

Frostburg Block Party. Our annual town-gown welcome back celebration for students and the university community is **tonight from 6 to 9 p.m.** on Main Street in Frostburg. Spend the evening visiting some of the local businesses and perusing organizational tents, etc. It's always a fun event for the city and the campus.

Regional Bobcat Innovation Launch Pad Competition. FSU, in partnership with the TEDCO (Maryland Technology Development Corporation) Maryland Innovation Initiative (MII) and the University System of Maryland (USM) Launch Fund, will host a regional Bobcat Innovation Launch Pad competition on the FSU campus on **Friday, Sept. 22, through Sunday, Sept. 24.** The focus of this year's Bobcat Innovation Launch Pad will be on distributed energy resources, virtual power plants, climate change, and environmental, social and governance factors.

The Bobcat Innovation Launch Pad is a unique program that will combine the best aspects of a hackathon with those of a business pitch competition, providing teams with an opportunity to work quickly and collectively to develop business models and technology-based solutions to real-world problems.

Multidisciplinary teams consisting of four to five student members, advised and mentored by FSU faculty, staff and subject matter experts, will put their technical and entrepreneurial skills to the test as they work through problem statements related to this year's themes and conduct market research to create a commercially viable solution and subsequent new technologies to solve difficult issues.

Winning teams placing first through third will be awarded cash funding in amounts of \$2,500, \$1,500 and \$1,000, respectively, to support further exploration and development of their solution. The Bobcat Innovation Launch Pad competition is open to all students in any undergraduate or graduate degree program. While an engineering or coding background is not required, participants should be curious and highly collaborative, with the ability to utilize critical reasoning skills to work within a multi-disciplinary team.

There is no cost to attend the event, but to participate, students must apply online by **Friday, Sept. 15, at 5 p.m.** Lunch and snacks will be provided. Space is limited, so visit <https://www.frostburg.edu/competitions/bobcat-innovation-launch-pad/2023.php> to apply.

Open campus meetings/sessions. The next two months will include several open sessions for the university community:

- The first is the annual **State of the University session** on Thursday, Sept 7 from 2:30 to 4 p.m. It will be held in the PAC Recital Hall and is open to all faculty, staff and students. The vice presidents will report on their division's activities.
- Look for a notice soon from the Provost and VP for Administration & Finance on an **open Budget Advisory Council** meeting to discuss this year's budget and answer questions.
- A series of open meetings is scheduled for October to focus on the transition from our nearly completed strategic plan (2013-2018) to two strategic initiatives to take us through December 2026. This is the tentative schedule with locations to be announced later:
 - *Review of FSU Mission, Vision, & Values*
 - October 5 10 – 11:15 a.m.
 - October 9 3 – 4:15 p.m.
 - October 10 2 – 3:15 p.m.
 - *Strategic Enrollment Initiative*
 - October 16 3 – 4:15 p.m.
 - October 17 9 – 10:15 a.m.
 - October 17 1 – 2:15 p.m.
 - *Campus Culture Initiative*
 - October 23 1 – 2:15 p.m.
 - October 24 3 – 4:15 p.m.
 - October 25 10: 11:15 a.m.
 - *Hagerstown Session:* October 26 Noon – 2:30 p.m.

Educational Advisory Board (EAB). As part of our work with EAB, a national organization designed to support higher education, everyone with a frostburg.edu email address can access their library of research on many different topics related to higher education. Visit www.eab.com and set up an account using your Frostburg email address.

Enrollment. We are still completing our registration work for this semester's enrollment. Our official "Census" date for fall enrollment is next week. The last day to enter any changes is Monday, September 11. At this point, we have seen an approximate 20% increase in first-time incoming students and transfer students relative to last year at this time. It is great to see that increase.

Have a good week and I hope to see many of you on Main Street this evening. Go Bobcats!