering, Opticianry, and Automotive, are systematically assessed through the outside accreditation agencies of ABET, the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA) and ASE Education Foundation (formerly the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation). The recently created Division of Professional and Continuing Studies will develop its own set of assessment standards for participants in those programs.

The results of the job placement data outreach are manually compiled in an Access database (to be replaced by Salesforce in 2022) and analyzed for placement rates based on employment, including factors such as full-time vs. part-time, in-field vs. out of field by choice, continuing education, and salary data. Ideally, this process would be more automated. The response rate from students in the certificate programs is much lower than the degree programs; BFIT anticipates that through the new career coaching model the overall response rate should improve, particularly from certificate students.

The Department of Student Services is designed to help students get the most from their BFIT education by supporting students on their path through academic and career coaching, learning and wellness resources, tutoring, mentoring, and involvement opportunities. As noted in Standard 5, work with students begins with a warm handoff from Admissions to Student Services, where students are welcomed by a success coach with a “Getting Acclimated to BFIT” one-on-one onboarding session. These sessions begin with an intake survey designed to develop a relationship between the student and their Success Coach who will be their main support system along their academic path and through career preparedness. This is where coaches can begin to share expectations and tools for success such as the importance of attendance, especially when tied to state licensing requirements; the availability of tutoring; wellness and disability support; and the benefit of an external support network.

This survey also helps to identify potential barriers to student success including family commitments, financial responsibilities, employment, and any other outside challenges that might inhibit academic success.

During onboarding meetings, Success Coaches assist students in logging onto the IT systems they will use during their career at BFIT, such as Canvas, Office 365, and the Student Portal. Since spring 2020, with all BFIT students participating in remote learning to some degree, ensuring student success depends upon the student’s ability to navigate these systems. The Student Services team begins to assess student opportunities for deeper support during this onboarding process and provides links to resources offered by the offices of Student Learning, Academic Success Center, Financial Aid, Career Services, and Wellness. Wellness staff also take stock of opportunities to support student success by addressing challenges they may be facing outside of the classroom. During orientation, the Wellness

Office launches an Assessment and Wellness Resources Survey to evaluate student experiences with food insecurity, housing instability, safety, and mental wellness. (See Standard 5 for more information.)

To assess student support services in real time, staff collect qualitative feedback through their student meetings, as well as monitor feedback from faculty shared through Dropout Detective or other communication channels, and share relevant information and data through multiple weekly meetings with the Dean of Students, Assistant Deans, other success coaches and student services division leaders. For example, in a meeting with a success coach, a student might note that they need additional support in a course, or they might share outside factors that are interfering with their academic performance, such as work conflicts, family obligations, or lack of motivation. In these cases, Students Services would determine what student supports are in place to effectively assist the student and if additional resources are needed.

In addition to the college-wide retention and graduation data produced by Institutional Reporting, the offices of Academic Affairs and Student Services use several other methods to collect data on educational and co-curricular programs and student learning outcomes. The most widely used are:

- Student Course Evaluations;
- Student Employment and Graduate Exit Surveys (for placement data and analysis);
- Student Services Evaluation Survey;
- Instructor Insight Reports (focusing on faculty use of CANVAS);
- Dropout Detective Reports (focusing on student risk analysis);
- New Student Onboarding Intake Survey;
- Student Needs Assessment—Wellness Resources Survey.

At the institutional level, the college measures student success through retention and graduation rates. Collection and analysis of retention and graduation rates (available from the college's Fast Facts) are conducted in collaboration with the offices of Student Services and Academic Affairs. Internally, Student Services monitors continuing student registration semester-to-semester by tracking the number of students who return the next semester by the number of students eligible to return ETR (all students who attended the previous semester minus the graduates of that semester). However, the official college fall-to-fall success rate is defined as the number of students attending in a given fall semester. The five-year average success rate is 63% with the highest fall-to-fall retention rate during that period being those entering in the fall 2017 cohort retained at 70%, and the lowest being those entering the fall 2020 cohort retained at 53%. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic the college lost 42% of its eligible to return students from spring 2020 to fall 2020. Spring to fall retention of students typically averages 66%.

BFIT's graduation rates remain consistently high for the two-year college sector with a five-year average of 51.5%. The 2014 cohort graduated the highest percentage of 142 graduates/56% and the 2015 cohort graduated the lowest percentage of 115 graduates/48%. 2020 graduation data from the 2017 entering cohort shows a graduation rate of 52%/135 students. Reviewing student demographic data shows a slight drop in male graduation rates from 55% in 2018 to 50% in FY 2021 and female graduation rates also had a slight drop going from 67% in FY 2018 to 64% in FY 2021.

The college has seen a significant decrease in graduation rate among our Asian student population. In FY 2018, Asian student graduation rates went from 77% to 43% in FY 2021. Similarly, white students have seen a drop-in graduation rate from 75% in FY 2018 to 67% in FY 2021. However, Black and Hispanic

students have shown a very slight increase in graduation rates, with our black students having 41% in FY 2018 to 44% in FY 2018 and our Hispanic students having 45% in FY 2018 to 51% in FY 2021.

Over the past ten years the college has reviewed and assessed this data through internal retention committees comprising administrators, faculty, and staff, and with external consultants from two groups, Strategic Grant Partners in 2019, and most recently Project Evident. The college applies retention and graduation data to make informed decisions in several ways.

Student Services uses these numbers to monitor and adjust student support based on program cohort, to inform outreach, and to set goals during student registration periods. At the academic program and course levels, assignments, lab-work, exams, final grades, and withdrawal rates play a role in evaluation. Below are two case studies of this type of collaboration resulting in a new English Course and a new approach to teaching developmental skills for CT students.

Case Study of English 129

In 2017, the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences used qualitative and quantitative data to assess the effectiveness of an embedded support model for writing courses. As a result, an additional composition course was created in 2018 for students who needed more support in writing that included flexibility with assignments and scheduling. This course was paired with an embedded support course. After two years of running these courses, departmental assessment found that instructors and students spoke openly about the unmanageable workload and the stress created by it. One student noted that it felt as if he was trying to learn through an avalanche of assignments.

To further assess the issue, the Director of General Education conducted interviews with students and faculty to verify the problems with the courses and consulted an institutional report that showed some sobering statistics: 33.3% of Automotive Technology students enrolled in EN 129 and EN 131 failed and 19% withdrew. Faced with the qualitative data and the unacceptable quantitative data, the department took immediate action, as it never intended its embedded support course to be a hinderance to student success. The department suspended the embedded support course and redesigned the core course with stand-alone embedded support. The new version of EN 129 includes a practicum component as its embedded support which amounts to a learning lab designed to help students with these major skills: reading critically, writing critically and properly according to standard American English, responsible researching, and presenting, both individually and in groups.

The revised version of EN 129 ran for the first time during the 2020-21 academic year and yielded positive results. While it is still too early to make a definitive appraisal of the course (and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic must be considered when looking at the data), the numbers look good: no students failed the course during the fall 2020 term, and only 20% of students, 4 out of 20, failed it during spring 2021. By way of comparison, 18.3% of students failed EN 129 during the 2018-19 academic year, while 22.8% of students failed EN 131. While the 20% failure rate for the new EN 129 is higher than it should be, the extenuating circumstances noted above must be considered, and the success of the fall 2020 term certainly marks a positive step forward. It is worth noting that 2 of the 4 failures were dual enrollment students who had a tough time juggling college and high school workloads due to the pandemic. The Director of General Education will continue to monitor student success in EN 129 and make the appropriate adjustments to the course based on the data.

PAC members use the data for various purposes depending upon their departmental objectives. Academic Affairs uses this data to determine what programs need academic program review, when to

target specific faculty observations, and as input to faculty evaluations. The offices of Development and Strategic Partnerships use this data to inform funding and professional studies partnership opportunities. For example, one of our most important programs in terms of interest from students and interest from employers is Computer Technology. Student Success data from this major has been less than stellar for a few years. Therefore, in addition to an academic program review the Student Services and Academic Affairs teams are collaborating to address some of the findings revealed in the data.

Case Study of Moving CT Online

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Computer Technology and Health Information Technology programs held all courses fully remote—a first for the college. Previously, all CT courses were held in person, on campus. To assess the effectiveness of this mode of instruction, Student Services launched a survey mid-semester spring 2021 and Academic Affairs conducted a focus group at the end of the spring semester to assess CT and HIT students' academic experience via distance learning during the pandemic.

Here is what we learned:

- Students in the focus groups noted that the sudden move to online distance learning at the time of pandemic did not result in a more positive learning experience than they had expected. They adapted quickly and had positive attitudes toward the change to an online setting.
- Most agreed that their instructors' use of Canvas helped them to be more organized in their learning.
- The multiple ways to access their course, from a mobile phone, tablet, desktop, or laptop added to their ability to do their work.
- Asynchronous courses should be designed for advanced students only, as the delay in response time from faculty can cause anxiety among some students.

In addition to the focus group, a survey was issued that revealed:

- 90% agreed that materials were available on Canvas adequately and that lectures were presented in an organized and understandable manner.
- Although the majority of students are satisfied with the variety of presentation of lectures on Canvas (videos, PowerPoint presentations, online sessions), only half (50%) agreed that learning methods through the online courses ensure sufficient student-to-student and student-to-instructor interaction.

While we were pleased that 39.5% of students rated BFIT's online courses as good or better than expected this past spring, we aim to raise this bar. As a result of these findings as well as student feedback in previous semesters, BFIT implemented several activities to improve students' online learning:

- Integrating textbooks into Canvas;
- Implementing TutorMe, a 24/7 online tutoring platform, with Computer Technology tutoring being prioritized in fall 2021; and
- Encouraging the incorporation of industry speakers into every course syllabus to make the courses more interactive and to embed career pathways to employment, which many students consider as the most important feature of BFIT college classes. Therefore, starting in the 2021-2022 school year, each class will invite at least one industry speaker to discuss important skills, job pathways, and other industry topics relevant to that course.

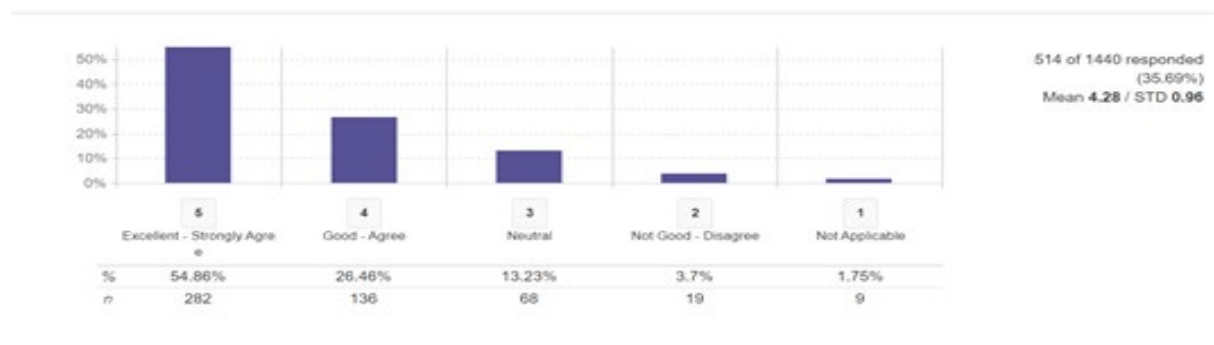
One example of student success as a result of moving courses online is a Practical Electricity Certificate student who, in an [interview](#) with the college President and CEO, said the online format allowed him to work as a manager at McDonald's, who provided the student an additional \$3K in scholarships towards his education. Eighty percent of BFIT students work while enrolled at the college, and distance education programming reduces commuting time, which, in turn, allows them greater flexibility to hold a job while taking classes so that they can graduate on time. In their letter of January 19, 2021, NECHE requested an update on BFIT's success in offering its current courses and academic programs via distance education as evidence that the institution has a demonstrable record of success in implementing the results of its planning. BFIT's Distance Learning Plan includes detailed data on the college's success in offering distance education.

Student enrollment data is reviewed on a program by program basis and used to project revenue on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Retention and graduation rates, along with new student enrollment numbers, account for the majority of our revenue and drive the financial performance of the college. The Enrollment team is aware of programs' success rates and understands what factors will increase the likelihood of a student's success. This information improves enrollment advising.

While graduation rates remain strong and steady, the college has a bold goal to incrementally increase the rate to 60% over the next five years so that we are on par with the graduation rate of 4-year colleges nationally. However, the retention rate has decreased over the past year and further analysis is needed of the effects of COVID-19 on retention. The early indicators of success and at-risk factors that inhibit student success should be examined to refine the student support resources already in place.

To assist with this analysis, we are integrating the predictive monitoring tools Dropout Detective and Instructor Insight into the analytical process to better monitor student performance and provide additional aid to students falling behind.

The recent addition of the Portfolium platform, a Canvas tool, will allow instructors to create content for their classes that provide pathways for students to receive learning badges which can be added to their resumes and/or shared with prospective employers via an e-portfolio.



After assessing the withdrawal and graduation rates of students who take developmental coursework, in 2015 the college created a Success in Automotive Technology one-credit course to help students transition from developmental courses to their major. While modeled after traditional First Year Experience (FYE) courses, this seminar took a unique approach by blending instruction in traditional academic and life management skills with major-specific content. Based on the positive results from this Automotive seminar, BFIT created additional success courses in 2016. Student course evaluations

revealed positive feedback for the success courses, and BFIT applied funding from its Title III grant to add “Success in Your Major” courses for most other programs in fall 2017. Three BFIT faculty members published an article based on their work with success seminars, available in the spring 2019 edition of the NEFDC Exchange.

Starting in the fall of 2019, BFIT’s Success in Computer Technology Seminars began a partnership with [Open Avenues](#), a Boston-based non-profit that helps foreign nationals “succeed in STEM careers in the United States.” Through this program, Boston-based professionals in the Computer Tech field co-teach the seminars, lead project-based learning activities, and speak to students about the realities of the field.. The first iteration of this seminar yielded an 87.5% pass rate. COVID-19 complicated the Open Avenue partnership, but the course pivoted to an online format with the Open Avenues mentors bringing in guest speakers from the field and helping students build professional profiles on LinkedIn. While success seminar courses were paired back during the height of the pandemic, the seminars have reconvened during the 2021-22 academic year.

Student evaluations are one of the components required in the Academic Affairs Annual Program Review process (See Standard 4). Evaluations are used in assessing the efficacy of each course and highlighting potential changes that need to be made on the course level. The evaluations invite students to report on a variety of experiences, such as: the learning environment; the effectiveness of instructors’ teaching methodologies; the instructors’ use of Canvas and how it enhanced the course or detracted from it; and, of course, if students felt that the course made them better students.

Since 2011, Student Services has relied on weekly Students of Concern meetings as the foundation of assessment for student support. These meetings allow for timely intervention when a student is determined to be showing early indicators of risk factors associated with course failure (lack of attendance, missing course assignments, etc.). The idea is to intervene just as students are showing signs of struggle, and before they fall too far behind. An internal review in fall 2015 by the Dean of Student Services and the Assistant Dean of Records & Research established that students who fall below 80% overall attendance in all classes are less likely to persist. Therefore, these learners are identified as students of concern and receive additional intervention and support from success coaches. Attendance data is aggregated through Veera Bridge and represented as dashboards organized by attendance percentage and student major cohorts.

To ensure collective support processes and because of virtual work due to COVID-19, in spring 2020 the success team scheduled additional weekly meetings to review data on Dropout Detective early alert flags, student holds, withdrawals, registration, as well as faculty Canvas usage. The data is used by the success team to create individual student outreach and success plans and inform departmental processes; the Office of Academic Affairs uses the data to monitor and outreach to faculty on Canvas usage standards and create professional development opportunities.

Grades provide another opportunity to assess and revise student support services. For example, as a result of a midterm grades review, the success team created personalized email outreach tailored to each student based on their midterm and cumulative GPA’s and their academic year and anticipated graduation status. The messages provided students with recommendations to help them get back on track, as well as suggestions to schedule meetings with their success coach. For students who fell into the lower GPA range of 0-2.33, in addition to scheduling a meeting with their success coach, a list of concrete action steps were provided: i.e., complete outstanding work, prioritize upcoming

deadlines, and if under 85%, improve their attendance rate. Success Coaches found the outreach effective; one student in particular indicated in which class he was really struggling (automotive transmissions coursework) and the hard time he was having with online learning, losing interest and motivation. The student and coach discussed these issues, and the student decided to reach out to the professor for additional support. The student's grade improved one letter grade by the end of the semester. It should be noted that students in the high GPA group received an encouraging "keep up the good work" email with many responding with appreciation for the congratulatory message.

Student support services have been assessed through various modes over the past ten years, notably through the evaluation of the Title III Systems for Student Success grant. Most recently, as a result of the integration of library/information literacy services with student services, the department has launched an internal survey based on the former library survey which was conducted annually. This spring 2021 Survey of Student Services garnered 108 student responses (32%) from the entire student body (degree seeking and certificate students) of which 80 students completed the survey in full.

- 53% of the respondents noted having connected with their success coach more than three times over the academic year with the top five reasons being, registration, financial aid/balances, grades, career search, balancing academic and outside life.
- 84% responded that their interactions with their coach made them a better student with students noting that the advisors/success coaches "played an important role in my academic success because they were able to accommodate me during hard times I had with family, personal issues and work/school life balance," and that the coach "cares about helping me get all my documentation and financials in place," and "In the past they helped me get a co-op position at Gillette in Boston."
- 75% of respondents noted that they were more successful this academic year because they received services through the Wellness Office. The Wellness Office also receives additional qualitative feedback directly from students on a regular basis. For example, upon getting their diploma, a graduate who received support from the office handed the diploma to the Wellness director and said, "you earned this as much as I did." Another student who accessed multiple resources from the office in the areas of mental health, financial literacy, food pantry and emergency fund, noted, "After dropping out of college four times, making the Dean's List has always been a goal of mine. Last semester I finally accomplished that goal. If it were not for [Wellness Office support], I would never be able to accomplish that goal of mine. I wouldn't be able to do it without [this] help and guidance."
- 60% of the respondents met regularly throughout the year with the Director of Learning with 100% of those students noting that those meetings helped them to be a better student. Over a third of the respondents chose to comment upon their support from the Director of Learning, noting, "I was able to express how I felt in school and what I can do to be a better student in terms of being organized and on time," and that "[working with the director taught me] I have access to other resources," and, "Honestly just knowing that whenever I needed the support there was someone always there."

The college has tracked Academic Success Center (tutoring) services since 2009. Data has been used to determine which subject areas and specific courses are in most demand for tutoring and what times of day are most popular.

- While 40% of the respondents to the most recent Student Services survey indicated they used the Academic Success Center for in-person tutoring in the past, only 27% reported having used the online ASC. Students had mixed responses when asked their preference between online and in-person tutoring, such as: “Tutoring was the best part of online learning. I sort of felt like there were more hours available when tutoring was in person (especially for math), but maybe it was just my schedule this semester? I really liked being able to get tutoring late in the evening or really early in the mornings. I also have a part time desk job that has a fair amount of down time, so I was able to get tutoring when it was quiet at work (couldn't have done this with in-person tutoring because my job requires me to be physically present),” and “I preferred the ASC on campus because I like to learn face to face and through the camera or computer isn't the same thing.” 88% of the respondents noted that the tutoring services helped them to be a better student, with some noting: “They help me understand the subject better when it's hard for me to understand. Having someone else explain the subject to me in a different way really helped me with the assignment I had to complete,” and “I have used a LOT of tutoring time while at BFIT. I definitely would not have done as well in my classes if it were not for tutoring. Role=ESSENTIAL.” As indicated above the college has added online support services through TutorMe to supplement BFIT faculty tutors and provide 24/7 tutoring support. (See Standard 5 for more information about the Academic Success Center.)
- 50% of the survey respondents engaged in BFIT at Home programming such as reading the newsletter or participating in social media events, and 75% noted participating in multicultural/racial justice programming. The college has engaged in several initiatives throughout the years to promote the institutional value of good citizenry. In 2011-13 the college hosted an AmeriCorps VISTA with an emphasis on service learning. Throughout the past ten years, service work has continued with service-learning components of curricula in Humanities and the Opticianry program, through programming in the Franklin Honor Society and the AmeriCorps Ambassadors, and through campus-wide events such as “Bensgiving,” when faculty, staff, students, and our community neighbors, competed against one another to see who could collect the most food for the Thanksgiving drive to benefit Boston Food Bank and BFIT's food pantry. Assessment of this type of service-learning programming was more formalized when there was an AmeriCorps VISTA coordinating it systematically. Accessing external partnerships, such as the National Service Corps has allowed us to expand capacity and an effective way to manage key programs.

General Education is continuously assessed through departmental curriculum review at the course level and through academic annual reports. An area of special emphasis was noted in May 20,2020 letter from NECHE that the college should be “reviewing and as appropriate, revising its general education program for consistency across all academic offerings,” and BFIT's response is more fully addressed in Standard 4. However, regarding assessment of educational effectiveness, General Education merged into a single department in July 2020, and it is still too early to offer data-driven results of revisions made to courses and the effect on students. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted data as well, so the department will need at least another academic year before it starts analyzing results and making the appropriate changes.

Projections

RESPONSIBILITY	PROJECT DETAILS	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
Academic Affairs - Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment & FAAC	Work with the faculty to improve the content of end of-semester course evaluations including student incentives for completing the evaluation, with a goal of 65% completion rate.	Fall 2021
Academic Affairs – FAAC & FDC	Develop and implement workshops that allow departments to integrate SLOs & Program learning outcomes (PLO's) with Canvas to produce reports and ease the process of assessment and curriculum mapping.	Spring 2022
Academic Affairs in cooperation with Student Services – CITTLE: Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment, Canvas Specialist/Director of General Education, Director of Information Literacy	Offer faculty & staff training that leverage BFIT's instructional technology platforms to promote best practices for overall student retention and success. Incorporate asynchronous training modules for faculty requiring refresher courses. Using Pathways in Portfolium certify student competencies and teach students to showcase their skills through e-folio. Map co-curricular outcomes to institutional values and where relevant to academic program outcomes.	Ongoing Ongoing with completion of at least one pathway by spring 2022.
Retention Committee (Representatives from Student Services, Academic Affairs, and Enrollment Services)	Monitor retention and retention efforts to formulate more strategic planning based on data inputs. Increase response rate of Student Services Surveys. Develop Process Map of Student Support Services. Systematize data collection and analysis for early alert risk factors and guide student support measures.	Spring 2022 AY 2021-22 AY 2021-22 By Spring 2022
Admissions, Academic Affairs, and Student Services	Membership in the Achieving to Dream College Network to improve enrollment, specifically of Asian students.	FY 2022-25

Standard Nine: Integrity, Transparency, Public Disclosure

Description

Integrity

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT), originally named the Franklin Union, was established in 1905 by the Massachusetts Legislature and welcomed its first students in September 1908. Throughout its history, the college has followed the high ethical standards espoused by its original benefactor, Benjamin Franklin. In 2011, the year of the last NECHE self-study report, enrollment at BFIT was 500 students. The college continued to enroll roughly 500 students each year until fall 2020, when total enrollment dropped to 402 students in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

The Board of Trustees by-laws outline in detail the responsibilities, organization structure, and policies necessary for the Board and the senior administration of the college to undertake their respective roles ethically, responsibly, and with integrity. (See Standard 3 for a full explanation of the board, committees, and PAC structure.) In Summer 2020, the [Boston Globe reported](#) that the BFIT Board of Trustees was privately deliberating a potential merger, without any input from faculty, staff, or most members of the executive leadership team. The ensuing outcry prompted the board to conduct a series of outreach meetings on Zoom with faculty and staff, students, alumni, and the Boston City Council. The Board of Trustees and the CEO pledged to be transparent going forward regarding the college's strategic plans, challenges, and goals. This promise was followed by emailed updates from the CEO, including notification that the merger was voted down and updates about college finances and the move to a new campus in Roxbury. With encouragement from the CEO, a new College Senate was created in October 2020, with formal bylaws and a panel of Officers elected by faculty and staff and representing departments across the college. The goal of this new body is to build a stronger communication channel between faculty/staff and the board/leadership team. A secondary goal is to improve cross-department communication and collaboration. ([BFIT Senate Charter and Bylaws](#) & [List of Senate Officers](#))

As part of the Board of Trustees policy and specified in the by-laws, the Board has a clear conflict of interest policy in effect. The Conflict of Interest Policy for faculty and staff is detailed in the Employee Handbook along with the college's "Open Door Policy," which states that "all employees have the right to voice their thoughts, opinions, and concerns" and outlines the procedure for raising issues or complaints.

Committees play an important role in the College's governance and its organizational and decision-making structure. Administrators, staff, and faculty are encouraged to serve on committees to facilitate the mission and goals of the college. In addition, various ad-hoc committees are created for a one-time purpose to focus on examining a specific subject or completing a particular task. Another potential avenue for faculty and staff to shape policy is the College Senate, although this group is new and still developing its priorities and goals.

Student involvement in governance matters at the college is currently underdeveloped, but BFIT endeavors to revive a student leadership forum to provide students options and platforms for addressing student-generated concerns (see Standard 3).

The Dean of Academic Affairs oversees program reviews on a rotating basis which ensures each program is appraised every five years to establish expected learning outcomes. Faculty is encouraged to help students achieve those outcomes by using their own teaching methods and strengths, backed up by technical expertise developed through years of industry experience and scholarly research.

The college is accredited by NECHE (New England Commission of Higher Education). BFIT also holds the following program-specific accreditations: the Electrical Engineering BS is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of ABET; Automotive Technology programs are accredited by ASE Education Foundation (formerly the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation); and the Opticianry AS is accredited by the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation. Although these agencies are not a guarantee of the quality of every course, nor the outcomes of individual graduates, they do provide reasonable assurance about the overall quality and academic rigor of BFIT's programs.

The college's accreditation information is available in the Course Catalog on the [website](#). Both include information about the NECHE accreditation, as well as industry-specific accreditations for the Automotive, Electrical Engineering, and Opticianry programs.

BFIT is committed to inclusive practices in recruitment, admissions, employment, and all other areas. The college admits students and hires employees regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, handicap status, or sexual orientation as clearly stated in the Equal Opportunity Policy in the Employee Handbook, New Hire Orientation, Student Handbook, new student onboarding, and in Admissions print materials, job listings, and the [website](#).

BFIT's Equal Opportunity Policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, veteran status, political belief or affiliation, criminal record (applications only), CORI check results, mental or physical disability, pregnancy, retaliation, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and genetic information and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state and federal law. This policy extends to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities including admission, employment, financial assistance, and educational programs. Inquiries concerning the application of these laws should be addressed to the Human Resources Director who is the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer.

BFIT is a diverse community with strong collaboration among all constituencies to ensure its educational mission. The college's student body is 74% students of color and 57% first-generation college students. PAC comprises 43% people of color and 57% women. More than 24% of faculty and 44% of staff are people of color. (See Standard 6).

The Board of Trustees bring diverse viewpoints to their governing duties, with members hailing from established companies, startups, public universities, and nonprofit organizations. The BOT in July 2020 enacted a [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Racial Justice Resolution](#). This resolution charged the Board's Governance Committee to work with staff to adopt a formal policy that ensures diversity, equity, and inclusion are reflected in the BFIT board and committees, in faculty, and in our student body. The Governance Committee is networking to build a Trustee candidate pool that ensures balance in Board diversity, expertise, and philanthropic giving. In addition, the Governance Committee has been charged with developing a leadership pipeline so that the committees are populated with non-board members from whom trustees can be sourced going forward.

The college expects honesty in all academic work. [The Student Handbook](#) documents the policy for addressing infractions. The catalog section on academic policies includes policies on the grading system, attendance, course withdrawal, satisfactory academic progress, academic probation, academic honesty, accommodation, students with learning disabilities, students with medical disabilities, transfer of credit, and graduation requirements. Additionally, ethics and a professional standard of conduct are addressed in new student orientation and in several courses.

Legal rights of students are outlined in the Student Handbook. A discussion of Student Rights and Responsibilities is included in new student orientation, covering the student code of conduct, sexual

harassment policy, Federal Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), computer use policy, and security services and safety.

In 2018 BFIT hired a Director of Strategic Partnerships to oversee the college's relationships with employers and community groups seeking to contract with BFIT to build talent pipelines and upskill their workers and members. The director works closely with faculty and staff in the Department of Academic Affairs and Student Services to ensure these relationships are compatible with BFIT's mission and to ensure the integrity and academic standards of the training programs. Offerings from the Employers and Corporate Partners are explained on BFIT's [website](#).

The Student Services team includes information on the website about [co-curricular and non-academic opportunities](#) available to students and traditionally hosts a variety of activities on campus. Because of the shift to mostly online learning due to COVID-19, Student Services has shifted its outreach to social media, email, and text messaging. The team has created a weekly e-newsletter with updates, activities, and important reminders for students. They have held frequent online contests designed to help students feel connected and have revamped in-person traditions into online events, witnessing the Virtual Candle Lighting Ceremony for inductees to the [Franklin Honor Society](#).

BFIT uses a new hire and termination checklist to ensure all practices are followed. The former faculty and staff handbooks were revised into a new Employee Handbook for all, with an addendum for faculty. The Employee Handbook describes the college's grievance and termination process for faculty and staff. This handbook is reviewed annually by HR and distributed to staff and faculty, who must sign a receipt indicating they have reviewed and understand the document.

The current version of the Employee Handbook is available in the college's shared drive where employees can easily access it. BFIT complies with Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as well as Smoke- and Drug-Free Workplace, Whistleblower (Retaliation), and Anti-Discrimination Title VII laws. These employee rights and laws are included in the Employee Handbook.

Student policies are outlined in the Student Handbook, including rights and responsibilities and processes for handling grievances and disputes. Employee policies are available through the shared drive and in the Employee Handbook. [Student policies and rights](#) are included in the Student Handbook and on the website.

The college complies with MA Laws, CMR-17 to protect the privacy of personnel records. All employee records are in a locked file cabinet in a locked closet in the Business Office. Since 1987, student records have been stored electronically in the secure CAMS system. Student folders from 1980-1987, which include all student records and transcripts, are stored in a locked, fireproof vault in the Admissions Office. Student records dating from the 1950s-1970s are stored off-site in a secure facility run by Access Records Management Services of Woburn, MA. The Office of the Registrar also retains Student Enrollment Cards dating back to 1908. These are stored in a locked vault in the college's lower-level maintenance area. Plans for BFIT's new campus in Roxbury includes fireproof, secure storage for staff and student records.

Leaders of the college spent the majority of 2020 involved in a strategic planning process, "Future Forward," that will frame the next four years of the college's direction, which includes reaffirming the move to a new campus in Nubian Square in Roxbury. The plan was created with the leadership of an external consultant and a Strategic Planning Committee consisting of the college's Board of Directors, and members of the college community (see Standard 2 for details about the planning process and

public outreach). Information about the college's planning effort was posted publicly on the [Move to Roxbury](#) web page, along with an online form where community members could submit comments or questions.

The college continues to explore ways to build ties to the Nubian Square community and leverage excitement about the move to Roxbury, which is expected to transpire in fall 2023. However, these plans are in their initial stages and the college has shared limited information publicly about the new campus. It is fair to say that current students and staff are unclear on the timetable for the move and from the student perspective, most of those currently enrolled will have graduated by the time we move. Our real estate project will continue to be a greater focus for PAC over the next 24 months. A Town Hall meeting for BFIT faculty and staff that took place in late April 2021 provided a first glance at the new building plans, including design ideas for academic labs/classrooms, student spaces, and offices, as well as an estimated timeline for events leading up to the move.

Since coming on board in February 2020, BFIT's outside HR firm has been reviewing and strengthening procedures to ensure that the policies documented in the publications are implemented fairly and equitably throughout the college. As part of its review, HR determined that BFIT did not have a clear, college-wide employee performance evaluation system. Instead, evaluation was left to department heads to conduct (or not conduct) staff evaluations and provide feedback. The HR firm announced at the fall 2020 College Kickoff Meeting (held on Zoom) that it would implement a mandatory, college-wide performance management process. The new process officially rolled out in March 2021.

The college adheres to all legal requirements of the Commonwealth and the standards set forth by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. For example, in October 2020, NECHE issued a Notation of Concern for the college. BFIT notified the commission as required. BFIT's CEO also communicated the news directly to faculty, staff, and students via email, explaining what the notation meant and the college's plan to resolve the financial issues that had been flagged.

Appraisal

Integrity

Legal and Ethical Requirements - Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology upholds the legal and ethical requirements of the college and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Human Resources requires employees to annually review and sign the updated Employee Handbook, where all policies and expectations are spelled out. Similarly, the Student Services team reviews the college's ethics policies and the complete Student Handbook with all new students as part of the mandatory onboarding process.

Academic Research and Integrity – BFIT promotes the freedom to teach and study, examine data, and question assumptions. The college's Academic Freedom Policy is clearly spelled out in the Faculty Academic Policies and Practices section of the BFIT Employee Handbook, which all faculty and staff must review and sign each year.

All BFIT students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice, detailed in the Student Handbook, which is updated annually. BFIT does not tolerate academic dishonesty.

Non-discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Complaint Procedures – BFIT has non-discriminatory policies and practices in effect for all aspects of the college, including recruitment and admissions, employment, evaluation and promotion, disciplinary actions, fundraising, and donor relations. Key

among these is the [Notice of Non-Discrimination](#). This policy is found on the website, the Student Handbook, the Employee Handbook, and all admissions materials.

Human Resources plans, develops, coordinates, and monitors all college activities to ensure equal employment, equal educational opportunity, and affirmative action standards are being followed. BFIT's Responsible Employee Training, which includes sexual harassment/misconduct training (and Title IX) training, is an electronic course on Canvas that is a requirement for everyone in the community. The college also conducts a national background screening for anyone who works at the college, as well as provides COBRA and Unemployment information for anyone who terminates. The [Title IX webpage](#) clearly defines the college's obligations regarding sexual harassment and Title IX compliance, as well as the policies to file a grievance or appeal. The website provides contact information for the Title IX Coordinator, as well as an online form where community members can [report an incident](#) without fear of retaliation.

Privacy – BFIT complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is included in the College Course Catalog and on the [Registrar pages](#) of the BFIT website.

The BFIT portal separates content by campus affiliation, keeping information for faculty and students separate. All online tools and systems, including Canvas, require user authentication, protecting the privacy of information while also providing personalized resources. The BFIT website clearly states the college's [Privacy Policy](#).

Description

Transparency and Public Disclosure

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology strives to maintain complete and accurate information regarding the institution, its mission, values, accreditation, policies, procedures, student outcomes, and news. Information or data in publications or communications to the public, both internal and external, is reviewed to ensure honesty and integrity. This includes information provided to prospective students, employers, industry, and other external partners. The process of ensuring the college presents consistent, accurate data has been improved with the creation of the Fast Facts folder, a set of fully vetted data which is maintained by the Director of Institutional Reporting in the college's share drive. This data is used for annual updates to the BFIT website, marketing materials, and other communications.

In past years, faculty and staff could rely on frequent informal and in person encounters to keep communication lines open between departments. The move to a virtual workplace because of the COVID-19 crisis has brought into stark relief the flaws of that approach. BFIT needs more thoughtful, formal systems to ensure that accurate and timely communication flows between and among college leadership, faculty, staff, and students. Moving everyone to O365 and implementing SharePoint and Teams as primary modes of internal communication is our identified solution to this communication challenge. This is especially important as the college continues to change and improve its academic offerings, its technology platforms, and as it prepares for the move to a new campus in Roxbury.

The Admissions Office provides information of interest to prospective students and families via a collection of publications that includes a general Admissions brochure and a Guide to Financial Aid; information sheets for each academic program; and a variety of [targeted brochures](#). These materials are available in both print and as electronic pdfs on the website. The Admissions and Financial Aid brochures are translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole and electronic pdfs of these versions are available on the [Family Resources](#) page of the website.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Admissions team instituted regular online meeting dates and times on Zoom, where students and families could ask questions directly to admissions and financial aid staff. The department also created a series of virtual tour videos that not only show the classrooms and labs but give key facts about the programs and career outcomes. Links to the [Zoom meetings](#) and the [tour videos](#) are available within the Admissions section of the BFIT website. These virtual sessions have been a good addition to the Admissions process and should continue to be offered even after the college is again able to offer in-person sessions.

A major focus within the Office of Admissions for FY 2019-20 has been the implementation of the Salesforce CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system and its Pardot email automation tool. The move into Salesforce will allow much improved reporting and tracking toward Admissions goals and a smoother handoff of accepted students from Admissions to Student Services.

BFIT Website

[BFIT's website](#) is the primary public source of information about the college, including mission and history; nonprofit, private status; academic offerings; accreditation details; leadership; admissions and financial aid policies; student and career services; press and media mentions; giving/alumni; as well as college news and events. The Marketing Department, which reports to the Office of Admissions but works closely with departments across the college, oversees the website.

The college's website was redesigned in late 2019 to give administrative departments an easier platform to present information so that it is timely and relevant for students and prospective students and to give users an easier way to navigate. The website is overseen by the Marketing Department, with development and technical support from our web hosting company, MetroCreate Studios. The Marketing Coordinator has set a goal to require each department to review their department web pages at least annually. The Marketing Coordinator is developing a web-based User Guide and short CMS training program. The User Guide will be completed by Spring 2022.

As part of the website overhaul in 2019, the Marketing Department focused on expanding and improving access to information about academic programs, expected length of study for all programs, cost of attendance, and financial aid options. Some of the new pages include:

- Typical course sequence, timeline for completion, and potential career paths and incomes for every academic program;
- Current tuition costs and fees, with link to Net Price Calculator tool;
- Step-by-step guide to completing the FAFSA (including a how-to video);
- Clear explanation of scholarships, grants, and loan programs.

In Summer 2020, the college re-aligned its academic offerings, discontinuing some majors and launching 6 new short-term certificates. Because of the timing of these changes, there was confusion among incoming students—and even staff initially—about what majors were available for fall 2020 enrollment. For clarity, BFIT listed both the suspended programs and the new certificates on the main Academics web page and kept the list there throughout September 2020 while the Admissions team reached out one by one to all prospective students whose major of choice had been affected by the changes. Later, web pages for suspended programs were edited to include text saying they were not currently enrolling new students.

Over the last year, the Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruiting/Chief Enrollment Officer and the Dean of Academic Affairs have worked to improve communication, to finalize new program details well in advance of their expected enroll date, and to identify the need for marketing support earlier in the

process. For example, the college is expanding its stackable programming model, which allows students in several BFIT majors to boost their resume quickly with a short certificate that can be “stacked” to earn a certificate, associate degree, and a bachelor’s degree in as little as 4 years. Additional stackable programs began enrolling students for fall 2021. Since the Enrollment and Marketing personnel were included early in the planning process, Admission counselors have been able to provide consistent information about the pathways, timelines, and outcomes for these new programs as soon as the programs are approved.

The steady decline of our students’ loan default rate is one key measure of success of the college’s efforts to ensure students and families get the information they need to understand the costs and benefits of a BFIT education. The student loan default rate, which was 27% in 2012, fell to 19% by 2016 and dropped further to 17.4% in 2017. (See Standards 5 & 7)

The college maintains a [COVID-19 Updates and Resources](#) webpage, which is linked from an alert banner in the website header. That page includes a Returning to Campus Safety Guide listing all policies and procedures for anyone entering BFIT’s campus, as well as links to resources and all college communications regarding COVID-19.

BFIT lists current faculty, their rank, and their academic credentials on both the college website (within each Academic major) and in the Course Catalog. The names, titles, and contact information for the [Academic Affairs staff and all Academic Department Directors](#) are on the website. The website is updated annually, although updates can be made during the year as needed.

The names, titles, and contact information for all PAC members, as well as the names and professional affiliations of all members of the Board of Trustees, board officers, and standing committees are listed on the [BFIT Leadership](#) web page, as well as in the Course Catalog. This information is updated on the website annually or more frequently as directed by the CEO.

The website footer includes the college’s Admissions Office contact information: address, phone, and email, as well as links to our social media channels. These channels are all monitored, with people receiving a response within one day of reaching out to us.

Quick links are available for the most frequently visited web pages, and links to important policies such as [Privacy Policy](#), [Notice of Non-Discrimination](#), and [Student Conduct Policies](#) (which includes Title IX Policies). As noted above, the college’s [COVID-19 updates](#) are available on the website via a link from the site-wide alert banner.

BFIT currently contracts with an outside agency for security coverage during all hours that the school is open. All [campus crime incidents](#) are recorded and are posted on the college’s website by the Department of Student Services to comply with the “Student-Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act (CLERY Act of 1965).”

The BFIT website includes data required as part of the public disclosure standard that the college reports annually and externally to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report. However, IPEDS data presents an incomplete picture because it is based solely on outcomes for first-year, bachelor’s degree students—who comprise less than 15% of BFIT’s student body. So, this year, the Director of Institutional Reporting and the Assistant Dean for Records and Research created an additional Retention formula that includes data from all BFIT programs (certificates, AS, and BS degrees). [The IPEDS Graduation/Transfer data, and the new Student Retention chart](#), are publicly available on the website.

BFIT's [Fast Facts web page](#) provides a snapshot of the total size and demographics of the student body, faculty, student ratios, and annual financial aid awarded to students. This information comes mainly from the Director of Institutional Reporting's shared folder in the share drive.

The college received funds from the 2020 CARES Act, which it used to provide emergency financial grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19. The college published its [Student Relief Grant and HEERF Funding Disclosure](#) on the website. This disclosure includes BFIT's process for distributing funds to students, the total funding received under the HEERF Student Portion, as well as the number of eligible students, and total amount distributed as of the most recent reporting date.

For industries where licensure is a key driver for employment, BFIT designs its programs to cover material needed to pass licensure exams in that industry, and students are encouraged to take the exams. However, sitting for licensure exams is not required and most programs do not collect or report licensure passage rates for their students. The Opticianry program does report passage rates for state and federal licensure as part of its accreditation by the [Commission on Opticianry Accreditation](#).

The website includes a listing of [BFIT's articulation agreements](#) including both college and high school articulation agreements.

[BFIT's audited financial statements and summary reports](#) for the last two years are available on the website.

All institutional information is contained in the annual Course Catalog. The [current course catalog and previous catalogs dating back to the 2015/16 academic year](#) are published electronically on the college's website as downloadable pdfs. The Office of the Registrar has paper copies of the Course Catalog dating back to 1942.

The [Student Handbook](#) is a comprehensive college publication for current students, advising them of their rights and responsibilities, the college mission and values, policies, and resources. Students are directed to the handbook at the beginning of the semester during the onboarding process. The Department of Student Services updates the handbook annually.

The Canvas learning management platform is where currently enrolled students interact with professors, submit assignments, and view their grades. Canvas has been an even more important platform since the move to online learning. Since this is the platform where students spend much of their time, Student Services has worked to re-create BFIT's student support systems—including free tutoring and success coaching for every student—within Canvas. Resources that students now access from within Canvas include Bystander Training, Career Readiness Resources, access to library databases and Ask A Librarian, an online Academic Success Center (with tutoring services). Elements of New Student Orientation are also currently being held in Canvas.

BFIT maintains an active social media presence on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. The college's posts range from news about student and faculty achievements, information about upcoming events or deadlines, promotions for financial aid or admissions info sessions, and campus activities. In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, social media became a more prominent tool for the Student Services and Admissions teams to reach and engage with current and prospective students. Members of the Admissions and Student Services teams monitor all social channels and respond to most inquiries within one day of receiving them.

Appraisal

Transparency and Public Disclosure

In past years, faculty and staff could rely on frequent informal encounters to keep communication lines open between departments. The move to a virtual workplace because of the COVID-19 crisis has brought into stark relief the flaws of that approach. BFIT needs more thoughtful, formal systems to ensure that accurate and timely communication flows between and among college leadership, faculty, staff, and students. This is especially important as the college continues to change and improve its academic offerings, its technology platforms, and as it prepares for the move to a new campus in Roxbury.

Website and portal—Marketing plans to create and deploy a training program so that more departments across the college are monitoring and updating their web pages at least twice a semester approximately thirty days to the start of the semester. The recent introduction of a Live Chat feature on the website has become a helpful tool for flagging information that is either missing from the website or cannot be easily found. Marketing now monitors chat transcripts to identify recurring website navigation issues and resolve them.

Information and Public Records Requests – BFIT responds to information requests and has a process for managing those requests. The college’s phone and email--found on every page of the website – is monitored by the admissions staff, which forwards all non-Admissions inquiries to the correct department. Likewise, the Live Chat feature on the website is overseen by an outside vendor that forwards all unanswered inquiries to Admissions to be routed to the correct department.

Financial Aid – BFIT recognizes the importance of financial considerations for prospective students and publishes a link to the [BFIT Net Price Calculator](#). The website includes a complete [list of tuition and fees](#) as well as [withdrawal policies](#).

Social Media – BFIT has official social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Using these channels, the college shares its stories, communicates important news and information, and fosters engagement with diverse audiences. To date, the Marketing and Student Services teams have been able to loosely coordinate their posts to the various accounts. However, it may be helpful to create a monthly calendar that encourages posts as more departments show an interest in posting content.

Projections

Responsibility	Project Details	Estimated Completion
Marketing	Conduct website training sessions for departments so they can update web pages directly. Create a User Guide to help troubleshoot issues after training.	Spring 2022
Marketing	Create a plan to better publicize website resources for students, faculty/staff, and parents -- including a monthly marketing newsletter and social media posts.	Fall 2021/Spring 2022

Academic Affairs/Enrollment/Marketing	Formalize the system for the launch of new programs developed by Academic Affairs and rolled out by Enrollment/Marketing to ensure that once programs are formally approved, they can be quickly added to the website and Admissions materials, and be effectively marketed.	Fall 2021/Spring 2022
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