APPENDIX 1

Recommendations

1. **Innovation in the FIT Culture**
FIT must create a culture of innovation throughout the College. While many innovative activities are currently taking place in various areas of the College, “innovation” needs to be a mantra that the entire college community espouses as one of FIT’s points of pride. Innovation needs to become part of the College’s brand. This is an iterative process that can be accomplished in a variety of ways, many of which are described in the recommendations that follow.

2. **Innovation in the FIT Curriculum**
In order to fully realize its potential as a leader in innovative thinking and establish its brand as the “go-to” destination for innovative activity, FIT must first and foremost fully embed innovation into the curriculum. This can only be achieved as a collaborative effort among all faculty, across all schools, and the Center for Continuing and Professional Studies. This may initially take the form of additions of or modifications to existing courses, and/or workshops and seminars but will gradually evolve into placing a greater emphasis on innovation throughout the entire curriculum. In order to underscore the importance and significance of innovation, FIT should require a course on innovation as part of the first-year experience as well as a third-year shared experience course across all disciplines. This third-year experience course would include new transfer students to FIT as well as those students who have moved from the associate degree programs to the bachelor’s degree programs.

3. **Innovation Center**
FIT requires a dedicated space for an Innovation Center. While a space for this purpose is included as part of the College’s Master Plan, in the short-term, a small space should be dedicated to serve as a temporary space for innovation activities. The FIT/Infor Design and Tech Lab may serve this purpose but an additional space would serve as another means of creating a college-wide culture of innovation. Ultimately, the permanent Innovation Center should ideally be approximately 10,000 square feet.

4. **Innovation Leadership**
Full-time leadership is needed to direct the College’s innovation efforts. The official title of this leader and the roles and responsibilities should be decided during the first year this plan is launched, keeping in mind that leading the Innovation Center and building its staff will be a key component of the leader’s responsibilities. However, as an immediate step in the roll out of the
plan, the College should appoint an “implementation leader” charged with directing the launch of the plan and facilitating discussions regarding permanent innovation leadership.

5. Innovation Programs, Symposia, Events, and other Activities
Schools, divisions, and departments should incorporate the teaching and promotion of “innovation” into programming and other planned activities. Innovation should be a component and/or focus of co- and extra-curricular activities, workshops, events, and departmental activities including Museum exhibitions and symposia. While the Innovation Center may serve as a nexus for the coordination of many of these activities, embedding innovation into activities across the campus will serve to nurture and reinforce a culture of innovation throughout the entire FIT community.

*Note: Myriad innovation-related activities have already taken place or are in the planning stages. Examples include:

- Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) workshops and demonstrations were initiated in AY2017.
- The first in a series of events titled An Evening of Technology Collaboration and Education began in July 2017 and will continue throughout AY2018.
- A Retail Lab (within the FIT/Infor Design and Tech Lab) is being developed to explore the impact of emerging technology on design, manufacturing, and retail.

*For a complete list and descriptions of innovation activities recently undertaken or in progress, please refer to Attachment 1.

6. Partnerships
The College should actively partner with a wide range of external groups, institutions, and industries as well as build on existing alliances -- locally, nationally, and internationally -- in order to exchange ideas and share expertise related to innovation efforts and to position FIT as a preferred “innovation solution provider” -- the go-to destination with the expertise to solve industry problems. In this role, the Innovation Center will serve as a centralized conduit for the exchanges among internal and external constituents and Innovation Center staff will actively promote and facilitate these dialogues as well as identify the appropriate expertise to solve problems brought to FIT from external groups.

*Note: Several partnerships have already been or are in the process of being forged. Examples include:
7. Internships, Fellowships, Contests, Competitions, and Other Challenges that Enhance the Learning Experience
FIT should actively pursue and engage students as well as external experts in innovation activities (e.g., exploration, research, product development, etc.). This should include but not be limited to hiring students as interns in the Innovation Center, using the College’s recently developed visiting professionals program as one of the vehicles to create fellowships and other external opportunities, and actively seeking and/or creating contests, industry sponsored projects, and other challenges and competitions that promote innovation and emphasize innovation as a core concept in a student’s FIT educational experience.

8. Funding
The implementation of many innovation activities will require significant funding as will the build out of the Innovation Center. Funding needs may include costs for faculty and staff professional development, start-up costs for innovation projects, faculty and student stipends, staffing, construction, and outfitting the Innovation Center with furniture, equipment, software, and other peripherals. As an initial investment, the College may need to use operating and capital dollars including funds secured to implement the College’s Master Plan. However, over time, a targeted fundraising effort should be launched to solicit funds to support the Innovation Center and other innovation activities with an ultimate long-range goal of the Innovation Center and related activities being self-sustaining. The Innovation Center may be an attractive naming opportunity for an appropriate donor.
9. Alumni Engagement
In collaboration with the innovation leader, the Office of Alumni Engagement and Giving should forge connections with alumni, particularly those whose affiliations are innovation related, through the creation of programs and other activities that actively engage them in innovation activities. The Innovation Center can play an important role in helping to facilitate these activities.

10. Innovation Network
FIT’s Innovation Center should by no means be the only dedicated location on campus that hosts innovative activities. There are already spaces such as the Gladys Marcus Library, FIT/Infor Design and Tech Lab, the Museum at FIT, the soon to be launched Faculty Research Innovation Space and planned spaces such as Studio X, and space at the Bush Terminal in Brooklyn where “innovation happens.” One of the immediate tasks for the innovation leader should be to map FIT’s Innovation Network which includes a comprehensive list of all spaces, faculty, staff, programs, and other activities associated with innovation. This network will serve as a support system for internal and external “innovators.”

11. Innovation Database
The innovation leader should create and manage a centralized database housing innovation-related research information, materials, faculty and staff areas of expertise, etc. to serve as a resource for the internal FIT community as well as for external constituents and/or potential partners. This may include message boards, project libraries and archives, etc. Selection of the appropriate database will be in consultation with FIT Information Technology staff.

* Examples of research activities underway which would be included in such a database are:

- Algiknits
- EAST Visualization Lab
- EPA grant awarded to conduct research in the area of sustainability

*For a complete list and descriptions of research activities recently undertaken or currently in progress, please refer to Attachment 1.