

# MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

## Mission

Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies. The university contributes to the enrichment of society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, and public service.

## Vision

Grand Valley State University demonstrates its commitment to providing an inclusive learning environment where all students can explore new directions, find their niches, and develop skills for life and productive careers. Grand Valley is known for increasingly innovative and outstanding teaching, recognized scholarship, significant community engagement, and excellent stewardship of its resources. Our university inspires and equips students to be active lifelong learners and global citizens. Grand Valley strives to be a model public university shaping leaders for success.

## Value Statement

At Grand Valley State University, the primary focus is on the success of students. To that end, the principles of liberal education permeate all programs and areas of study. This broad educational perspective provides students with the general knowledge and transferable skills necessary to positively influence their communities, their professions, and the broader world.

The institution is characterized by and known for its superior student-centered teaching and learning. Students acquire new knowledge and explore its application through artistic expression, scholarly activity, and active engagement in a variety of communities — to students we are a big university with a small college feel.

Our mission, vision, and strategic outcomes reflect the seven core values that define students, faculty and staff members. These core values provide a foundation and framework for all of Grand Valley's decision-making processes. We use them as touchstones in developing the strategies and tactics that lead to the attainment of the institutional outcomes and strategic priority areas and objectives of our strategic plan. We translate our values into actions institution-wide; they are reflected in the policies, practices, and assessments we implement every day. These core values are described as follows:

### *Excellence*

Grand Valley State University values excellence in all aspects of its enterprise. Our students' levels of performance in learning, scholarship, and community service; our stewardship of resources; our regular assessment and refinement of instructional and operational processes; and our shared dedication to excellence compel us to strive for exemplary and responsible outcomes in all that we do. Within our academic community, we individually and collectively celebrate our successes and the difference our commitment to excellence makes to individuals and communities in West Michigan, the state, the nation, and the world.

### *Integrity*

Grand Valley State University values honesty, fairness, and openness in its actions, transactions, and communications. Our emphasis on integrity compels us to respect and teach the fundamental tenets of a liberal education that remain central to our identity and reputation. We moreover value the incorporation of ethics into critical thinking and decision making institution-wide. The value we place on integrity underscores our intention to be trustworthy, dependable, and adhere to legal and regulatory requirements; we aspire to set an example for others in our words and actions. Our stakeholders and the public can count on Grand Valley to make wise decisions and carry them out transparently and with fidelity to the university's mission and vision for its future. As members of the Grand Valley community we hold ourselves accountable to each other, the institution, and the broader public that we serve.

*Please visit the Strategic Positioning website to see the Grand Valley State University Strategic Plan 2016-2021.*



### *Inquiry*

Grand Valley State University values inquiry, which encourages the lifelong pursuit of knowledge to improve the human condition and expand our understanding of the world. Consistent with our historical commitment to liberal education, we invest our resources to promote intellectual growth, creativity, scholarship, and critical thinking in our students, our faculty and staff, and the communities we serve. We promote global education and an internationalization of our curriculum that celebrates and encourages intellectual exploration, open discourse, and the unfettered expression that characterizes the academy. We celebrate and promote freedom of speech as foundational to the creation and dissemination of knowledge in every discipline. We are committed to learning as a means of preparing individuals for academic success, meaningful careers, and exemplary community service.

### *Inclusiveness*

Grand Valley State University values all identities, perspectives, and backgrounds and is dedicated to incorporating multiple voices and experiences into every aspect of its operations. We believe that diversity competencies are an intellectual asset and that a range of thoughtful perspectives and a commitment to open inquiry strengthens our liberal education tradition. We recognize that the long-term viability of the institution depends upon anticipating and meeting the needs of emerging constituent groups, especially our changing student body. Therefore, the institution seeks to include, engage, and support diverse groups of students, faculty and staff members, as well as community members. Grand Valley is committed to strengthening our living, learning, and working environment by recognizing and removing the barriers to full participation and providing a safe, inclusive, vibrant community for all.

### *Community*

Grand Valley State University values its connections to, participation with, and responsibility to local communities, West Michigan, the state, the nation, and the world. We value the collaboration of faculty members, staff members, and students with external partners in addressing mutual interests and community needs. The university offers the communities it serves resources and inspiration in their own lifelong pursuit of knowledge. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to contribute their expertise and service working in partnership with communities. Students are encouraged to take part in various service learning and volunteer opportunities in their communities and abroad. To foster and expand these community connections, the institution and its members promote, value, and honor diverse perspectives.

### *Sustainability*

Grand Valley State University values the guiding principles of sustainability in helping to meet the current needs of our faculty members, staff members, and students without compromising the needs and resources of future generations. We are committed to working with our community partners to create a sustainable future for our university, our community, our region, our state, our nation, and the world. We model applied sustainability best practices in our campus operations and administration, education for sustainable development, student involvement, and community engagement by promoting social responsibility, practicing fiscal responsibility, and encouraging environmental stewardship. We provide our students with excellence in education for sustainable development by imbedding theory, systems-oriented thinking, and service learning into our curricular and extracurricular programs.

### *Innovation*

Grand Valley State University encourages and appreciates innovation. We value entrepreneurship and integrative interdisciplinary collaboration that solves local, regional, and global problems and advances the common good. We strive for the development of innovative products, systems, and services that contribute to improvements in the wellbeing of individuals and our world. We trust that scholarship and the new knowledge it produces are worthy of our investments in their creation and proliferation. We manage our resources and structure our university to encourage new ideas, creativity in all its forms, and novel approaches to answering the most important and challenging questions of our time.