Assurance Argument

Grand Valley State University - MI

Review date: 6/5/2023

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

1.A.1 The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) is a Doctoral/Professional institution serving over 22,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The student body is diverse, both demographically and in terms of non-traditional students (including veterans, older students, and other adults in transition). The university promotes ongoing success for all students as its core mission.

The 2016-2021 Strategic Positioning Process is described in detail in the 2018 Assurance Argument but will appear as part of this argument intermingled with the new mission because both missions served the previous 4 years under review. That former mission is:

> *"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."*

In 2019, President Mantella initiated a collaborative process to plan for the future of GVSU called Reach Higher 2025 (RH2025). This planning recognizes and responds to the shrinking number of high school graduates in Michigan in the years ahead. RH2025 resulted in a new mission, vision, values, and series of commitments for GVSU. The process involved 18 "huddles" of students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Ultimately, over 8,000 stakeholders participated and gave input, along with more than 150,000 comments helping to guide the process. In Winter 2021, an inclusive steering committee spearheaded the development of the RH2025 strategic framework. The committee included eight representatives from the University Academic Senate (UAS), student and staff

representatives, presidential fellow appointees, and liaisons to the enrollment, digital, and equity parallel planning efforts. In addition to the 18 huddles there were 24 steering committee meetings. The work of the steering committee concluded with RH2025 endorsements from the UAS, Board of Trustees (BOT), Student Senate and Administrative Professionals (AP) Executive Committee in January 2022. This collaborative guiding mission is:

> "At Grand Valley State University, we **empower learners** in their **pursuits**, **professions**, and **purpose**. The university enriches society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, advancement of equity, and public service."

1.A.2 The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.

GVSU's RH2025 mission is rapidly being deployed. Grand Valley's mission is clearly articulated in the 2016-2021 strategic planning documents available on the strategic planning website. RH2025 is featured on the About GVSU page, and this link appears in the footer that is common on most university webpages.

The GVSU community is proud of the mission and what it stands for in the region and beyond. The mission is a touchstone in conversation and planning at every level; when "mission" is used as a GVSU website search term, hundreds of hits reveal the many programs and units throughout the institution that have developed their own strategic alignment with GVSU's mission statement. The mission is articulated in public statements made by the university's administrative team (ex. 1, ex. 2) and divisions and colleges are also building on RH2025.

The mission and associated strategic planning efforts are recorded, tracked, assessed and reviewed in a common web-based system named *GVPlan*. This system (one of the core components of a larger system called *GVAdvance*) was built in-house and is used by all divisions, colleges, and units and is accessible by all faculty and staff. Key components of the plans, including mission statements and overview of annual progress made toward achievement of planning objectives are viewable publicly on a searchable website that is directly connected with strategic plan updates completed in *GVAdvance* (e.g., Seidman College of Business, Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies). College/unit websites also provide instant access to missions (e.g., KCON, Accounting, and Computer Engineering) or even a dedicated page showing all strategic planning efforts (e.g., Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies) and centers (e.g., the Office of Multicultural Affairs). Programs/units and their parent colleges or divisions regularly review progress (either annually or biennially) of planning efforts, and the University Assessment Committee reviews all curricular and co-curricular programs every two years, as part of a regular review schedule.

The impact of the previous mission's influence on instruction, scholarship, research, creative work and other various impacts is exhibited in the Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Final Report and in related documents and progress reports (e.g., Accountability Report). The final report for the Strategic Plan 2016-2021 explains the impact COVID-19 had on strategic planning work, but also details the majority completed, in-progress, and revised objectives. Examples of accomplishments include the LEADS program, Campus LINKS, National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, and the Annual Teach-In. The university Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Accreditation website also provides instruction and links to help illustrate the ways the mission statement has influenced (and will continue to influence, specifically as the RH2025 initiatives are being deployed) all aspects of the

strategic plan, including scholarship, research, service, economic development, and the various social and cultural concerns of the university.

1.A.3 The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.

GVSU's RH2025 mission statement clearly identifies the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its programs and how the institution strives to help learners in their **pursuits**, **professions**, and **purpose**.

RH2025 provides 3 commitments that shape how GVSU strives towards achieving the RH2025 mission and vision, but also positions the university to better shape the future for what GVSU must become. These commitments are:

1. *An Empowered Educational Experience* (e.g., understanding of individual student needs, motivations, and goals; expanded flexibility for learning, personalized assistance, community engagement, digital literacy, and leadership development)
2. *A Lifetime of Learning* (e.g., develop supportive connections within and beyond GVSU community members; increase options for adult learners; build strategic institutional partnerships to serve diverse groups of learners)
3. *A Culture of Educational Equity* (e.g., remove systemic barriers, establish policies, practices, systems; establish culture that demonstrate accountability to diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and well-being for all community members)

The strategies provided for each commitment demonstrate how GVSU is evolving and maturing in a responsible manner to build upon its higher education offerings and services.

1.A.4 The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

GVSU's mission embraces both student learning as well as the enrichment of society. Academic programming and practices support and enhance this mission. Instructional offerings encompass more than 300 areas of study, including 96 undergraduate and 45 graduate programs.

Academic Offerings

With a mission rooted in a commitment to the liberal education tradition, GVSU has responded to emerging needs of society by creating new academic programs and updating existing programs to sustain educational and practical relevance. As discussed in Criterion 3, the rigorous approval process for new undergraduate and graduate programs ensures alignment with the institution's mission, vision, and values, as well as available resources. For example, the Bachelor of Applied Science program reflects changes in the global context and emerging local needs and offers students the opportunity to focus on one of four in-demand areas: Leadership and Business Fundamentals, Professional Innovation, Technology Project Management, and Web Design and Development. These innovative new curricula help GVSU address its RH2025 Commitment: Lifetime of Learning.

GVSU also meets its mission through institutional programs aimed at educating students beyond the walls of the institution. For example, local and regional civic engagement opportunities are fostered through GVSU's Office for Community Engagement and the Office of Student Life and Civic Engagement. Continuing education opportunities for professionals in fields like Education, Safety

(MIOSHA), and Social Work are managed through the [Center for Adult and Continuing Studies](). National and international experiential learning opportunities are facilitated through partner organizations such as the [Johnson Center for Philanthropy's Community Research Institute]() and the [Padnos International Center]().

Student Support Services

Student support at GVSU has always been a primary focus. To better focus on the various needs of students, the Academic and Student Affairs Division was [split into two separate divisions](). The split made sense for an institution of the size of GVSU, but also to help address the diverse needs of students. That is one way that student support services have kept pace with the evolving student profile.

GVSU has invested significantly in providing services for nontraditional students and veterans. For example, Continuing Education was renamed the [Center for Adult and Continuing Studies](), reflecting a reorganization to provide returning adult students with "one stop" advising service; this unit recently merged with Graduate Studies, Alumni Affairs, and the Career Center to further support what adult learners need on their journey, whether via degree completion programs, graduate credentials, or short-form certificates. GVSU also has a [Veterans Upward Bound]() program and a new [Veteran Promise]() for Michigan high school seniors who have enlisted in the military. GVSU also holds [Gold Status from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency]() for its friendliness to military students; the Military Times ranked the university "one of its 140 ["Best for Vets"]() institutions in 2021 for outstanding support to current and former service members." In addition, the [Children's Enrichment Center]() provides affordable childcare and early childhood education to children of GVSU students and the campus community.

In addition to the university's efforts to provide services to nontraditional students and veterans, the [Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach]() advances a broad, intersectional social justice framework. The Division coordinates sustainable and strategic institutional efforts to engage all members of the community while also intentionally supporting and advocating for historically underrepresented communities. A few impressive examples include the [Hispanic Heritage Celebration]() and [Native American Mno'chegewin student success program]() organized by the [Office of Multicultural Affairs]() and student organizations; the [Queer and Trans 101: Training for Allies]() offered by the [Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center](); [Laker Familia]() [programs](), [Black Excellence]() orientation and mentorship programs; gender justice/violence prevention work through the [Center for Women and Gender Equity](); and [DSR Program Advisors]() offered by [Disability Support Resources]().

Enrollment Profile

GVSU's efforts to serve an increasingly diverse student body have seen accelerating results. The first-time-in-any-college (FTIAC) class for 2021-22 was the [most ethnically diverse ever](), both in terms of the number and percentage of entering learners who are students of color. In addition, GVSU attracted it's [highest-ever number of international graduate students](). New programs and supports for adult degree completers resulted in an [increase in the number and percentage]() undergraduate learners who are older than traditional college age, reversing a decade-long trend.

All Divisions attend to the characteristics of incoming students, with a collective goal of allocating resources toward increasing the diversity of the student body and meeting the needs of returning adult learners, veterans, and our large population of FTIAC and first-generation students. While resourcing student support systems (e.g., [TRIO Student Support Services]()) is of great importance at

GVSU, so too is fostering professional development programs (e.g., New Faculty Orientation, New Staff Orientation) to keep the particular needs of various student population at the forefront of campus thinking.

In 2020, GVSU created the Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach, led by a Vice President for Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach, which signaled the central role of admissions, retention, and completion in the university's strategic vision. A large, cross-divisional Strategic Enrollment Management Task Force was created, and in 2021, completed work on a new Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP) to guide the work of 14 transformation teams dedicated to the recruitment and retention of a diverse and capable student body. For a more detailed description of the university's current and past enrollment profiles, see the Office of Institutional Analysis.

1.A.5 The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Prospective students and families encounter the mission statement early on in investigating GVSU when they receive the General Education Program handbook during campus visits. When enrolling students and their families return for new student orientation, they'll find the mission statement in the Catalog, which describes every program and course at the university, as well as in the president's welcome within the *Family Guide* booklet and the interactive University Viewbook which highlights student support services.

The mission is at the core of the standards outlined in the Student Code, a document created to create a community atmosphere in which the mission, vision, and values can flourish. For example, the Office of Student Life Involvement Assistants help students become an integral part of the campus community, aligning with the RH2025 mission of empowering learners in their pursuits, professions, and purpose. The Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies' Peter C. Cook Leadership Academy provides leadership development for 60+ undergraduate and graduate students each year, aligned with RH2025. These efforts share a common thread across student co-curricular experience of achieving the GVSU mission.

Employees initially see the mission statement on the GVSU job posting website, Human Resources website (About Grand Valley State University), and in the Commitment to Inclusion and Equity and Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy. The mission is featured on the University Policies website that includes the Faculty Handbook and Board of Trustees Policies, reflecting the university's commitment to all decision-making processes being in alignment with its mission.

Publications from University Communications highlight stories of the mission in action, including within Grand Valley Magazine which is mailed to alumni, parents, students, faculty and staff, and friends of the university, and in the Forum, a publication that is mailed to GVSU faculty, and staff. GV*Next,* a daily news website that welcomes story ideas from all members of the GVSU community also features stories of the university's mission in action. These publications and others articulate and highlight the many ways GVSU is educating students to "*shape lives, professions, and society*" as well as *"empower learners in their pursuits, professions, and purpose."*

The Laker Effect branding campaign, spearheaded by Institutional Marketing, plays off the familiar meteorological term "Lake Effect," to showcase the collective impact of the GVSU mission. Since 2016, campus community members have shared the impact GVSU has had on them and that they, in turn, have on society through research, service, creativity, problem solving, volunteering, or

advocacy. The Laker Effect has been featured on billboards, print, web and broadcast advertisements, and on apparel at the Laker Store. An abbreviated version of the mission statement appears on building banners, business cards, and throughout many GVSU public documents. Together, these messages highlight how the people who comprise GVSU — students, alumni, and employees —"enrich society" and "empower learners" as stated in the GVSU mission.

In sum, not only is the mission stated and presented clearly and publicly, the evidence presented above also demonstrates the many ways it guides the institution's plans, actions, and interactions with the Grand Valley community. The mission defines GVSU's culture.

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.B.1 The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.

The second sentence of GVSU's mission statement - *The university enriches society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, advancement of equity, and public service educating students to shape their lives, their professions and their societies* - embodies the institution's commitment to the public good. The GVSU vision also makes this commitment clear: prepare globally minded citizens for the future they face *and the communities they shape.* The approach is unique as while GVSU is a large, complex university, it maintains a consistent focus on offering students rich experiences embedded in the traditions of liberal education. Commitment to this tradition is evident in the institution's range of undergraduate and graduate academic programs which include interdisciplinary degrees, as well as a select few professional/clinical doctorates.

The commitment to the public good is demonstrated on campus in many ways. A primary example at GVSU is the exemplary efforts maintained by the Office of Sustainability Practices. This office organizes many events to promote and teach the importance of sustainable measures. GVSU has created a sustainable agriculture project, which is a collaboration between students, faculty, and staff to experience sustainable agriculture on the main campus. The success of the office is measured in the wide array of awards and recognitions it has received, including:

1. Named one of the country's "Most Environmentally Responsible Colleges" by The Princeton Review, for twelve years in a row
2. Maintaining Gold Status, since 2013, according to The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)
3. Ranking second in the 2021 Sustainable Campus Index for master's institutions, according to AASHE

1.B.2 The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

As a state university with a focus on student-centered teaching and learning, GVSU is not driven by profit margins. It promotes transparency of a commitment to the public good by issuing an annual

Accountability Report. This report, along with other evidence presented below, provides assurance that the university's educational responsibilities take primacy over all other interests. This practice of providing regular reports to the institution's public stakeholders is an ongoing commitment and a top priority in GVSU's strategic planning cycle. Additionally, the accountability reports demonstrate the many ways GVSU helps build Michigan's future.

1.B.3 The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

GVSU's responsiveness to the public good can be gauged in qualitative ways at every level through our curricular development, faculty-led initiatives, and student engagement.

Curricular development that serves the public good is illustrated by the creation of the Lifelong Educational Attainment for Determined Students (LEADS) program, which launched in early 2020. The program aims to be an accelerated degree program serving the 2 million Michigan residents who have earned college credits but did not earn a bachelor's degree. More recently, GVSU added four new Bachelor of Applied Science programs (BAS) to serve students who have earned an associate of applied science degree and need a path to advance their careers and serve needs in society.

GVSU also recognizes the need to serve a dire labor shortage in Michigan. In 2023, GVSU launched a work-and-learning program called the Laker Accelerated Talent Link, with five West Michigan-based employment partners to help provide the talent they need. GVSU is also addressing a need for public health education in northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula with an articulation agreement with Lake Superior State University.

GVSU is the leading provider of health care professionals in West Michigan with more than 9,300 students enrolled in 20+ health-related programs. The university is a key partner of the Grand Rapids, MI Medical Mile that employs more than 60,000 bioscience-related professionals and is expected to double moving forward.

The university's commitment to service and the public good is found in large program development, and in faculty-level engagement with the community. The Faculty Handbook outlines faculty responsibilities and workload: *"Service to the community involves faculty members acting as representatives of the university while using their expertise to contribute to the public's knowledge and welfare."* This expectation is reflected in faculty reviews and annual faculty workload reports where public service is cited as evidence of successful faculty performance.

Many academic units are engaged in community partnerships that enhance student educational experience while offering important benefits to the community. GVSU's Community Engagement office, in the Office of the Provost, provides a quick reference to highlight the many community based efforts and partnerships that exist. For example, every single Engineering student participates in a co-op experience that places students in area industry with partners to engage in experiential learning. Teacher preparation programs have extensive partnerships through preservice student teaching and field experiences that are common at most similar institutions, and the College of Education and Community Innovation has an office of Community Partnerships that maintains active connections in the community.

Students also strengthen the university's commitment to the public good**.** Internships keep students (and academic programs) connected with the public and workplace needs, and service-learning projects provide meaningful ways for students and faculty to participate in community development.

The Office of Student Life and Civic Engagement provides community service, civic engagement, and co-curricular learning opportunities for students to engage the local community. It is a campus clearinghouse and resource for students, and provides support to faculty and staff for community engagement and service-related initiatives.

Other civic partnership examples include the 1,100+ students who are members of GVSU fraternities and sororities contributing over 4,137 hours and more than $34,320 for philanthropic purposes in 2022. Moreover, the Community Service Learning Center reported that students completed over 25,296 community engagement hours. GVSU has also been designated as one of only 231 institutions as a Voter Friendly Campus since 2016; and recognized for the support of first-generation students by NASPA and The Suder Foundation.

In 2017, then President Haas signed the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Statement, indicating GVSU's commitment to the public purpose of higher education through many efforts including the GVSU Civic Action Plan with action updates.The efforts to create symbiosis between GVSU and the surrounding community are recognized annually with the most recent celebration in April 2023.

From the 2021-2022 Financial Report, more than 67% of revenues come from students and their families (via tuition, financial aid, and grants), underscoring their importance as immediate stakeholders. Appropriations from the State of Michigan comprise about 18 percent of revenues, which highlights GVSU's accountability to the broader public and elected officials. In addition, GVSU is accountable to its generous donors, for example, the recent addition of the Daniel and Pamella DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health (DCIH), had more than 700 donors providing tens of millions of dollars to the $70 million dollar project.

A concerted effort has been made to disseminate these reports widely. By making these reports and narratives interactive, dynamic, and publicly accessible, GVSU's Institutional Marketing Department and University Communications, the administration, and the university community can work together to ensure that planning and assessment data is both transparent and useful, and that stakeholders, including the BOT, are well-informed about the institution's progress each year.

GVSU engages with its communities and responds to their needs through Charter Schools initiatives. GVSU Charter Schools has nearly 80 schools, serving more than 35,000 students in grades K-12, making a difference in many educationally disadvantaged communities throughout Michigan.

GVSU's commitment to community engagement recently affirmed itself in three important ways:

1. The Office of Community Engagement was established to provide "mutually beneficial opportunities that employ assets, promote collective ownership and action, generate new knowledge, and resolve community challenges."
2. In the RH2025 values and commitments, GVSU underscored the importance of addressing community involvement of the students, faculty, and staff.
3. The Civic Action Plan has provided an opportunity to highlight, elevate, and further develop the work that many are already doing in the field of civic engagement, as well as grow and develop commitments.

GVSU has a long tradition of engagement with the community and commitment to and awareness of its public mission. It has a pedagogical history of learning in the progressive tradition, and over the years, this tradition has matured into a civic-minded pedagogy, evidence of which can be found across a wide range of academic programs.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

1.C.1 The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.

GVSU's Vision includes, "prepare globally minded citizens for the future they face and the communities they shape." Every day the institution strives to prepare students to lead into the future while recognizing that society becomes more diverse every year. Strategic planning efforts are being enacted across the institution after being formally approved by the BOT in early 2022. The strategic planning efforts resulted in a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP) that provides baseline progress and goals, along with recruitment and retention strategies. This effort is resulting in a more welcoming, diverse, and inclusive campus to enable GVSU to strive toward its vision and benefit students.

Ongoing education is essential in advancing GVSU's equity and inclusion efforts. This includes curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students, and professional development experiences for employees (ex 1, ex 2) that ensures they can best support students in this work.

A Cultures component in the General Education curriculum exposes all students to both global perspectives and U.S. diversity. Students must take one course in global perspectives, which provides perspectives regarding the ways of life in societies outside of the United States. Students also take one course in U.S. diversity, which focuses on understanding how diversity may affect their own identities, as well as their relationships with people in their social and political communities. In April 2022, UAS passed a General Education (GE) Committee recommendation on revised language for the US Diversity and Global Perspectives GE categories and a new Student Learning Objective specifically related to racism and systemic racism. This change was aimed at increasing students' understanding of the impact of systemic discrimination and racial inequity on individuals, communities, and society as a whole.

Across the institution, new courses, programs, minors, and certificates tied to inclusion, equity, and diversity have been added to the curriculum to help prepare students for a more diverse society. Curricular examples include newly established minors in LGBTQ studies and human rights, as well as a certificate in Latino/a Studies.

Academic and service units work to support and integrate culturally diverse perspectives in curricular

and co-curricular programming. An area of strength regarding diversity is GVSU's Intercultural Training Certificate program, housed in the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies. This certificate is designed to give students the skills to interact sensitively and effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. Through coursework across the university, bookended by an introductory course and a practicum, students learn in an atmosphere of respect about the differences that expand human capacity and enrich experiences.

The Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center, Gayle R. Davis Center for Women and Gender Equity, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and Disability Support Resources host many programs tied to inclusion and equity. A scholarships resource program for LGBT students has been established. All Housing and Residential Life (HRL) assistants care required to complete social justice pre-training and recurrent training while holding their position. Each living area seeks to educate residents via its HRL residential curriculum model, detailed within the HRL Strategic Plan, in the values of community building, academic success, becoming interculturally aware, and learning about becoming a citizen in a democracy.

In 2011, the Division of Student Affairs implemented Gender Inclusive Housing; review of such requests is done via partnership with faculty, Intercollegiate Athletics, and the Division of Inclusion and Equity (I&E). Substantial progress was made in this area, as GVSU met 100% of the requests (see page 6) received with placements in 2020. Additionally, there are a variety of inclusive facilities at the Allendale, Pew, and Health campuses, including accessible and gender inclusive restrooms, nursing facilities, and interfaith reflection rooms.

The Division of Inclusion & Equity (I&E) works to develop, and connect students, faculty, and staff with programs and services that empower them to learn about the many ways their intersecting identities inform their understanding of their worldview and role in disrupting or maintaining power and privilege. Example programming includes a dialogue series, trained student ambassadors, and social justice service learning opportunities and education. In addition, I&E provides an LGBT inclusion workshop to employees called Queer and Trans 101.

In promoting interfaith understanding and mutual respect, the Kaufman Interfaith Institute offers over 200 events/initiatives each year that seek to create a more inclusive and equitable West Michigan Community for persons of diverse cultural and religious/secular/spiritual identities. These events bring together diverse voices and worldview traditions to find common ground, foster interfaith cooperation, and elevate individual experiences and stories.

The University Counseling Center offers identity-based Group Counseling and facilitates a social justice discussion series about disparities in health care based on race, gender, socioeconomic standing, and other factors. The Office of Student Life-Civic Engagement hosts multiple programs focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion through the MLK Day of Service and Solidarity.

In November 2022, GVSU held its tenth annual Teach-In titled *Power, Privilege and Difficult Dialogues.* As a day-long event, hybrid (i.e., in-person and virtually) event, the Teach-In supports mutual education among students, faculty, and staff and addresses topics related to inequality and systems of oppression, as well as social justice and liberation.

Finally, numerous community engagement efforts are occurring that focus on diversity and equity. Over the years, the College of Education (recently merged with another college to emerge as the College of Education and Community Innovation) and the Kirkhof College of Nursing have established a productive relationship with Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS), the most racially

and ethnically diverse K-12 school district in the region. Similarly, the College of Health Professions has developed sustainable programs tied to diversity and inclusion, such as a yearly camp devoted to expose middle school children to health profession careers (sHaPe Camp) and Wellness Camp, a four-week, after-school program that focuses on nutrition, exercise and mental health for local area elementary school students. The unique activities offered at the Wellness Camp were designed by GVSU graduate students and faculty members, based on a community-wide needs assessment survey completed by Lowell residents. Grand Valley's Public Health Department partnered with Lowell Community Wellness to conduct the needs assessment to gauge the health needs of more than 2,500 adults and children. Overall, the GVSU has worked effectively with many area schools and businesses, including preparing GRPS high school students for the transition to college.

1.C.2 The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.

Ongoing commitment to inclusion and diversity builds on prior decades of work. In 2008, the creation of the Division of I&E at GVSU made it one of the first universities of its size to create a leadership structure in which the chief diversity officer reports directly to the president and is part of the President's Cabinet, overseeing a divisional portfolio structure with human and financial resources. In response to input from the campus community, campus leadership, and community stakeholders, I&E has grown and developed into a comprehensive support system for students, faculty and staff, as well as a dynamic community resource. I&E is proactive in educating, supporting, and leading the campus community to become more inclusive and diverse, guided by its Framework for Inclusion & Equity, which was endorsed by the UAS, Student Senate, and President's Cabinet.

Past efforts have evolved into the current Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP) where GVSU values, "diversity and inclusion" and identifies the #1 Guiding Principle as, "Recruiting, admitting, retaining, and graduating a diverse learner population with equitable outcomes as the goal." The SEMP also provides guidance for various curricular and university efforts to address inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.

GVSU maintains a focus on recruitment and retention efforts and on policy and administrative initiatives. The institution has established partnerships and collaborations with other educational institutions such as GRPS, Grand Rapids Prep Academy, the Michigan Campus Compact and several two-year institutions to increase the diversity of students. The Admissions Office actively recruits students from across the entire state of Michigan, surrounding states, and international locations. University leaders believe that an excellent academic community includes people of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. Over the years, efforts at improving access and equity in educational opportunities can be seen in the increase in unduplicated minority students, which is currently 21.2% at GVSU.

GVSU has made continual efforts to increase its hiring of faculty and staff from underrepresented populations. Every search committee now includes an Inclusion Advocate (IA) who has been trained to recognize and address bias--conscious or unconscious--in the search process. IAs receive regular training on topics, ranging from effective media outlets to recruit diverse pools of highly qualified candidates, racial and gender inclusion, and hiring techniques inclusive of age, sexual orientation, disability, and veteran status. Based on continued evaluation, improvements to the IA initiative include providing Affirmative Action data to the IAs and ensuring the IA is part of the recruitment planning.

In addition, affinity groups support and nurture diverse faculty and staff. These groups include: Asian Faculty and Staff Association, Black Faculty and Staff Association, International Faculty and Friends, Latino/a Faculty and Staff Association, LGBT Faculty and Staff Association, Native American Advisory Council, Positive Black Women, and Women's Commission. Affinity groups host events, engage in mentoring, and foster community among underrepresented and diverse faculty, staff, and student populations. The Equity and Inclusion Committee was established as a standing faculty governance committee in 2017 to promote and facilitate faculty involvement in support of a healthy and equitable campus climate.

For more than three years, the Inclusion and Equity Institute has worked alongside faculty, staff, and students and also external partners to offer workshops, consultations, and professional development centered on advancing inclusion and equity commitments through knowledge and action. Moreover, the Laker Inclusion Team initiates meaningful and measurable action that enhances diversity, equity, and inclusion within GVSU's athletic department and campus community. Example initiatives include the SEA (Supporting, Elevating, Activating) of Change and Waves of Change Programs, which focus on creating an inclusive environment by breaking down barriers between new classmates and teammates and building continuing conversations to address issues of diversity and inclusion. These initiatives have led to GVSU's receipt of the 2023 NCAA and Minority Opportunities Athletic Association Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

Finally, the College of Health Profession offers a pro bono clinic each Friday classes are in session - this clinic is used by a significant number of rural and underrepresented populations. The clinic's services are free to underrepresented members of the community who either lack or have exhausted their insurance coverage.

1.C.3 The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

One of GVSU's five core values is an inclusive and equitable community, a critical aspect of its mission in practice. The description provides additional context of this value in that GVSU "fosters and sustains a sense of belonging, promotes diversity and respect, and addresses systemic issues that impact outcomes for those who have been historically excluded from higher education. Inclusion and equity are experienced through our physical campuses and in digital environments, as well as our interpersonal, institutional, and community engagements." GVSU took an important step toward disrupting patterns of inequity over the previous strategic planning work.

As a leader in climate assessment, GVSU completed its seventh Climate Survey at the end of 2021, with 18% of the campus population participating (16% of students, 54% of faculty, and 27% of staff). GVSU is committed to making data-informed decisions based on the results of the Survey. A total of seven campus climate studies have been completed since 1994 - the results of which have driven campus change, including creation of the Women's Commission, Children's Enrichment Center, Collegiality Policy, and student ombuds program.

The Division of Student Affairs continuously reinforces this commitment of respect through its programs and services. For example, Campus Recreation developed a Recreation and Wellness for Everybody initiative promoting student equity and inclusion in fitness, wellness, sports, and outdoor activities; and the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center started the Inclusive Excellence Teaching Institute to provide affiliate and tenure-track faculty a space to learn and strategize about inclusive excellence in teaching and learning. The Institute runs various workshops and multiple 3-day long "institutes" encouraging an atmosphere of cultural humility through the examination of

social identity and bias. For example, the Colloquium Series on Inclusion and Equity provides 3-day intensive workshops to help elevate historically underrepresented faculty and staff.

GVSU provides a transition period before students begin classes each fall to engage in efforts towards student success (e.g., student blueprint with extensive links to so many important centers and services) and building a campus community for students. Student orientation includes an introduction to being a member of a diverse campus community. The goal is to ensure that every new Laker understands campus expectations for inclusiveness. New faculty and staff orientations also include training provided by I&E.

In 2020, GVSU began a 15-point charge for racial equity. A second phase of this work emerged for 8 high-level recommendations. A more recent third phase created six implementation and action plan teams with a keen focus on racial and cultural equity for employees. By Fall 2022, the effort became coordinated by the Inclusion and Equity Activation and Accountability Leadership Team (AALT). This effort has representatives from each division and shared governance to ensure a comprehensive effort across the institution and already has many accomplishments. The efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion have resulted in many recognitions and awards since the last HLC visit and was recently profiled in Diverse Issues in Higher Education demonstrating how the work is connected to RH2025.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

GVSU's mission is presented clearly and publicly, and it guides plans, actions, and interactions with the Grand Valley community and beyond. The development of Reach Higher 2025 was a collaborative and iterative process, which included a new mission and vision, as well as values and commitments shaping the essence of GVSU. RH2025 steers the university towards the future and provides guidance to address any challenges.

The mission is demonstrably committed to the public good. Existing and proposed programs, curricula, and engagements have been guided by an effective effort to connect learning with the public good in ways that prepare students to consider the importance of integrating personal learning while making an impact on others. Accountability reports are published on the university website annually, summarizing benchmarks and progress, and keeping GVSU on continuously improving with the public apprised of the progress.

GVSU has succeeded in connecting its mission to a diverse and multicultural community, with Inclusive and Equitable Community as one of the five shared values, and identifying a Culture of Educational Equity as one of three institutional commitments. The university has a long history of attending to and developing its role in a diverse society, as evidenced in its organizational structure, cultural centers, and programming to address and increase diversity.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

2.A.1 The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.

Core Component 1.A describes the collaborative process used across campus to develop the RH2025 mission and strategic plan. Following the [governing board's adoption](#) of the RH2025 effort in early 2022, all Divisions, Colleges, and Units are updating their respective mission statements and strategic plans to bring them into alignment, and this work continues. All plans, including objectives, baselines, metrics, strategic actions, and statements of progress are posted on a [publicly accessible website](#), facilitating cross-unit collaborations and transparency to all university constituencies.

2.A.2 The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Integrity is one of [GVSU's core values](#). GVSU has [policies](#) to promote ethical behavior by its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Policies and procedures that demonstrate institutional integrity related to academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions are easily accessible on the [University Policies website](#). GVSU operates with a [shared governance](#) model in which administration, faculty, and students collaboratively participate in making policy and curricular decisions. Committees or teams that monitor GVSU's commitment to integrity include, but are not limited to, the [Office of General Counsel](#); the [Risk Management department](#); the [Business and Finance unit](#); [Information Technology](#); and the [Security, Risk and Compliance Committee](#).

GVSU embraces its responsibilities as a public institution and acts with integrity in its operations. Accountability principles include measures of access, affordability, and efficiency; GVSU includes information in the [Annual Accountability Report](#) and the [University Information & Disclosures](#) page, which are published on the website and easily accessible to stakeholders. The institution employs both internal and external evaluations to ensure practices are consistent with principles.

GVSU's organizational structure supports sound [financial management](#) and promotes fiscal responsibility. GVSU follows a tiered budget development process. The decision making body is the Senior Leadership Team-Budget group, which ensures that [budgetary decisions are made](#)

transparently, with input from both a budget review team and budget representative group. Funding decisions are based on strategic plan priorities.

The Business and Finance unit is responsible for the day-to-day financial operations of the university and oversight of most Auxiliary Operations. The Vice President for Finance and Administration/CFO oversees all financial affairs and serves as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, as well as the Senior Leadership Team-Budget group.

The Division of Finance and Administration has several policies that guide its operations. Evidence of integrity in operations is available to the public on the Budget and Performance Transparency Reporting website. This includes annual financial reports, the annual operating budget, summary of current expenditures, general fund revenue/expenditure projections, and debt service obligations that demonstrate GVSU's responsible management of financial resources.

GVSU's general fund budget is approved by the Board of Trustees at its annual June meeting. Additionally, GVSU keeps reserve funds that are separate and distinct from operating funds and come from general fund or divisional budget surpluses. These funds provide the university (and respective divisions) with a measure of protection and flexibility during periods of fiscal distress or when needed for high-priority strategic planning initiatives requiring one-time resources. Reserve funds are used judiciously and always maintain compliance with minimum threshold levels unless dire fiscal circumstances warrant.

GVSU's financial practices comply with federal, state, and local tax laws and generally accepted accounting principles. In accordance with its policy, GVSU conducts an annual financial audit (e.g., page 13 shows an A1 bond credit rating from Moody's Investors Service) and generates a report to share with the Board of Trustees, the Higher Learning Commission, and other stakeholders. The report is audited by an independent CPA firm, Plante & Moran, PLLC. Plante & Moran also audits federal awards in compliance with the Federal Awards Report (Formerly OMB Circular A-133). The Financial Reports and the Federal Awards Reports are published on GVSU's website each year. In addition, several internal audits are performed (on a rotating three-year basis) by another independent CPA firm. Reports are made to the Finance & Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees. Financial policies of the Board of Trustees are published on the University Policies website. Internal controls include oversight of finances by each executive officer within a division, requirement of approval and review of expenses on a regular basis by each executive officer, and random purchase audits conducted by the accounting office.

All academic functions are executed within the Division of Academic Affairs, which is led by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. This division and its personnel are guided by published academic policies approved by the Board of Trustees, which outline the academic governance structure and include policy statements on issues like academic freedom, academic tenure, and evaluation for promotion and tenure.

The following policies and practices help GVSU to operate with integrity:

- A conflict of interest policy guides the BOT. Trustees are required to complete a Conflict of Interest form annually, and the Board has adopted institutional policies for identifying and managing potential, actual, and perceived conflict of interest situations. Although rare, trustees abstain from voting when there may be a perceived conflict of interest in the decision-making process.
- The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity oversees responsible conduct of research

training for the institution and maintains processes to ensure compliance with research involving animal care and human subjects, biological materials, radiological materials, lasers, export controls, and conflicts of interest and commitment. This oversight ensures that faculty, staff and students engaging in research act ethically and with integrity (see Core Component 2.E for more information).

- The Student Ombuds Office, supported by Student Senate, allows for students to privately report and discuss conflicts related to faculty, staff, and administration, and serves as a resource for students regarding university processes, procedures, and referral.
- The Office of the Employee Ombuds offers confidential voluntary services to help faculty and staff create and maintain a positive working environment, including exploring options, communication and conflict coaching, group facilitation, and feedback to campus leaders regarding systemic issues.
- The Academic Grievance Process, found in the Catalog, may be used to resolve academic issues such as grade appeal or graduation requirements. GVSU also provides procedures to guide student complaints and concerns (both academic and non-academic).
- GVSU strives to create an inclusive and equitable campus community where people are treated with dignity and respect. If anyone in the Grand Valley community feels belittled, disrespected, or isolated based on their identity (e.g., sexual harassment or misconduct, discrimination, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) discrimination, other civil rights complaints, etc.), there is a mechanism, coordinated by the Division of I&E and the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX (previously named the Office for Title IX & Institutional Equity) to report the incident anonymously online, in person, or by phone. Both informal and formal resolution options are available, and they provide training.
- Since 2016, the Anonymous Reporting system has been available for anonymous reporting of behaviors that may be contradictory to university values or policies. The system is administered by the Office of the General Counsel.
- The Office of Human Resources and the Affirmative Action/EEO Office also provide a Conflict Resolution Process with neutral facilitators who mediate the problem-solving process.
- Hiring processes are embedded with inclusive practices and resources to assist hiring managers. The Office of Human Resources develops and implements guidelines, policies, and procedures for recruitment, position approval, review, and retention of faculty and staff. The Affirmative Action/EEO Office reviews and approves all stages of the hire to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all candidates.
- The University Personnel Review Committee reviews personnel-level policy, ensuring fair and consistent implementation across the university.
- Procurement Services, guided by a code of ethics, establishes guidelines for contractors and vendors that wish to do business with the institution. Contractors and vendors must agree to GVSU terms and conditions that govern all supplier relationships to ensure integrity is maintained throughout the relationships. Likewise, the Auxiliary Services office uses the same expectations outlined by Procurement Services for the oversight of its departments/operations.
- University Development follows a code of ethics and gift acceptance policies.

Significantly, the university's messaging when behavior contradictory to our community values is observed or experienced is swift, direct, and strong. President Mantella and other members of leadership regularly issue campus statements when incidents of violence, racial injustice, or other actions antithetical to the university's integrity impact the community.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

2.B.1 The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.

Grand Valley's public website is constructed to provide clear and accessible information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships. The website platform is built as a content management system (CMS) that allows programs, departments, and administrative staff to easily update content on an ongoing basis. The university website is continually evaluated by GVSU Institutional Marketing to reflect best practices in web design as well as user needs and interests. For example, since 2016, GVSU Institutional Marketing has created a GVSU Web Accessibility site as a resource to support efforts to become WCAG 2.0 AA compliant and has also implemented annual web accessibility training for all CMS administrators.

GVSU's website includes the following elements:

- *Comprehensive listing of all Academic Programs*: Listed alphabetically and one click away from the home page are all programs with accompanying curricular overviews, departmental contact information, and links to further information.
- *Admissions Requirements:* Easily found on the Admissions website, one click from GVSU's home page is information about transfer credit, program requirements, international issues, graduate programs, dual enrollment and much more.
- *Faculty and Staff Directory:* Faculty and staff profiles are searchable on the home page.
- *Costs and Tuition:* Appropriate links related to costs and tuition appear at the top of the search results. Tuition and related costs are clearly presented under the Students tab of the home page, as well as on the tuition webpage and in the BOT policies, where it is broken down by credit hour and the categories for lower/upper level undergraduate and graduate level and for both Michigan and non-Michigan residents. Differential tuition for graduate-level programs is also listed. The website provides cost estimates for housing, books, transportation, and personal expenses. Tuition rates and information are also readily accessible and published in the University Catalog.
- *Accountability Reporting*: Posted annually, this report provides information to demonstrate how the State of Michigan and its people are receiving excellent returns on investment in GVSU.
- *University Information and Disclosures:* To comply with federal and state guidelines, the

> University Information and Disclosures page aggregates required disclosures and other helpful resources, packaged in a manner consistent with The Higher Education Act (as amended).

- *Control:* The Controller's Office, under management of the Business and Finance Office, is responsible for financial reporting, accounting, treasury, financial assurance, accounts payable, procurement, payroll, and student accounts. Information and procedures for the Controller's Office are found on the Business and Finance Office website. Students and the general public can find helpful information about the financial health of the university, particularly as it relates to enrollment, through the Annual Financial Reports made available at the top of the Business & Finance menu of the Office's website.
- Enrollment and Course Schedule is found using the Banner system for students.
- Accreditation: Stakeholders can access the Accreditations and Approvals list at GVSU, which is found on the Strategic Planning, Assessment, and Accreditation website.
- Inclusion and Equity: Information on university resources related to inclusion and equity and its commitment is linked directly from the home page.
- Campus Safety: In 2018, a new comprehensive website that details essential information and resources about campus safety was developed and linked from the home page. Additionally, in 2020, a campus transparency and accountability page was added to GVSU's website.

Because usability research revealed that users were looking for facts about class size, degrees offered, study abroad programs, tuition, size of the library, student housing and other high-level information, an "About GVSU" panel was added to the homepage, allowing dynamic statistics accompanied by internal links for details on topics of interest to be quickly viewed and explored. This change was a response to stakeholders' interests, demonstrating GVSU's responsiveness and desire to be transparent.

Finally, each course taught at GVSU has a standardized Syllabus of Record (SOR) where instructors communicate course requirements to students.

2.B.2 The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

GVSU ensures that evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through the Office of Institutional Analysis's (OIA) website. The OIA conducts research about GVSU's resources, processes, and outcomes and provides information and expertise to support empirical decision-making to best serve our students. Thus, the OIA provides an online resource to view and search a data index. Users also have the ability to request specific data that they might not be able to find on the Office of IA's website. Examples of data provided include student enrollment snapshots, retention reports, degree profiles, and licensure and certification pass rates.

Additionally, GVSU participates in several national data sets, including the Integrated Post secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Student Achievement Measure, and the NCAA. Furthermore, and as previously mentioned, GVSU completes regular Campus Climate Surveys to assess the real or perceived quality or interpersonal, academic, and professional interactions on the GVSU campus. The results of these surveys are publicly available.

All reports/data are easily accessible and understandable for students and the general public.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1 The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

GVSU is a state institution of higher education originally chartered in 1960 and incorporated into the Michigan Constitution of 1963, governed by an eight member BOT. Article 8, Section 6 of the Michigan constitution provides that "the board shall have general supervision of the institution and the control and direction of all expenditures from the institution's funds." GVSU ensures that its governing board's deliberations and decisions reflect the priorities to preserve and enhance the institution by using a variety of mechanisms. An extensive orientation for new board members includes discussion about the proper role of the board and its governance.

2.C.2 The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

The BOT's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution in that they are closely connected to the university strategic planning efforts. Trustees regularly receive updates (page 7) from the University President on progress toward achieving strategic plan goals, which emphasizes the institution's mission and purposes as guiding principles for the BOT. At its February 18, 2022 meeting, the BOT reviewed and adopted the Reach Higher 2025 strategic plan.

The BOT is kept current with ongoing institutional activities in its regular meetings (e.g., General Reports, page 5). All BOT actions are taken in public meetings and generally at the recommendation of one of two standing committees: the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. The Academic and Student Affairs Committee (page 7) reviews new degree program proposals and policies with a significant impact on institutional programs and activities, recommends appropriate action to the BOT, and monitors results. The Finance and Audit Committee (page 18) reviews proposed policies and BOT actions that will have significant financial impact, recommends appropriate action to the BOT, and monitors results. Additionally, *ad hoc*

subcommittees are appointed for special purposes such as presidential searches or nominations for BOT officers (page 19). Full discussion of action items takes place during subcommittee meetings ahead of full Board meetings. All board meeting minutes are posted publicly on GVSU's website. All committee meeting minutes are held in the BOT Secretary's office and available upon request.

The BOT is also kept abreast of the institution's activities and notable achievements at each meeting via the President's report (page 5). The annual Financial Report (page 4), Updates to the BOT Policies (page 7), and personnel actions (page 3) (including annual review of the President) are regularly on BOT meeting agendas.

In 2018, the State of Michigan began requiring increased oversight of the BOT in reports of sexual misconduct. In response to increased requirements, GVSU and BOT determined appropriate measures that both responded to the intent of the legislative requirements and appropriate role of the Trustees. As such, the BOT Chair works with the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX team and Title IX advisory group and the President and Vice President for Inclusion and Equity to oversee the university's Title IX functions. Additional legislative provisions are being responded to on an ongoing basis.

2.C.3 The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Matters that are relevant to GVSU's internal and external constituents are reviewed on a regular schedule (page 4). The BOT's archive of agendas and approved minutes reveals decisions made in the interests of internal constituents represented by students, faculty, the University Academic Senate, the university President, and others that bring motions before the BOT. Budget review, including setting of tuition rates (page 18), is approved in a motion that reflects GVSU's commitment to external stakeholders at the June BOT meetings.

2.C.4 The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.

The BOT consists of eight members appointed by the Michigan governor and confirmed by the Michigan Senate as an independent governing board for the institution. Each member serves an eight-year term; not more than two expire in the same year.

The Trustees are required to complete a Conflict of Interest form each year, and the BOT has adopted an institutional policy for identifying and managing potential, actual, and perceived conflict of interest situations. There are examples (page 6) when BOT members abstained from decision making when a perceived conflict of interest might exist.

2.C.5 The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

The bylaws, Article VI, section 6.2, explain the duties and authority of the President. The President, appointed by the BOT, is the chief executive officer of the university with duties and authority determined by the BOT. As provided for in the bylaws, this delegation provides the President with the authority to manage day-to-day operations of the university.

The President utilizes this authority to plan and implement strategies to achieve the goals and objectives of GVSU's strategic plan, to approve organizational structures, and to carry out the

university's mission.

Fundamental to GVSU's operation is the principle of shared governance. Faculty-led committees are therefore essential to Grand Valley's operations and progress. While each college has its own internal governance structure, these university-wide committees report to the UAS.

The UAS is the highest faculty governance body at GVSU. According to the bylaws, it has authority to deal with any academic issue or faculty concern. It makes recommendations to the Provost and/or President regarding such matters as curriculum, the academic organization of the university, faculty personnel policy, budget, and other issues considered relevant to academic affairs.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

GVSU's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is revealed in an array of institutional structures, programs, initiatives, forums, practices, learning opportunities, and policies.

Declared institutional value
One of GVSU's core values is inquiry, which is defined, in part, as: *encourages active questioning and problem solving to improve lives and strengthen communities*. Inquiry is foundational to a pursuit of truth.

Policy and procedure
GVSU's commitment to freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is highlighted in the following codes and policies:

- Board-approved language fosters and sustains freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression, and freedom from institutional censorship or discipline for faculty.
- Section 4 of the Student Code of Conduct underscores the importance of academic honesty and integrity of scholarship in curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Senior Leadership Team policy on grounds and facility use defines expressive activity and states the university will not impose restrictions on students, student organizations, or university employees due to the content or viewpoint of their expressive activity.

Campus Initiatives
GVSU is committed to fostering a climate of engagement and has worked with donors to establish the Padnos/Sarosik Endowed Professorship of Civil Discourse in the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, where civil discourse, "is not polite conversation, but, rather, intentional dialogue that builds understanding across difference."

GVSU benefits from its Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies, which trains leaders to uphold freedom of expression through the Common Ground Initiative. This initiative aims to prepare "a new generation of leaders to work constructively with people from diverse cultures and different worldviews." Through forum debates, workshops, and media outreach, the Common Ground Initiative brings together emergent community leaders from diverse backgrounds and opposing political orientations to explore, practice, and model respectful civic discourse both on campus and in the surrounding region. The university commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is also supported by teaching and learning initiatives.

The mission of the Office of Student Life-Civic Engagement is to "prepare students to become active, global citizens and challenges them to be committed to a life of community engagement and democratic participation." The office provides resources for expressive activity at GVSU as well as leadership for students to learn about their rights and responsibilities as a citizen at GVSU and

beyond. The office's Democracy 101 series educates students about citizens' democratic roles and responsibilities through presentations, panel discussions, and community engagement.

The GVSU Annual Teach-In grew out of concerns regarding bias and incivility on campus, but is now in its tenth year and consistently draws over 1,600 students, faculty and staff to convene for a full day of learning and dialogue on a variety of intersectional justice issues/civility topics related to the First Amendment, gender justice, racial inequality, poverty, disability rights, and transgender issues. The 2022 event was titled, "Power, Privilege and Difficult Dialogues." This event is co-sponsored by the UAS and Student Senate, with administrative and financial support from the Office of the Provost, Division of Student Affairs, Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach, and the Division of I&E.

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1 Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.

Active scholarship is an essential component of GVSU's mission as an institution of higher learning. The Research Integrity Policy and Core Ethical Values are outlined in the General Personnel Policies for Faculty and Staff Section 4.1.10.4. All staff, faculty, and students who participate in research are expected to perform their work to the highest degree of professional and ethical standards.

GVSU offers training and educational opportunities for faculty, staff, and students involved in all aspects of research. The Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training program satisfies both the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation requirements by incorporating online and face-to-face training. GVSU utilizes CITI course modules to provide a basic training in RCR. Graduate training is program specific and is completed through CITI or offered courses at GVSU. All faculty and students receiving internal or external funding for their research are also required to complete the training.

Support for health-related activities is provided by the Health Compliance Team, as well as compliance and oversight bodies within academic departments and college. Students, faculty, staff, and volunteers (associates) may facilitate or participate in clinical, non-clinical experiential education or research at health-related affiliated facilities. To protect everyone involved, associates and the community served, participation requirements have been established through the Health Compliance Policy, which adheres to state and federal statutory regulations, and accreditation standards for academic programs, and the health, safety, and legal requirements set forth by affiliated facilities. GVSU is contractually mandated to ensure all applicable associates attain and maintain full compliance as defined in its affiliation agreements. Health compliance requirements are discipline-specific and are established in collaboration with each academic program.

The institution provides clear guidance regarding allowable costs to help ensure that all proposals and awards for externally sponsored projects conform to federal regulations, including the Office of Management and Budget 2 CFR 200—Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (e.g., the Uniform Guidance)—and are consistent with GVSU's academic and business policies and sound fiscal practices. Compliance of these policies is

overseen by the Office of Sponsored Programs. The institution also requires compliance from the Business and Finance Office to avoid or address potential conflicts of interest in the procurement of goods and services.

2.E.2 The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.

The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence (CSCE) encourages, facilitates, and supports GVSU in its scholarly pursuits. The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity within the CSCE ensures the safe, ethical conduct of human, animal, and laboratory research compliant with university policy and regulatory requirements. Research training and review are provided to enhance the safety of researchers and participants and increase regulatory compliance in human research, animal research, lab safety, biosafety, and radiation safety.

- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) comprises GVSU faculty, staff, and community members who review proposed research studies involving human subjects. All research involving human subjects performed at GVSU and/or by GVSU students, staff, and/or faculty must be reviewed and approved or found exempt by the IRB prior to beginning research. The IRB meets regularly (pages 6 - 7) to ensure timely review of proposed research requiring full board review. The IRB also reviews HIPAA-related research protocols. While the IRB acts independently for reviews, it is governed by GVSU IRB Policies and Procedures, in addition to state and federal regulations.

- The Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) provides oversight in animal research activities. The committee ensures that all animal research is conducted in accordance with IACUC standards and complies with the Public Health Service policies and USDA animal welfare regulations. The IACUC regularly reviews and updates its policies to ensure proper guidance, oversight and compliance.

- The Lab Safety Program is committed to providing a safe laboratory environment to employees, students and visitors. GVSU has established guidelines to ensure safe lab practices and training programs. In addition, Lab Safety staff provides additional resources to evaluate hazards and minimize the risk of injury or illness to students, faculty, and research staff.

- The Radiation Safety Committee is the team responsible for the safe use of radioactive materials and radiation emitting devices. The committee sets policies and procedures that are in accordance with state and federal regulations, which are then carried out by the Radiation Safety Officer.

- The Institutional Biosafety Committee ensures that all research, teaching, and clinical activities involving the use of biohazardous materials are in compliance with regulatory requirements and applicable university policies.

- The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity provides guidance regarding export control issues.

2.E.3 The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.

Educating students on the ethical use of information resources takes the form of a holistic set of

engagements at every level of research and scholarship during their time at GVSU. GVSU requires its undergraduate and graduate students to conduct research in conformity to the ethical principles in the Belmont Report. Graduate students demonstrate their ability to generate new knowledge and/or apply existing knowledge to specific practical situations in a culminating experience. This demonstration must take the form of a project, thesis, dissertation, internship, comprehensive examination, or a culminating experience course. Every academic program offers courses in research methods, ethics, and standards. A majority of faculty teaching research courses in each college are tenure-track faculty.

General Education Program
Ethical use of information resources begins with GVSU's General Education Program, in which students are introduced to Ethical Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Quantitative Literacy. These are just four of the nine skills student learning outcomes being taught and assessed in General Education courses.

Undergraduate Research
The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS) provides a wealth of resources for students on the ethical use of information resources and a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to work with faculty on their scholarship and produce an original output that contributes to the knowledge or activity of an academic discipline. Specific programs, such as the Modified Student Summer Scholars Program and the McNair Scholars Program, participate in educational activities that support the ethical conduct of research and inquiry for their disciplines. All undergraduate student scholars and faculty mentors complete CITI training prior to beginning their research.

Graduate School Training
The Graduate School also has a policy and set of related training for Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) for Graduate Students. Each graduate student is required to complete RCR training prior to completion of 50% of the graduate program or prior to engaging in any research activity (e.g., voluntary, independent, or supervised research, projects, theses, and dissertations). Additional RCR training may be required by individual graduate programs.

Research Support Services
The GVSU Libraries and award-winning Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons have many faculty and staff consultants available to assist students in finding, assessing, and using research and information literature. The Libraries also provide outreach and classroom instruction on information literacy, access to a variety of databases and resources, and information on copyright and fair use. A Library liaison is assigned to each department as a specific link between the faculty and students to the library; liaisons are available to help students in-person, via email, and in office hours.

- Highly trained peer consultants from the Library-hosted Knowledge Market work with students to develop research strategies, analyze data, improve writing, or polish presentations.
- The Data Inquiry Lab, also hosted within the MIP Library, provides support for student-led quantitative data management, visualization, and analysis. The Data Inquiry Lab's purpose is to foster students' development of practical data skills through workshops, in-classroom demonstrations, and one-on-one consultation.

Additionally, the IT Help Desk loans laptop computers and tablets and provides hardware and software support for current students, faculty, and staff. Moreover, students who are working on research projects and are in need of information specific to the statistical design of their project are

encouraged to work with the Statistics Consulting Center. Information, training and one-on-one consultation are available to students and faculty.

2.E.4 The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

The policy on Academic Honesty-Integrity of Scholarships and Grades is outlined in the Student Code, and communicates the rights and responsibilities of students, student conduct, rules and regulations, the judicial process, and the process to follow for student grievance procedures.

In 2015, the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution implemented new conduct software that allows for better tracking and communication in the area of Academic Integrity. In addition, a collaboration with the University Libraries offers consultation resources through the Digital Creator Lab and resources to assist students with understanding academic integrity, plagiarism, and proper citation practices.

GVSU has a Conflict of Interest Policy for faculty and staff, which covers employment, financial, and political candidates or office holders. Consistent with these values, the BOT has adopted institutional policies for identifying and managing potential, actual, and perceived conflict of interest situations.

As stated in the General Personnel Policies for Faculty and Staff, "Research, scholarship and creative activities are central to fulfilling the mission of the university. It is the policy of the university that all employees, students, partners and affiliates always perform their roles related to research, scholarship and creative activity with ethical integrity. This requirement reflects a culture publicly committed to developing and fostering the highest standards of professional ethics. Research integrity is demonstrated in the decisions and actions that exemplify our core ethical values."

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

GVSU values honesty, fairness, and openness in its actions, transactions, and communications. An emphasis on integrity compels the campus community to respect and teach the fundamental tenets of a liberal education, which remain central to the university's identity and reputation. GVSU values the incorporation of ethics into critical thinking and decision-making institution wide. Stakeholders can count on GVSU to make and execute wise decisions transparently and with fidelity to GVSU's mission.

The campus community holds itself accountable by employing transparent policies and practices that promote ethical behavior of the governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. Expectations for institutional integrity related to academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions are publicly presented and described in a variety of documents. GVSU provides clear and comprehensive information to students and the public regarding programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) provides institutional oversight while ensuring the administration oversees day-to-day management of the university, and the faculty attends to academic matters. The BOT is knowledgeable and regularly informed about progress made related to GVSU's strategic plan, assuring that their deliberations and decisions reflect the priorities of the institution.

A commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is evidenced in an array of structures, programs, initiatives, forums, practices, learning opportunities, and policies. These efforts evolved from reactive responses to specific incidents into holistic engagements with students, staff, faculty, and the community.

Active and ethical scholarship is an essential component of GVSU's mission as an institution of higher learning. GVSU provides clear guidance, policy, and facilitation for responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by faculty, staff, and students.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

3.A.1 Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

GVSU regularly reviews programs for currency through a program review process, as described in Core Component 4.A. The GVSU catalog describes the levels of performance expected for all undergraduate and graduate courses. GVSU's extensive review process ensures that courses, programs, and certificates require appropriate levels of performance. The admission requirements are also publicly displayed for all undergraduate and graduate programs to ensure that GVSU maintains high quality throughout its programs.

All curricular proposals are created, submitted, and reviewed via an online curriculum development system called SAIL. Proposals initiated by academic units are reviewed by the bodies below, each of which has specific roles and responsibilities:

- Information Technology
- University Libraries
- College Curriculum Committee (CCC)
- Dean of the College
- General Education Committee (if appropriate)
- Graduate Council (if appropriate)
- Online Education & Microcredential Council (if appropriate)
- University Curriculum Committee (UCC)
- Office of the Provost

For new programs, a prospectus is prepared and initially reviewed by the New Unit/New Program Council. New unit proposals are also reviewed by this council. The UCC verifies each proposal's soundness within the context of the university's Strategic Plan (page 7). Proposals for new degree

programs are presented to the BOT and the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) for approval. MASU serves as the coordinating board for Michigan's 15 public universities, providing advocacy and fostering policy to maximize the collective value these institutions provide in serving the public interest and the state of Michigan.

Units also benchmark against GVSU's peer institutions, as well as departmental identified peer units, in order to evaluate currency of their program. GVSU's externally accredited programs must periodically ensure programs are current with student levels of performance appropriate to the degree. Programs with licensing data (e.g., nursing, other health-related programs) report board passing rates as a way of demonstrating that GVSU students are achieving the required level of performance, all licensure and exam pass rates are easily accessible through the Office of Institutional Analysis.

3.A.2 GVSU clearly articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs.

The university's learning outcomes for all undergraduate students are the skills outcomes that are delivered through the General Education Program (described in more detail in 3.B).

Due to the diversity of graduate programs (page 7), GVSU does not have a common set of graduate student learning outcomes. The Graduate Curriculum and Program Review Subcommittee of the Graduate Council and UCC ensures all graduate level programs and courses have student learning outcomes that are appropriate to that level (e.g., MS Water Policy SAIL proposal).

Continual improvement is embedded in the curricular process. The Graduate Academic Program Review Guidelines and Procedures and the Criteria and Standards of Graduate Academic Program Review were created to ensure excellence in program quality by requiring a unit self-study and an external evaluation of the program. Since 2017, 19 program reviews have been completed, with 3 underway in 2022-23*. Graduate programs also have policy to guide curriculum development related to award of a graduate degree (page 24) where candidates, "must demonstrate not only their mastery of the subject matter, but also their ability to integrate and synthesize it" along with additional requirements. Also, dual listed credits (page 38) has a policy noting that graduate credits can only be awarded when the course is considered, "sufficiently rigorous and of an advanced nature." [*Graduate program reviews were briefly paused during the 2020-21 academic year as the university was shifted to remote instruction and work as a response to the pandemic.]

In Fall 2018, GVSU began requiring all programs to articulate student learning outcomes on a curriculum map when the program or certificate is initially proposed or significantly revised. Student learning outcomes and an assessment plan for a program are entered into *GVAssess* and reviewed by the University Assessment Committee (UAC) after the program is approved, but prior to the start of the program. The new process ensures that specific program learning outcomes are reviewed prior to program approval.

All courses for the program or certificate are required to have learning objectives identified on the Syllabus of Record (SOR), and have historically been reviewed by UCC (e.g., EDF 215, CHM 115, and HNR 251 undergraduate and EDR 634 graduate). The UCC utilizes the credit hour definition to guide its review of all courses, including ensuring that increasingly progressing levels of performance are expected of students between lower and upper division courses. For example, this proposal (page 9) shows the UCC recognizing the lack of a B.S. degree requirements being met and provides the exact rationale from policy.

Student outcomes for all programs are available on a GVSU website. Learning objectives for all courses are found on the SORs, which are maintained by the Registar's Office after the course is approved. The SORs are the referent syllabus for all course syllabi and are accessible to faculty on a common Blackboard site.

Through its processes and procedures the UAC ensures academic programs provide annual evidence documenting student learning. Through the Guiding Principles for Assessment, the UAC ensures that student outcomes are appropriate. Every six years, academic and co-curricular units complete a self study that describes student performance and strategies that units will use to ensure that students achieve a high level of learning (see Core Components 4.A and 4.B).

The expectations for students enrolled in dual-listed courses (page 37) are appropriate for each level of degree program the course serves. The Graduate Council reviews such courses, and the individual program faculty ensure that dual-listed courses clearly differentiate expectations for students. For example, the SOR for BIO 475 and 575 includes seven total learning objectives; undergraduate and graduate students must all achieve objectives 1-5, but only graduate students must demonstrate mastery of objectives 6 & 7, which focus on testing hypotheses and communicating via scientific writing. Student learning outcomes for BIO 475 are lower on Blooms taxonomy--explain, describe, apply, interpret, and solve--whereas those learning outcomes associated with BIO 575 are higher on the taxonomy and include test, synthesize, and write.

3.A.3 The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

The SOR governs all course offerings and guides curricular activities regardless of delivery mode or location.

Over 90% of GVSU courses were offered through online or hybrid options during the 2020-2021 school year due to COVID. In the 2022-2023 school year, online and hybrid course offerings were significantly reduced, but now encompass over 43% of the course offerings on campus. GVSU requires faculty to complete comprehensive training in teaching online or hybrid courses. Additionally, courses to be offered online or in hybrid format must be reviewed by the standing Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC), the unit head, dean, and Provost. This process enables curricular innovation while ensuring consistency across modes of delivery.

GVSU regularly reviews (see example) distance learning using a set of well-tested metrics based on the Quality Matters standards, the Penn State Peer Review Guide, and The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chickering and Gamson). GVSU has implemented an evaluation tool for use by faculty in peer reviewing the teaching of online courses that was cited in The Chronicle of Higher Education as a model for measuring teaching effectiveness.

The eLearning and Emerging Technologies team provides faculty with instructional design assistance, interactive digital media development resources, and guidance in the effective application of instructional technology in teaching. In looking toward the future, innovative emerging technologies are evaluated through the Atomic Object Technology Showcase. Additionally, the Instructional Design for eLearning team assists in providing institutional oversight and strategic planning for the advancement of distance education at GVSU.

One way GVSU ensures consistency is to analyze performance data by delivery mode. The General

Education Program found minor differences in student learning based on delivery mode of online, hybrid, and face-to-face instruction. However, this finding comes with the caveat of having substantially larger sample sizes for face-to-face versus online (i.e., 9000+ vs 500 ratings) courses, and even smaller sample sizes for hybrid courses. Smaller sample sizes can result in individual instructor differences having a more powerful effect than the effect of online versus face-to-face instruction differences overall. The university recognizes that this is an important metric that deserves further attention and continued tracking to build a more solid dataset. Thus, the University Assessment Committee is exploring having units compare assessment data of in-seat and online/hybrid delivery of all courses to ensure more definitive data can be used for informed decision-making.

In March 2022, HLC visited and reviewed GVSU's campus locations and issued a Multi-Location Visit Report, which found the university in compliance in all areas, including in Instructional Oversight, Evaluation and Assessment, and Student Support. Courses offered at other locations are governed by the same processes, policies, and personnel decisions as those at the main campus. For example, unit heads and deans approve the hiring and assignment to courses of faculty according to Faculty Qualification Guidelines. In many cases, faculty teach across multiple locations and delivery modes, which helps to ensure consistency among campuses.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

3.B.1 The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.

GVSU's General Education (GE) Program is designed to provide all students a common base of skills and knowledge valued by employers and society.

The purpose and the description of each of the three components of the general education requirements are clearly articulated in the General Education Handbook. Students learn the Knowledge outcomes associated with each of the Foundation, Cultures, and Issues categories through one or two courses. Students develop increasing proficiency in nine student Skills outcomes distributed throughout the program: collaboration, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, information literacy, integration, oral communication, problem solving, quantitative literacy, and written communication. These outcomes are based on The Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Essential Learning Outcomes. These nine outcomes are distributed every semester to faculty to use as an attachment to their syllabus.

The General Education Committee (GEC) modified the AAC&U VALUE rubrics to create Skills rubrics that also help students understand the increasing levels of proficiency they are expected to achieve. The rubrics are used in the course-based assessment of general education courses - the main components of GVSU's 2013-2017 HLC Quality Initiative. The GEC has established a Knowledge rubric to evaluate student learning in each category of the GE program.

The Honors Program, through the Frederik Meijer Honors College, offers an alternate way to fulfill GE requirements, and its curriculum was revised to ensure that students achieve the same knowledge and skills. The Honors Program reconfigured the existing general education categories into

integrative multi-course sequences to address both the content and skills outcomes found in the traditional program. More recently, the Honors Program was revised again (page 4) and changes went into effect in 2020-2021.

3.B.2 The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

GVSU's GE program is a traditional cafeteria-style program in which students select courses from three major components of the program: Foundations, Cultures, and Issues.

In *Foundations*, students are introduced to seven major areas of human thought and endeavor: Arts, Historical Analysis, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Philosophy and Literature, Physical Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences and Writing. In *Cultures*, students are taught to recognize themselves as cultural beings and understand the diverse ways in which people organize life and perceive the world by taking courses in two categories: U.S. Diversity and Global Perspectives. In *Issues*, students are provided opportunities to integrate their coursework and out-of-classroom experiences by working in teams to solve problems.

The GE Committee periodically reviews the program to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to GVSU's mission. GEC reports changes made to the program annually. In 2021-2022, it revised the Knowledge outcomes for U.S. Diversity historical analysis and changed the language describing the Global Perspectives category. The previous major revision to the GE Program added four new skills (collaboration, ethical reasoning, problem solving, and quantitative literacy), and a new structure to deliver these outcomes (shifted from *Themes* to *Issues*) was implemented.

GVSU requires all undergraduates to complete the GE requirements in addition to completing two writing-across-the-curriculum courses (Supplemental Writing Skills), in which students learn the norms of genre and written communication in their respective disciplines. Each degree program includes a culminating capstone experience. In addition, the University Curriculum Committee ensures that every program has embedded within it a sustained focus on cultures for the BA degrees or on mathematics, statistics, quantitative reasoning, and scientific analysis for BS degrees.

Many programs (e.g., Engineering, Nursing, Writing) have internship/practicum/co-op requirements to ensure students have ample opportunities to practice their skills and integrate their knowledge successfully in the context of a work environment. Other programs, such as Cell and Molecular Biology, require students to complete a significant research project.

Each degree program articulates the learning outcomes for its majors consistent with the strategic mission of the university and the college. Units report assessment data annually, assessment and strategic planning progress are reviewed every two years, and a Self-Study for program review is completed every six years in parallel with the university's strategic planning time frame. Notable assessment reports are from Integrative Studies and the BSN in Nursing through the Kirkhof College of Nursing, captured from the *GVAssess* site**.** Reports by academic and co-curricular units demonstrate progress made in achieving student learning outcomes and strategic planning objectives for their programs. These are first reviewed by the associated Dean's Office, and then by the University Assessment Committee (UAC). The UAC provides formative feedback to support units with achieving the desired outcomes.

All graduate programs require a culminating experience (page 39) that allows students to demonstrate they have mastered the program's modes of inquiry or creative practice.

Student Scholars Day (SSD) provides a special opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to showcase their scholarly and creative works. This event began in 1996 with a small group of science and mathematics majors and has grown to include student presentations from majors across the university. Beginning as a single-day research symposium, SSD evolved into a multi-day event that celebrates the scholarly process and showcases faculty-mentored student work with presentations in-person and online and additional exhibitions of art. The event continues to grow each year, with a record-breaking 800 student participants in the 2019 event. The event stands as ongoing evidence of an inclusive picture of collaboration and learning, as well as the adaptation of learning modes and creative work.

3.B.3 The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.

One of the institution's values in the new Reach Higher 2025 strategic plan focuses on International Perspectives (page 4), whereby the aim is to think and act on a global basis, recognizing that the well-being of individuals, groups, and ecosystems are all interconnected and interdependent. As such, GVSU's curricular and co-curricular activities include many opportunities for members of the academic community to gain exposure, skills, and knowledge that will impact their ability to be successful in our diverse and changing community.

Curriculum-based activities include promotion of foreign language study, area study opportunities, and courses that include extensive international content. Previously noted, the Cultures category of the GE Program includes a required course in each of U.S. Diversity and Global Perspectives.

The university also offers an Intercultural Training Certificate, the opportunity for a one-semester or year-long study abroad through the Padnos International Center, and international service learning experiences for undergraduate or graduate credit. Co-curricular activities also include support for student organizations, programs, and events with a global or international focus or emphasis.

Foreign Language Program
GVSU's Language curriculum includes instruction in Spanish, French, German, Arabic, Greek, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Russian languages. To receive a Bachelor of Arts degree, students must demonstrate third-semester proficiency in a foreign language. Some majors require more language study. For example, the Seidman College of Business requires students receiving a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) degree with a major in international business to minor in a foreign language and study abroad.

Study Abroad Opportunities
The mission of the Padnos International Center is to engage the university community in meaningful international experiences that foster an appreciation and awareness of diverse cultures, people, and ideas. For a university with its profile of significant numbers of first-generation and Pell-eligible students, it is noteworthy that in 2019, GVSU provided approximately 760 students with the high-impact learning experience of studying abroad, with 28% of participants being first generation college students. All study abroad opportunities are accomplished partially through scholarships offered through the Padnos International Center.

Student Organizations

GVSU has 18 [student organizations](#) representing a diversity of cultural backgrounds. Examples of these organizations include the [Arab Culture Club](#), [Black Student Union](#), [Latino Student Union](#), [Native American Student Association](#), and [American Sign Language and Culture Club](#). The [Student Senate](#) elects a Vice President for Diversity and appoints student members of the [Diversity Affairs Committee (page 5)](#) and the [Cultural Funding Board](#), which provides student-led extra- and co-curricular opportunities.

Social Justice Co-Curricular Programming

The university's [division offices, initiatives and programs, and affinity groups](#) provide efforts to: recruit and retain diverse students to educate, engage and empower all students to live in a diverse world; and advocate for a socially just campus environment. Regular programming includes [Conversations of Color](#), [Professionals of Color Lecture Series](#), [Talk Back Tuesdays and Fun Film Fridays,](#) and [Queer and Trans 101 Training](#).

Training Programs Prepare Students for a Diverse Society

Several academic units sponsor diversity training programs for their undergraduate students via coursework and specialized programs. [Three examples of diversity and global-knowledge courses](#) offered by the Management Department are *The Diversified Workforce, International Human Resource Management, and International Management and Multinational Corporations*. Such specialized courses prepare students to serve and lead in their neighborhoods, communities, and workplaces in a diverse society. The [Division of I&E](#) provides [opt-in training](#) to student groups and classes, such as [Intergroup Dialogue](#) and [by-stander intervention strategies](#). [Office of Multicultural Ambassadors](#) are student-peers who are trained to deliver social justice workshops and co-curricular programs. Additionally, the [Career Center](#) offers a resource (i.e., [Handshake](#)) for students to connect with [current internship programs](#).

3.B.4 The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

[Faculty](#) and [students](#) contribute to scholarly and creative work in many ways. The [Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence](#) houses the [Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship](#) (OURS), the [Office of Research Compliance & Integrity](#), the [Office of Sponsored Programs](#), and the [Technology Commercialization Office](#). These programs all support the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and creative work. OURS manages the [Student Summer Scholars](#) program, which provides funding and support for student and faculty mentors to work together on research.

GVSU supports [graduate research assistantships](#) through the Office of Graduate Studies, as well as [sabbaticals](#) for faculty engaged in research. The [Final Report of the Strategic Plan 2016-2021](#) showed that the objective to promote faculty and staff scholarship by increasing external support and grants by at least 7.5% was achieved in the 2020-2021 academic year, with an actual increase of 55.5% to $30.4 million, using the 2016 baseline of $19.5 million (see [page 52, Objective 2.E.2](#)).

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Argument

3.C.1 The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Ninety-three percent of regular faculty have terminal degrees, and many of the institution's faculty members are in the beginning or middle of their academic careers. In Fall 2021, six were instructors, 192 were assistant professors, 333 were associate professors, and 322 were full professors. According to I&E's Diversity Dashboard report on Faculty Trends, females comprised 46.7% of tenured and tenure-track faculty in 2022. Racial diversity is improving slightly year after year, with 20.3% individuals of color (and Not Reported is 1.6%) among tenured and tenure-track faculty in 2022, which is an improvement from 17% in 2018-2019.

Moreover, regarding all staff (i.e., including temporary, part-time, etc.), the Diversity Dashboard showed a minor change in staff of color, which increased from 14.3% in 2018 to 15.1% in 2022. However, the percentage of "Not Reported" staff also increased from 5.0% to 7.3% from 2018 to 2022, which renders it difficult to know the true change in staff diversity. Regular, full-time staff showed a slightly clearer trend, with staff of color increasing from 15.7% to 18.2% (.5% and 1.4% Not Reported, respectively) from 2018 to 2022. Finally, out of all staff in 2022, females comprised 53.8%, males comprised 43%, and "Not Reported" comprised 3.2%.

3.C.2 The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.

Oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance is the responsibility of faculty, as guided by the curriculum development process described in Core Component 3.A. Curriculum development and learning assessment are both valued aspects of faculty governance, and both provide important opportunities for faculty to be involved in the development and assessment of student learning.

To ensure that instructional staff are of sufficient quality and ability, faculty are integrally involved in the search process, including establishment of hiring criteria. Faculty also set the criteria used in our faculty qualifications assurance process (described below).

GVSU's Assessment Guiding Principles establish the expectation that faculty be involved in assessment of student learning. Although not all faculty are involved in every assessment project, process, or initiative, all faculty are routinely involved in the development of their academic units' overall assessment plans and review of assessment data. Moreover, faculty engage in discussion of how their units will respond to assessment results, including changes to be made based on these findings (see Core Component 4.B).

Tenured, tenure-track and affiliate faculty are considered the permanent faculty who provide long-term continuity for classroom and non-classroom roles. In 2021, there were 853 tenured and tenure-track (regular) faculty at GVSU along with 194 Affiliate Faculty. GVSU also had 99 visiting faculty and 558 adjunct faculty.

GVSU has a sufficient number of faculty to enable an average class size of 26. The faculty ratio for students is 17:1, and for the 2021-2022 academic year, over 1,200 full-time and part-time faculty were employed.

The UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) survey, administered every three years since 2001, provides a positive portrait of our faculty and indicates a favorable comparison to similar institutions. Notably, according to the 2019-2020 HERI Survey, while GVSU faculty's scores are on par with similar institutions in terms of how much they were engaging, working, and presenting with undergraduates on their research projects, as well as in terms of feeling satisfied with their autonomy and independence, departmental leadership, and departmental support for work/life balance, GVSU faculty also reported higher satisfaction scores than faculty of similar institutions in terms of their teaching load (71.3% vs 53.8%). These numbers provide evidence that GVSU has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles.

3.C.3 All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.

GVSU recruits and retains faculty for whom excellent teaching is a priority. The Faculty Handbook reflects the ongoing teaching commitment of the institution through its statements of teaching expectations for faculty and the requirements for tenure and promotion.

Assurance that all instructors are properly credentialed is a combined effort among units, academic deans, the Office of the Provost, the Human Resources Office (HRO), and the Division of I&E. The final verification of credentials is accomplished through the appointment process as executed by academic deans. Academic units have the responsibility for developing appropriate position requirements for all instructional staff based on professional standards, licensing, and university expectations. HRO has extensive materials to assist academic units to hire the most qualified and appropriate instructional staff. I&E has implemented practices such as the Inclusion Advocate

program that encourages the inclusive hiring of qualified, diverse candidates.

In addition to providing information and support, HRO and Affirmative Action monitor the search process and verify new hires have met all qualification and credential requirements. Regular, affiliate, visiting and adjunct faculty qualifications must meet the credential qualifications set by the academic deans' offices, as well as those discipline-specific expectations set by the academic units. Specific requirements and the approval process for the appointment of graduate-level faculty are outlined in the Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual (page 53).

I&E ensures hiring practices are fair and inclusive; they provide extensive resources to help academic units hire the most qualified and appropriate instructional staff. The Vice President for Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach creates and maintains all overarching agreements with outside institutions. The policy that guides these agreements is titled Institutional Agreements Process and linked on the Office of the Provost's website. Additionally, deans and unit heads supply resources to part-time, adjunct faculty hired to help ensure their successful transition to teaching.

GVSU has adopted Faculty Qualifications Guidelines and a Faculty Qualifications Assurance Form. These have been reviewed and approved by University Academic Senate (UAS) and are posted on the Office of the Provost website. These guidelines apply to all faculty teaching any course in any capacity at GVSU. Units define criteria and develop rubrics for evaluating tested experience (e.g., Seidman College of Business). Completed forms include signatures from the faculty member, the unit head, and the dean, and are kept in a central database.

3.C.4 Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

All tenure-track faculty engage in an annual two-part planning process utilizing the Watermark Faculty Success (formerly Digital Measures) system. Each fall, after consultation with their unit heads, faculty compose Faculty Workload Plans (FWP) that outline prospective activities and significant scholarly, teaching, or service focus for the upcoming year. Each winter, faculty complete retrospective Faculty Workload Reports (FWR). These reports document work accomplished as planned on the prior year's FWP. According to the Faculty Handbook, "the Unit Head is required to collect the vitae and FWR, append to it the corresponding FWP, and distribute these three documents to the unit for peer review. The compiled results of the peer review and Unit Head's evaluation form the basis of the annual discussion between Unit Head and faculty to set salary. These documents also are used cumulatively to inform tenure and promotion decisions." A template provides prompts for information to be included in all FWPs and FWRs. A comprehensive workbook is provided to faculty by the Office of the Provost and includes responsibilities, timetable, and written summary language. Following are examples of FWPs and FWRs: FWP-CECI, FWR-CECI.

Both the annual evaluation and contract renewal/tenure review processes include consideration of student course evaluations, which are collected for every course. In 2016, GVSU adopted a university-wide course evaluation system known as Laker Impressions of Faculty Teaching (LIFT). LIFT was adopted based on a recommendation from UAS, and is considered an appropriate, contemporary system to standardize teacher evaluations across units and colleges. Detailed information about LIFT is provided on a university website.

Each unit establishes criteria (e.g., History, Writing, Political Science) for the evaluation of regular faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service that are consistent with university-wide criteria. To ensure faculty not yet fully promoted have annual feedback on their progress to tenure or

promotion, unit heads write statements of progress toward tenure at the end of the FWR evaluation cycle; these statements, along with FWPs, FWRs, LIFT scores, and peer evaluations become part of faculty members' review portfolios used in contract renewal, promotion, and tenure decisions. This process is part of the annual salary adjustment program.

The process for tenure and promotion decisions is clearly outlined in the BOT policies (e.g., probationary appointments, academic tenure, renewals, procedures). A comprehensive workbook is provided to faculty by the Office of the Provost and includes a progression chart, calendar, and flowchart. The roles of faculty, unit head, dean, and provost are outlined, including a Frequently Asked Questions document. These procedures are also summarized in the Faculty Handbook.

The University Personnel Review Committee (UPRC) was established several years ago to review evaluation criteria of units on campus and recommend to the UAS any actions to ensure consistent personnel reviews of faculty. The Faculty Handbook provides details about the UPRC.

Processes for reviewing Affiliate faculty have been recently updated and provided in the Affiliate Faculty Handbook. Like tenure-line faculty, Affiliates receive merit-based salary adjustments annually, which are based on evaluations by their units. For contract renewal (every three years, or more frequently for new Affiliates or in special situations) or promotion to Senior Affiliate, departments and deans follow guidelines developed by UAS and the Office of the Provost. In all cases, LIFT scores are used in the review. For contract renewal and promotion, some departments incorporate classroom visits by tenured faculty; for all, the submission of a portfolio demonstrating teaching effectiveness compiled by the faculty member under review is required.

3.C.5 The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

The Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) offers numerous venues for both full- and part-time faculty to reflect upon and improve their skills and knowledge of teaching. Supporting the strong teaching culture at GVSU, FTLC provides customized individual consultations, peer learning opportunities, and financial support for teaching innovation projects. Highlights of FTLC activities include:

- An annual Teaching and Learning Conference, now in its 28th year
- Semester-long, outcome-driven Faculty Learning Communities, engaging over 100 faculty in ten or more topical Communities per semester
- A faculty-to-faculty mentoring program supporting new faculty, as well early career, midcareer and senior faculty
- Confidential consultations, including class observations and structured, formative mid-semester feedback.
- Intensive personnel portfolio workshops to help faculty prepare more complete documentation of teaching effectiveness beyond reliance on student evaluations
- Teaching Innovation Grants, along with five other mini-grants, funding innovative teaching projects, teaching-related conference travel, and collaborative faculty professional development efforts. This is on top of the $900 all tenure-track faculty get for Professional Development related to teaching and/or scholarship.

Information Technology (IT), through eLearning and Emerging Technologies, provides individual consultations, phone and email support, and workshops that help faculty to develop technology skills necessary for effective teaching, as well as other professional activities. The eLearning and Emerging

Technologies team supports faculty, contributing to teaching excellence and enhancing student success through:

- Exemplary Instructional Design - IDeL (Instructional Design for eLearning)
- Effective Application of Instructional Technologies - Teaching with Technology
- Learning Management System Enhancement - Blackboard
- Interactive Digital Media Development - Digital Studio
- Innovative Emerging Technologies - Technology Showcase

The Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence (CSCE) promotes a culture of active, engaged, and ethical scholarship through supporting innovative faculty and student research and collaborative partnerships across disciplines and in the broader community. Research, scholarship, and creative activity are essential components of the university's mission as an institution of higher learning. It drives performance and content in the classroom, laboratories and studios.

CSCE coordinates the efforts of the following units:

- The Office of Sponsored Programs supports faculty and staff in the identification, development, submission, and administration of externally sponsored agreements for scholarly research and creative activity.
- The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity works directly with researchers to create a culture of active, engaged, and ethical research by providing guidance and oversight in the following areas of research compliance: human subjects research, animal research, responsible conduct of research, conflict of interest in research, export controls, and research safety.
- The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship offers opportunities for undergraduates to pursue research and scholarship in various disciplines under the direction of a faculty mentor.
- The Technology Commercialization Office (TCO) creates productive relationships in the quest for discovery, learning and engagement between the university and businesses. The TCO supports university-industry relationships by creating valuable connections, facilitating the exchange of ideas, and supporting the development of collaborations that capitalize on value created by GVSU scholarship.
- High Performance Computing provides remote computing services—servers, storage, databases, software, and analytics—over the Internet. The system provides a scalable resource to assist with powerful computing needs and secure storage for research and teaching data.

3.C.6 Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

Positive student/faculty relationships and mentoring is an essential aspect of GVSU's teaching and learning culture. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Profile for 2022 indicated GVSU scored on par with its peers in the category of "quality of interactions." As described in the Faculty Handbook, instructors are required to publish office hours, included on course syllabi, and should be accessible to students for a minimum of one hour per week for every three credits taught. This availability can be in-person or online, but "each instructor must be reasonably available to meet with students in person." All academic departments have searchable faculty lists on the university website, making it easy for students to locate contact information. Student assessments about faculty accessibility are embedded in course evaluations and graduate exit surveys.

3.C.7 Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and

supported in their professional development.

Staff members meet hiring qualifications established through the HRO, which regularly benchmarks qualifications for positions with peer institutions, as well as professional standards established by national associations (e.g., NASPA, ACPA, NADOHE, NACUA). GVSU has position templates that outline specific qualifications for student support service positions. It has established uniform standards for qualifications for individuals serving in various academic advising roles. The university has received outside accreditation for some student support service areas, such as the National Association for Academic Advisers in Athletics certification for the Laker Academic Success Center and the International Association of Counseling Services for the University Counseling Center.

The process of hiring staff mirrors that of hiring faculty as described above: a standardized electronic system manages the process; HRO and I&E advise on inclusive search practices and affirmative action review; and a hiring committee makes a recommendation to an appointing officer. Each staff position has a job description that includes qualifications and responsibilities.

All staff, including executive/administrative professional (non-teaching faculty), professional support staff, Department of Public Safety staff, maintenance, grounds, and service positions, use PageUp as a communication program to help them understand their roles, continue to learn, and participate in their improvement. It includes a section addressing professional development goals and plans. The program is completed annually via a multi-stage electronic process that includes an automatic flow of forms between staff and supervisor. It starts with an Annual Planning document and is completed with a Final Assessment that reflects performance over the past year. These evaluations are also a basis for merit increases in salary. All resources for PageUp are available through the Performance Management Toolkit provided by the Human Resources Office.

Staff are supported in their professional development with designated funds to attend state, regional, and/or national training and conferences appropriate to their functional areas. The GVSU Strategic Plan 2016-2021 contained an objective (2.E.1) of having at least 75% of staff participate in professional development to expand, enhance, or extend their competencies and capabilities within the context of the responsibilities of their positions. The baseline was determined to be 50-55% of staff annually participating in some form of professional development. According to the Final Report, this objective was achieved with 100% of the faculty and staff completing performance evaluation plans.

Example professional development opportunities include the AP Leadership Series, Leadership IQ, Course Design Series, and various Blackboard Exercises. There are departmental and work group focused opportunities, such as the Academic Advising Professional Development Committee and the Division of Student Services monthly meetings. Staff professional development opportunities can be accessed on the Sprout website.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Argument

3.D.1 The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

The university's student support services are tailored to the diverse needs of our students. Various offices provide a broad umbrella of support for student life, physical health, mental health, academic success, gender equity, sexual orientation, religious, cultural, international, and recreational needs. Student support services are led by the Division of Student Affairs, and other divisions provide additional student services, including the Provost's Office, Division of I&E, and Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach. For student safety, there is an updated GVSUAlert! Emergency Notification System and campus safety website. Academic and advising support are easily accessible via the EAB Navigate system.

The Office of Institutional Analysis serves the university community as a source for aggregate data about students. The "Students" and "Enrollment Snapshots" tabs on the website provide overviews of student identity, geographic origin, enrollment status, and college of primary major. Summary reports from student surveys and customized tabulations are available through the Office of Institutional Analysis. The Division of I&E hosts the Diversity Dashboard and provides an overview of how students experience the campus environment through the Campus Climate Survey.

This information about the student population and student experience allows offices to tailor their initiatives to fit the needs of students and commitment to their success. Newer initiatives include the MoneySmart Lakers program, Campus Interfaith Resources, Religious Inclusion Policy, Lakers Speak Up!, Social Justice Education, Inclusion and Equity Institute, Victim Rights and Options, Talking Together, the anyBODYS application, and Laker Familia and Black Excellence Orientations.

Faculty-led initiatives to support student success are coordinated through the Office of the Provost and include the Student Success Network and a linked course initiative. Both programs are centered on first-year students to ensure a strong start and help students build faculty connections on campus. The My Laker Success website serves as a resource for all students. An in-house survey is sent to all new Lakers during the fourth week of class to check for signs of problems in navigating campus life

and academics. Staff in areas noted above, plus advisers from the colleges, follow up with students who answer the survey in ways indicating they are not thriving or that they are adopting habits likely to hamper academic success.

The Division of Student Affairs created new positions to address immediate student needs and to improve student success (e.g., the Student Ombuds, Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, and Director of First-Year, Parent and Supporter Programs).

3.D.2 The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.

Academic and faculty advisors assist students in course selection through the New Student Advising and Registration Program and through ongoing academic advising. Initial student course selection is assisted through use of ACT and SAT test scores and math and language placement tests. GVSU has multiple pathways for typical first-year courses (such as composition and math) designed to cater to a variety of prior learning experiences and skill levels, as well as Structured Learning Assistance and Peer Assisted Study Sessions in courses with traditionally high D/F/W(ithdraw)/I(ncomplete) rates. The university provides tutoring services through the Tutoring and Reading Center, the Library-hosted Knowledge Market, the Math Center, the Statistics Center, and the Writing Center. Most of these support services are peer-to-peer and provide students the opportunity to learn from one another.

Because approximately 36.1% of GVSU's students are first generation, the university offers TRIO Student Services, a federally-funded support program for first-generation and limited-income college students. The program offers various forms of support for participants along their journey toward graduation. Students are assigned an advisor and have access to peer mentors who can help them achieve success while in college.

Graduate students comprise about 13.5% of the overall student population. A range of support resources are provided, such as the Graduate Student Association, GradSense Financial Education, Professional Development for Graduate Students (PACES), and the Academic Conference Fund. The goal of the Graduate School is to prepare graduates to be effective leaders in their field, to be engaged, lifelong learners, and to excel in a global environment.

International students get a comprehensive orientation prior to the start of the fall semester. GVSU also hosts dedicated orientations designed for underrepresented students that include both academic and social engagement opportunities for transitioning first-year students. The Laker Connections programs include: Asian Student Achievement Program, Black Excellence 365, Black Male Scholars, Laker Familia, and Mno'chigewin: Native Student Success Program. Together, these programs are designed to create an environment where students can achieve their potential at GVSU while being their full, authentic selves. These programs are open to all students and embody GVSU's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion and the Office of Multicultural Affairs' commitment to student success.

The Office of Institutional Analysis monitors the success of the students participating in the Laker Connections programs through retention rates. These reports are unpublished but available through email communications with Institutional Analysis representatives. The success of Laker Familia Orientations is significant. Participants in Laker Familia had 80% first-year retention compared to 72% for Latino students who did not participate in the program (fall 2020 to fall 2021). Participants

in Black Excellence, the Asian Student Achievement Program, and the Native Student Success Program also showed gains compared to students of similar backgrounds; however, the differences were not as substantive (ranging from a 2% to a 4% increase in retention).

3.D.3 The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.

GVSU employs a shared model for academic advising. Students entering GVSU as new students are initially advised through a centrally coordinated advising and registration program utilizing a group of trained faculty advisors, staff advisors, and peer advisors who are directed by a Faculty Director and Assistant Director. Advising and Registration sessions are also available for transfer students. Students are assigned a faculty advisor from their major(s) and/or a staff academic advisor from the college's academic advising center.

Additionally, student athletes, Honors College students, and students admitted through the Oliver Wilson Scholars program or the Oliver Wilson Transfer Scholars are advised by trained faculty and staff academic advisors who supplement the major advisor. Some Oliver Wilson Scholars are encouraged to participate in a Summer Student Success Program. Students who are undecided, deciding, or transitioning between majors participate in Exploratory Study programming, which is housed in the College of Liberal Arts & Science (CLAS). Though all CLAS advisors are trained to work with Exploratory Study students, some advisors specialize in this area.

3.D.4 The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

GVSU ensures that faculty and students have the support they need to maximize student learning.

Faculty Teaching & Learning Center
The Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC), guided by the ideals of liberal education and the principles of inclusive excellence, strengthens the university in carrying out its primary mission of teaching and learning. The FTLC fosters dialogue and community-building and responds to both the needs of the faculty, at all ranks and career stages, as well as the needs of the campus community. The FTLC and Division of I&E partnered to assemble a three-day Inclusive Excellence Teaching Institute that focuses on exploring inclusive excellence techniques in the classroom.

Computing & Technology
Students have access to computing labs across all campuses. All classrooms have a computer, projector, and internet access to ensure that faculty can use technology to teach. Facility or technology issues can be reported directly from the classroom. Facilities and Information Technology (IT) routinely inspect classrooms to ensure all equipment is working properly and determine needed updates, which happen on a recurring and managed schedule. Some software is available for students to install on their personal computers (e.g., SAS, SPSS, ArcInfo). Students, faculty, and staff may also purchase reduced price software and hardware. Information about such resources is found on the IT website.

IT provides students and instructors with the infrastructure and support to enable teaching excellence and student success. The eLearning and Emerging Technologies team provides an array of services and resources designed to facilitate the support of faculty teaching hybrid and online classes, and to

assist faculty in delivering innovative classroom-based instruction. Faculty receive timely and high-quality support in instructional design, the effective application of instructional technologies in teaching, and interactive digital media development resources. Unique to GVSU, the [Atomic Object Technology Showcase](#), located in the [Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons](#) (MIP Library), provides faculty, staff, and students with an immersive and engaging environment to: interact, discover, learn, and share how innovative emerging technologies enhance teaching and improve student learning, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, mobile computing, wearable technology, and 3D printing.

GVSU Libraries

The MIP Library on the Allendale Campus provides the latest technologies associated with learning, including student collaboration spaces, computer labs, and other technology spaces. Specialized libraries include the [Steelcase Library](#) at the Richard M. DeVos Center, the [Frey Foundation Learning Commons](#) on the Health Campus, the [Curriculum Materials Library](#) associated with the College of Education and Community Innovation, and the [Seidman House](#) associated with special collections. Information about these branches and services are found on the ["About Us"](#) page of the library website.

Clinical Practice Sites

[Clinical sites](#) are critical resources for health and health-related program students to apply knowledge to practice and refine clinical skills and to participate in critical thinking within actual healthcare delivery environments. Local, regional, national, and international clinical sites are identified by the academic programs; the College of Health Professions formally negotiates written [affiliation agreements](#) between the sites, the colleges, and the university.

Buildings Designed with Teaching and Learning at the Focus

As new academic buildings are designed and constructed, faculty are regularly consulted on questions of classroom needs, scholarship space, and student study areas (e.g., development of plans for [Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall)](#). [Academic space requests](#), particularly classroom assignments and modifications, are addressed by the Academic Space Committee. Faculty also have a permanent voice in facilities matters via the [Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee](#), whose role is "to provide recommendations to Facilities Planning on planning, remodeling, and building academic facilities at Grand Valley, with the goal of providing an optimal teaching and learning environment."

Recent new construction and renovated spaces have resulted in new classrooms, teaching laboratories, faculty and student research facilities, study areas, and offices. The [Daniel and Pamella DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health](#) in Grand Rapids opened in 2020 and includes one of the largest state-of-the-art simulation centers in Michigan, as well as classrooms with interactive walls and floors. The [P. Douglas Kindschi Hall of Science](#) in Allendale features spaces designed for STEM disciplines, particularly biology. [Finkelstein Hall on the Health Campus](#) supports 19 health profession and nursing programs, including occupational therapy and speech-language pathology. In 2019, the [Innovation Design Center](#) for Engineering was added as part of the Padnos College of Engineering and Computing. The 63,000 square foot facility and its 2.7-acre campus is both a vital resource for students and a catalyst for innovative partnerships between the college, companies, and community. This facility provides [expanded flexible project space for our students](#) and dedicated space to bring multiple schools together for K-12 STEM projects. These new facilities join an extensive collection of technology-intensive instructional laboratories for [School of Engineering academic programs](#), including a clean room with scanning electron and atomic force microscopes, two biomedical engineering laboratories, and a fabrication/rapid prototyping area.

Performing Arts Center

In 2017, the Thomas J. and Marcia J. Haas Center for Performing Arts expanded to attend to the need for more student performing spaces as well as study spaces and more seating.

Art Galleries

GVSU holds the second largest art collection in the state of Michigan, with nearly 20,000 pieces of art, half which is displayed at any one time across all campuses. The Art Gallery manages six exhibition venues. The Allendale campus houses the Art Gallery in the Performing Arts Center, the Red Wall Gallery in Lake Ontario Hall, and Kirkhof Center. The Pew campus houses the Blue Wall Gallery, the George and Barbara Gordon Gallery in DeVos Center, and the West Wall Gallery in the Eberhard Center. Academic departments manage galleries in the MIP Library, Calder Art Center, and Lake Michigan Hall. Additional art is selected for public spaces on campus including, Lake Huron Hall, the Office of the Provost and Division of Academic and Student Affairs, Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall, and the Daniel and Pamella DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health. The Art Gallery houses a large catalog of virtual art tours, artist talks, exhibition tours, and exhibition talks.

Living-Learning Communities

Housing and Residence Life offers living-learning communities in a number of on-campus apartments. Students living in these buildings have chosen to expand their education through shared learning experiences, and each community is built upon a specific theme, major, or area of interest. Professional and graduate staff work closely with a faculty coordinator in these communities to provide a rich living-learning experience that extends outside of the classroom (e.g., through programs, events, field trips, research, etc.).

Financial Support for High-Impact Learning

Faculty and students are provided many resources to financially support high-impact learning experiences including the areas of research, experiential learning, and international travel.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

GVSU provides high-quality education to its students in all courses, programs, and degrees regardless of format. GVSU is committed to its mission, emphasizing a liberal arts education for all undergraduates, accompanied by strategic development of masters and professional doctoral programs.

Curricular and assessment processes ensure that GVSU programs equip students to be lifelong learners engaging with multiple modes of intellectual inquiry and creative work. The General Education Program is relevant to the needs of society and ensures that all undergraduates are well-versed in intellectual inquiry and communication, analysis and application, and adaptable integration of general material.

GVSU supports a host of undergraduate and graduate research opportunities and provides students with support for internal and external dissemination of scholarly activity. Graduate students complete an integrative culminating experience (i.e., thesis, project, dissertation, practicum) to demonstrate mastery of their program's modes of inquiry or creative practice.

The university requires hiring qualified faculty and staff who support a student-centered approach to education. Faculty and staff are appropriately trained and supported in their professional growth and development.

GVSU faculty and students have the needed support to maximize student learning through various resources, such as the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, computing and technology, advising, specialized libraries, interactive classrooms, art galleries, financial support, etc. Support services are relevant, easily accessible, and hands-on.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1 The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.

Program review is coordinated through a website developed in-house, called *GVAdvance*, which includes multiple separate tools for reporting, including *GVAssess, GVPlan, GVStability, and GVReview.* In *GVAssess,* individual academic units complete annual student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessment for every undergraduate and graduate major and certificate (e.g., example 1, example 2), and co-curricular units assess student centered outcomes (SCOs) (e.g., example 1, example 2). Additionally, all units complete annual progress reports for strategic plans in *GVPlan* (e.g., BCOIS). Both the SLO/SCO and strategic planning progress reports are reviewed on a 2-year cycle by the University Assessment Committee (UAC) as demonstrated in the UAC's year-end report. Units' reports and accompanying UAC feedback are accessible for decision making at any time. UAC recognized a need to improve the process of reporting and providing feedback and then seeing follow-through. The committee heard frustrations during COVID from programs that already completed much reporting for external accreditation and felt they were doing duplicative reporting for UAC. Thus, UAC responded by establishing improvements and new criteria for the assessment

planning and reporting process introduced to campus in Winter 2023.

An additional component of program review happens in the General Education program. The General Education (GE) Committee reviews Course Assessment Reports to ensure courses are teaching and assessing the Student Learning Outcomes for the GE Program, as well as explaining how they use the results from the course-based assessment to change their teaching and assessing in the future. The committee typically re-certifies courses every four years. When data unveils concerns, courses are placed on probation (see example); programs must then reassess the course the semester after they are placed on probation. If conditions are not met, these courses are removed from the GE Program.

Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) reviews undergraduate and graduate academic programs, with enrollment and budget metrics displayed for units and deans in dashboard format and reported in *GVStability* (e.g., Statistics and FSBC feedback). The FSBC's annual reviews are available to units and deans and are sent to the Office of the Provost for consideration in allocating budgets and faculty lines.

At the end of each 6-year cycle, which parallels the university's strategic planning cycle, all academic and co-curricular units complete self-study reports in *GVReview* that include an analysis of student learning outcomes, updates on the strategic plan, and analysis of the unit's resources (e.g., Philosophy). The self-study is reviewed by the UAC and FSBC; they provide feedback to the unit, dean, and Provost's Office (see example review schedule).

The Graduate Council (GC) began reviewing graduate programs in 2017-2018, focusing on enrollment trends, professional development opportunities, student success, and resource needs (e.g., minutes from a meeting - page 3). This process includes an assurance report prepared by the faculty and staff of each program and an external review. The external peer review is an integral part of the Graduate School's program review process (e.g., Educational Technology, Health/BioInformatics, Higher Education, Occupational Therapy, School Psychology). The GC's final report is sent to the provost, with copies to the program director and appointing dean, recommending changes to the program and/or its resource allocation (e.g., Occupational Therapy).

The Provost's Office Assistant/Associate Vice Presidents (AVP) are *ex officio* members of all university governance committees, including the UAC, UCC, FSBC, and GC. The Provost consults with her team in making budget and faculty line allocation decisions. During COVID, this shared governance approach to the budget was crucial to allow necessary budget cuts to be implemented with full transparency and support from the faculty. When budget requests are considered (each fall) and faculty lines are determined (each spring), the provost and her team rely on data to make more informed decisions. These data include enrollment trends across the university, retention and persistence rates of students in various programs, and data that have been analyzed and vetted by the FSBC.

Annually, the AVP for Academic Affairs responsible for curriculum and program review examines data, assessment reports, and recent curricular actions to flag programs experiencing dramatic enrollment growth or decline, as well as programs in need of curricular refreshing. Programs are flagged for potential further resource review by the provost's and dean's offices, with curricular and programmatic review involving the faculty in the unit and the appropriate dean(s). In these cases, benchmarking of the curriculum and enrollments at peer institutions as well as commissioned market research are tools used in the review.

4.A.2 The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.

Any credits transcripted by GVSU undergo careful evaluation processes. GVSU courses undergo a rigorous curriculum review process as detailed in Core Component 3.A. Credit-by-exam programs include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College Level Examination Program, and Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES). Credit earned while serving in the military is evaluated according to DANTES and guidelines set by the American Council on Education Joint Services Transcript. Academic units evaluate the credit-by-exam courses, which are then reviewed by a university committee.

GVSU recently began awarding credit for experiential learning at both the undergraduate and graduate level. This credit is awarded as GVSU credit rather than transfer credit. Additionally, GVSU's Prior Learning Assessment policy allows credit to be granted through internal GVSU examination (by units and faculty), industry certification, or portfolio assessment.

GVSU does not rely on third parties for evaluation of credit.

4.A.3 The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

GVSU has a clear and transparent policy and process for evaluating credit from accredited institutions. Most transfer courses come from accredited schools, with the Catalog (undergraduate and graduate) outlining exceptions. The Course Equivalencies self-service website allows students to determine how and what courses can be transferred from other universities.

As a member of the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO), GVSU follows the Michigan Transfer Agreement between two-year and four-year institutions. This agreement articulates a block of credits transferable from any of Michigan's 28 community colleges to GVSU. The institution's Admissions Office has a resources page dedicated to helping students transition smoothly while also ensuring the quality of the transfer credits.

Additionally, course equivalencies have been developed and approved by GVSU units for many study abroad courses offered by partner institutions. Students can receive credit from other institutions by having courses evaluated and approved by the appropriate department.

4.A.4 The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

Prerequisites, Rigor, and Student Learning Expectations

GVSU maintains and exercises authority over course quality (curriculum review process described in Core Component 3.A). The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) ensures that all programs and courses are well-designed, rigorous, and have the appropriate prerequisites so students can successfully complete them. Student prerequisites are automatically enforced by the Banner student registration system. All course syllabi must include student learning expectations.

Access to Learning Resources

GVSU ensures that all students have access to advising, tutoring, library, writing center, technology, disability services, and other resources that support and enhance learning. Learning resources are further described in Core Component 3.D.

Faculty Qualifications

In the hiring and performance evaluation processes, the university ensures that all faculty are qualified to teach courses, as detailed in Core Component 3.C.

Dual-Credit Offerings

To ensure that dual credit courses for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes, GVSU has clearly defined the process and course credit criteria (see Dual Enrollment in the Undergraduate Admissions). Dual enrolled students are held to the same standards and expectations as other GVSU students. Faculty who teach in these programs meet faculty qualification assurances guidelines. Students are issued GVSU IDs and have access to all learning support services.

4.A.5 The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

The Office of the Provost strategically facilitates accreditation in keeping with the mission of the institution. In addition to the Higher Learning Commission accreditation, 40 nationally recognized accreditation agencies have certified programs across the university for high quality and integrity.

In the 2018 assurance argument, it was noted that the Physician Assistant Studies program was placed on probation in 2016 primarily due to insufficient documentation of program analysis and that corrective measures were taken. A positive site visit in August 2018 resulted in successful continued accreditation, with an upcoming renewal in 2024. This program has consistently generated excellent outcomes with graduates regularly achieving a 5-year average pass rate of 97% the first time they attempt the national certifying exam.

4.A.6 The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

National Exams

The Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA) collects information on pass rates of GVSU graduates on licensure and certification exams. According to the OIA, of the 12 programs with licensure and certification exams, all programs had a pass rate above 80%, with seven having over 90% pass rates. The board reviews and licensing exam results are frequently used for differentiating student-learning goals and for program evaluation.

Employment and Advanced Degree Programs

Success of its graduates is measured through the Annual First Destination Survey. The latest report conducted by the Career Center noted that 73% (page 4) of graduates were employed and another 10% (page 3) were actively continuing their education. Additionally, 97% (page 9) of student who

were employed received a job offer within three months of graduating, and 88% (page 8) received full-time offers before graduation.

GVSU utilizes the online resource tool, Handshake, to connect students and alumni to employers and career resources in a variety of fields. During the 2020-2021 academic year, there were over 48,000 jobs and internships (page 12) posted on Handshake.

Fellowships, Internships, and Special Programs

Students are able to explore internship possibilities individually, through departments or colleges, or through structured programs offered by the Career Center. More than 7,300 students received experiential learning (page 9) during the 2020-2021 academic year. Experiential learning offerings included co-ops (5%), clinical rotation (14%), student teaching/assisting (22%), and internship/practicum/field work (58%). The Career Center also offers students an opportunity to meet with companies and other organizations about employment opportunities, internships, and career mentoring. GVSU has been very successful helping students achieve national and international fellowships.

GVSU gathers information regarding student perception of the quality of their educational experience. The Office of Institutional Analysis and the Registrar jointly conduct a survey of graduates every even-numbered year. The results from the 2018-2019 GVSU Survey of Graduates show that over 96% of the respondents were moderately to extremely satisfied with their overall experience.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Argument

4.B.1 The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.

GVSU is committed to assessment and improvement of student learning at the course, program, and institutional level. The assessment process focuses on outcomes as opposed to goals. The undergraduate institution-level learning outcomes are adopted from the General Education (GE) Program - foundational for GVSU's undergraduate education:

- collaboration
- critical thinking
- ethical reasoning
- information literacy
- integration
- oral communication
- problem solving
- quantitative literacy
- written communication

These outcomes were endorsed campus-wide by the President's Cabinet, Provost's Office, and UAS.

Since 2007, the GE Program has engaged faculty from across the university in a robust assessment process. The GE Committee's course-based assessment process requires faculty to assess student learning outcomes in every course on a four-year cycle, using standardized rubrics. In the Course Assessment Report (CAR), faculty reflect on the process of teaching and assessing the outcomes, including how they plan to use the results to improve student learning. GEC provides summative and formative feedback on these reports to the faculty and the units. Every year, the GEC publishes a report summarizing student learning and the resulting programmatic improvements made in the GE Program. In addition, information about program improvement is summarized annually and reviewed by the University Assessment Committee (UAC).

In addition to the institution-level outcomes, GVSU assesses student learning for each academic and co-curricular program. Outcomes are posted publicly on the university's website and programs' websites (e.g., English, Biology, Housing, Speech Language Pathology M.S.). Strategic planning and

assessment of learning outcomes are closely connected activities at GVSU. Both activities are recorded, tracked, assessed, and reviewed in *GVAdvance*, as explained in *Core Component 4.A.*

Assessment Process Overview

Student learning/student centered outcomes of all academic and co-curricular programs are assessed annually, and results are reported in *GVAssess*. The UAC reviews all curricular and co-curricular programs every two years, as part of a regular review schedule. Each undergraduate degree, graduate degree, and certificate program has learning outcomes that are reviewed by the program, college, and UAC. Likewise, each co-curricular program has student outcomes that are reviewed by the unit, division, and UAC. All academic and co-curricular units prepare a student learning/student outcomes assessment plan, housed in *GVAssess* (e.g., Integrated Science (BS), Integrative Studies (BA/BS), Mathematics (BA/BS), Social Work (MSW), Nursing (DNP), Urban and Regional Planning certificate, Housing). Units collect and analyze data on an ongoing basis, review findings, develop action plans, and record progress annually. Outcomes are assessed and reviewed by faculty and staff at the program level, and appropriate corrective actions are taken when results indicate improvement is needed.

Assessment activities are reviewed by each college dean's office before submission to UAC. Reporting in the *GVAssess* site details: (a) student learning outcomes, (b) measurable objectives, (c) actual measures/metrics, (d) data collected over the course of each year, and (e) analysis of the findings, including plans for improvement. The UAC reviews progress made on assessment of learning/student outcomes, ensuring that all units are provided with timely, formative feedback (e.g., UAC feedback on Music & Dance assessment). Teams of UAC members review the assessment materials according to a standardized rubric, and the UAC chair reviews the feedback for consistency before making it available in *GVAssess* to the unit and college.

Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Self Study Integration

An assessment reporting cycle for academic and co-curricular units has been in place since 2003. Our review schedule uses a two year review cycle by UAC, and each curricular and co-curricular program was reviewed twice between 2016 and 2019 (see master review schedule). In 2020-2021, programs/units culminated the previous strategic planning cycle with a six-year self-study, housed in the *GVReview* section of *GVAdvance*, which involves reflection on the progress made in strategic planning and assessment of learning/student outcomes. Additionally, the self-study includes a stability report (a resource analysis of faculty/staff, enrollment, facilities and budget - in the *GVStability* section of *GVAdvance*), conducted by the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee. Examples of self-study reports that illustrate the integration of assessment and strategic planning include: Integrative Studies (BA/BS), with UAC feedback; Philosophy (BA/BS), with UAC feedback; Criminal Justice (MS), with UAC feedback; and Career Center, with UAC feedback.

Additional Assessment Mechanisms

Complementing the university-level review process, many individual units and colleges have their own active assessment committees responsible for the planning and execution of student learning outcomes assessment efforts. Each college dean's office works with the UAC and the Office of the Provost to ensure faculty and staff are actively involved in the assessment efforts for the units within the college. On-demand professional development in the area of assessment of student learning is provided by the UAC, the Office of Strategic Planning, Assessment and Accreditation, and the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC). In addition to face-to-face consultations with

individuals or units, online resources are provided and updated regularly.

GVSU students are required to pass two supplemental writing skills (SWS) courses; these courses are designed enhance writing, reading, and communication skills more aligned with a student's specific discipline. The SWS program provides detailed requirements for SWS course and syllabus design. The University Writing Skills Committee is responsible for the assessment and approval of SWS course proposals.

As part of the curriculum approval process, all new course and curricular revision proposals are accompanied by a syllabus of record. The syllabus of record must contain learning objectives that complete the sentence, "After successful completion of this course students will be able to...." Course learning objectives align with the program's student learning outcomes. The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and FTLC websites provide helpful materials for faculty proposing courses and for committees reviewing proposals. Course and program proposals require rigorous design and review, including creation of curriculum maps (e.g., MS in Water Resource Policy).

The Division of Student Affairs conducts internal and external assessments of its departments on a regular cycle; the Office of Student Life assesses student learning in its programmatic efforts and its Civic Engagement sector regularly evaluates programs with community partners using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics.

4.B.2 The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Continuous improvement is a standard component of the assessment process. The following are examples demonstrating the use of assessment information to improve student learning.

Institution-Level Examples

General Education: The GE Committee reviews Course Assessment Reports (CARs) to ensure courses are teaching and assessing the Student Learning Outcomes and explaining how they will use the results from the course-based assessment to change their teaching and assessing in the future. The committee typically re-certifies courses for four years; courses that are placed on probation must be reassessed the semester after they are placed on probation. For example, the GE Committee reviewed and replied to 47 CARs in the fall of 2022. The Committee approved 39 of them. Five CARs were given a Warning and 3 were placed on Probation; these courses must reassess next semester. The GEC Chair and/or GE Director met with four units whose courses will be reassessed to offer suggestions and recommendations for a successful assessment next semester. The process is working to maintain continuous improvement.

GVSU's 2013-2017 Quality Initiative project focused on improving the assessment of learning outcomes in the GE Program, introducing standardized rubrics, and increasing faculty involvement in the process. Data were collected from faculty assessors for over 11,000 students in 222 courses between 2013-2016. The Quality Initiative Report and a more detailed report describe the changes to the GE Program and the assessment processes that were made to improve student learning, including modifying rubrics and student learning outcomes. The results were used to establish a baseline and targets for student performance for each student learning outcome. GE Committee continues to make programmatic changes and support faculty development activities to improve student performance across all of the learning outcomes. The Quality Initiative Report was endorsed by the BOT, President's Cabinet, Office of the Provost, UAS, and Student Senate. More recent updates include Guidance on Teaching About Systemic Racism and a study finding an equity gap in the GE

program. The 2020 End of Year Report demonstrates the high level of activity by the GE Committee.

Student Complaints: Established in 2017, the Committee for Review of Student Complaints meets regularly to review complaints (e.g., August 2022 minutes) and to review several systems, processes, or policies that impact student learning and recommends improvements, including:

- **Avoiding conflicts between university events and religious holidays:** While GVSU policy holds that major events are not to be scheduled on religious holidays, student complaints were received about the scheduling of a major event in March 2017. To help reduce the likelihood of such mistakes occurring in the future, a detailed version of the university calendar is distributed to faculty, staff, and administrators. Conference services also adopted a practice of consulting the calendar when booking major events.
- **Exam schedule concerns:** Several first-year students wrote letters of complaint about their exam schedule, reporting that they had exams on different campuses during back-to-back time slots, or because they had three or more exams in a single day. The Registrar and the Office of the Provost collaborated to revise the exam schedule website to clarify the mechanism by which students can request alternate exam times.
- **The Committee for Review of Student Complaints** received a complaint from a former student and his father who were pushing to have the university accept a grade from a course taken at another institution after the student had graduated. The student wanted to apply to a doctoral program and was seeking to raise his GPA by retaking a course elsewhere that was bringing down his final GPA at GVSU. The policy that GVSU had on the books did not address how this situation might be best handled. Because of this complaint, the shared governance process updated the policy and website to alleviate similar complaints in the future. The language in the Academic Policies section of the academic catalog now explicitly states that in order to transfer credits to GVSU, a student must be a current student transferring in credits that apply to the program in which they are currently admitted.

Undergraduate Examples

The Writing Department pairs faculty to examine learning outcomes in a course, report the assessment findings to the rest of the faculty, and facilitate discussion about improving teaching and learning. For example, one faculty pair assessed students' team presentations in an introductory professional writing course and found that students excelled in developing content and visuals for their presentations but struggled in delivery. Teaching recommendations to improve students' proficiency in these areas included peer review of team presentation delivery "drafts" ahead of final delivery for a grade and clarification of terminology and rhetorical strategies to emphasize across sections in this introductory course and in later writing courses.

The Classics Department engaged in a comprehensive review of the program with a substantive curriculum revision. The program identified areas of strength, as well as areas in need of improvement. For example, in CLA 395, data revealed that this course produced the desired student outcomes. However, students who enter other 300-level courses without CLA 395 exhibited deficiencies in substantive integrative thinking that must be fixed. SLOs that were no longer productive were also identified, but additional unit discussion helped to resolve those concerns.

The Integrative Studies Department also engaged in a significant program review and identified strengths and areas of improvement. The report provided much narrative, including discussion of a learning objective that required students to demonstrate intercultural understanding by identifying intersections of socially and culturally constructed identities and effects of unearned privilege and

systems of discrimination. Work from 2019 established a baseline of 2.7 with a target of 3.0 (proficiency) using a common measure. The department assessment committee worked with teaching faculty in the relevant courses to hone the program-wide assignment and support students to achieve proficiency in this area.

In addition to formal assessment reports, College of Education and Community Innovation programs regularly review data for the extensive Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) accreditation efforts. This includes course embedded assessments and feedback from stakeholders and much SLO analyses and action. Curricular changes resulting from assessment data analysis included: (a) creation of distinct sections of EDF 310 (Organizing and Managing Classroom Environments) for elementary versus secondary education candidates so that the classroom management and the unique development needs and characteristics of students could be addressed; and (b) addition of more explicit instruction, resources, and guided practice in EDI 610 (Advanced Study of Child Development) around creating developmentally and culturally effective curriculum and learning experiences.

The Bachelor of Nursing Practice program also provided extensive program review. SLO reviews showed that students were largely passing at high rates on their exit certification tests and were encouraged to disseminate their practices. Nursing programs also engaged in curriculum and/or pedagogical changes to improve students' learning experience related to: using analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature; designing/evaluating health programs; and using epidemiological data to inform clinical prevention and population health strategies. The improvements helped students apply their learning to their practice and field components.

The Modern Languages and Literatures Department conducted an extensive self-study that resulted in improvements. For example, tracking Oral Proficiency had a positive effect on test results for preservice teachers. A concerted effort by faculty teaching at all levels led to curricula changes that addressed students' needs and resulted in Oral Proficiency becoming an area of strength. Overall, providing assessment update and related resources, which clarified goals and concepts for instructors, at the annual August teaching workshops helped improve the department's curricular processes and showed an effort to close the learning and assessment loop.

Graduate Examples

The Literacy Studies graduate program underwent an extensive self-evaluation and external evaluation in 2019/2020. This is a process that all graduate programs engage in regularly. Program faculty responded to feedback and initiated a whole program curricular update to improve what students are being taught. The curricular process for the Literacy Studies update is detailed in its entirety here.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) went through an external review of their program and a report was generated. Based on this review, the Provost provided conclusions and recommendations, which the program then responded to by implementing changes to curricula as detailed in the official communications. For example, the program developed curricular badges/micro-credentials that can be earned and applied toward a graduate degree.

The Master of Science in Engineering (MSE) program engaged in a thorough program review in 2021. The graduate program identified 4 student learning outcomes (SLOs). On SLO #2, the programs recognized that they were successful, but just barely meeting their target. The program proposed a strategy to address the learning outcome was to create smaller program groups. This

action item will provide meaningful assessment data for program development by allowing the program to evaluate the impact of smaller project groups.

The Medical Dosimetry program also engaged in comprehensive program review in 2021 for both undergraduate and graduate programs. The graduate self-study notes that they had a learning outcome for students to communicate effectively with healthcare staff that had previously had less than desirable performance. The self-study reported there was a curricular change taking place and in which students' performance rose from 70% to 93%, making it a successful SLO. The report also discussed students communicating effectively through written work as an SLO where students were falling just short of the desired threshold. This report noted many changes put into place to help students perform better, but that the data has yet to be collected to determine success of the interventions.

Co-Curricular Examples

The Division of Student Affairs uses Standards of the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education (CAS), and Essential Learning Outcomes developed by the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) to evaluate many of its offerings. For example:

- Housing and Residence Life (HRL) conducts a measurement of student learning using pre and post test data, which is part of a large self-study endeavor. HRL provides documentation on how curricular decisions and staff development are dependent on what the individuals learn. Annual data collection allowed the program to track improvements and changes stretching back a decade.
- A 2017 Campus Recreation assessment revealed unintended impacts of fee-based programs on Pell Grant eligible students and students of color. As a result, Campus Recreation now offers many free exercise classes, a growing range of identity-based programming, and culturally-sensitive staff and student employee training.

- The Padnos International Center (PIC) was impacted by COVID and travel restrictions more than most units on campus. Despite a global pandemic impacting worldwide travel, PIC successfully completed an extensive program review. Issues arose around constantly changing leadership and a failure to come to agreement over various student learning outcomes. This knowledge resulted in an effort to focus on creating and assessing targeted student learning outcomes across a variety of initiatives and programs. PIC continued to collect valuable data and learned that international students were struggling to connect with classmates and potential new friends because of the shift to online learning and using Zoom during the pandemic. PIC developed programming to address this knowledge by better addressing cultural adjustment.

- The Fred Meijer Center for Writing and Michigan Authors provides writing tutorials by trained peer consultants. Peer consultants were trained in observation methods and 20 sessions were observed to determine the extent to which students left the center with a plan for revision. Findings indicated that sessions focused on more revision strategies than are captured in the end-of-session notes sent to faculty. When shared with the full staff of tutors, several changes were implemented: training consultants more thoroughly in how to help students build revision plans during the session; assisting consultants with time management strategies; and making technical adjustments to the session notes system to ensure more robust revision plans could be written and shared with students using the center's services. In a recent internal assessment, the writing center commended the success of their peer consultants.

4.B.3 The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Assessment and improvement processes are designed and implemented by faculty and staff, ensuring student learning, as well as institutional, program/unit, and course effectiveness. GVSU follows assessment best practices. Colleges and units often have designated faculty and staff as leaders in assessment, such as the Director of Assessment in the Seidman College of Business and the College of Engineering Chair of Assessment, Accreditation and Cooperative Education. All unit and program assessment reports are reviewed by UAC, which is composed of faculty and staff representatives. Further engagement of faculty/staff in assessment efforts occurs through the annual review of UAC reports by the University Academic Senate. Additionally, Instructional Design Specialists are available to assist faculty with integrating technology in a way that is learner-centered and pedagogically sound.

One best practice is obtaining external accreditation where appropriate. Accrediting agencies, such as the Accreditation Board of Engineers and Technology (ABET) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provide invaluable professional development and feedback opportunities that inform assessment efforts. GVSU has more than 40 external accrediting bodies providing external peer review and evaluation for a wide variety of programs, units, and colleges that continuously improve to maintain accreditation.

Another practice is to involve external constituencies. GVSU engages community members, employers and alumni through advisory boards and surveys. Faculty and staff lead these efforts, and the feedback is incorporated into unit and program assessment. (e.g., Hospitality and Tourism Management, Seidman College of Business, and College of Education and Community Innovation).

GVSU also uses nationally normed surveys. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered every three years, with results informing student engagement campus-wide, including in the Division of Student Affairs and the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies. Data from additional surveys administered by the Office of Institutional Analysis are publicly available and inform assessment activities campus-wide. The MySuccessCheck tool helped the Housing and Resident Life Office implement programming to address student homesickness, such as implementing Community Development Plans, to improve student retention.

GVSU also uses nationally normed exams and standards to help guide curriculum decisions, resulting in high pass rates. Most of the health professions programs utilize data from national exams as an integral part of its assessment process (see Physical Therapy and Medical Laboratory Science). The Psychology department administers the ETS major field test on a regular basis as part of their assessment process. The Division of Student Affairs uses the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) in planning and assessment work, and Campus Recreation specifically administered the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment and the NASPA Assessment and Knowledge Consortium's Recreation and Wellness Benchmark Assessment.

The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is a global membership organization dedicated to advancing the democratic purposes of higher education by promoting equity, innovation, and excellence in liberal education. GVSU uses the AAC&U VALUE rubrics extensively in the GE program. The rubrics are used in the GE Program assessment and by academic programs when appropriate (see Economics for written communication).

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

4.C.1 The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.

The commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention and completion rates is a strategic priority evident in GVSU's organizational structures and practices.

The current Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (2021-2025) is a collaborative effort led by faculty, staff, and students across campus. This robust recruitment, retention, and completion plan aims to:

- increase the 6-year graduation rate for undergraduates to 76%
- increase retention to 90% across all subpopulations
- substantially increase the number of enrolled undergraduate, graduate, and adult learners

4.C.2 The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.

Student retention and completion information is collected by the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA), including:

Completion rates

The six-year undergraduate completion rate for the 2015 cohort (most recent) was 67.1% which ranks in the top third of Michigan public universities. The three-year masters program completion rate for the 2019-2020 cohort was 66% (page 24), and the four-year doctoral program completion rate for the 2018-2019 cohort was 97.6% (page 25). Data are disaggregated by major and race,

ethnicity, first generation, Pell eligible and other categories on the OIA website.

Retention rates

GVSU's first-year retention rate from Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 was 82.6%, which again ranks in the top third of Michigan public universities. The three-year masters program retention rate for the 2019-2020 cohort was 76.5% (page 24) and the four-year doctoral program complete rate for the 2018-2019 cohort was 97.6% (page 25). Data are disaggregated by major, race, ethnicity, first generation, Pell eligible, and other categories on the OIA website.

The OIA regularly updates enrollment and retention data on its website, and notifies leadership each semester after the official enrollment reports are completed. The transparency of these data allows units to make evidence-based decisions at the program level.

4.C.3 The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

GVSU continues to implement a coordinated, multipronged approach to address retention and completion since the last comprehensive visit in 2018. Interventions include academic and co-curricular activities, student support services, and faculty/staff communication and training activities. Due to these efforts, undergraduate 6-year completion rates have improved from 64.9% for those starting in 2008 to 67.1% for those starting in 2015. This increase and continued success, despite COVID-related disruptions for students starting in 2015, reflects decades of effort by faculty, staff, and students to develop a culture that supports and encourages students' success. Much work continues to be done in closing the gap on retention and completion rates for some student populations, as described below.

Curriculum Examples

- Retention and completion data are components of the annual review conducted of all academic units by the Faculty Salary & Budget Committee, called stability reporting. These same data are reviewed annually by the Office of the Provost for each program. These data are used to make decisions, such as determining the replacement of vacated faculty lines for academic programs.
- Several data-informed curricular initiatives have been implemented or have evolved:
  - Undeclared students are offered more opportunities to explore majors by declaring a placeholder major Exploratory Study. These students receive specialized outreach by professional advisors dedicated to this population.
  - The Chemistry department began a "parachute" program to help students who are enrolled in CHM 115 change enrollment to CHM 100, if they find themselves struggling.
  - A First-Year Learning Community was piloted in 2018-2019, consisting of seven sets of paired thematic courses fulfilling GE requirements. The sections are taught by faculty with a passion for first-year student success, and classroom content is enhanced with co-curricular activities.
  - The Writing department implemented a "stretch" version of the university's writing requirement for students who desire a 2-semester writing experience. This eliminates a 0-level preparatory writing course that did not count toward the 120 credits needed for graduation. The Math department developed a similar 2-course stretch sequence for the introductory math course. GVSU now has no 0-level courses.
  - GVSU's Adult Degree Completion program (LEADS) is completely online and has

> multiple start dates. Additionally, students in this program earn stackable certificates to ensure that they are making interim progress on credentials as they earn a degree.
> - GVSU has a variety of combined-degree programs that enable undergraduate students to matriculate more smoothly and quickly into a master's degree program which aids in retention and persistence at the graduate level.

Student Support Examples

- MyPath: A tool to help students and their advisors with degree completion planning. It produces an easy-to-read and user-friendly degree audit, and gives students clearly defined information for selecting coursework toward degree requirements.
- mySuccessCheck: Early alert survey that captures student feedback about their initial college experiences and has a strong predictive relationship with first-semester and first-year persistence. Responses indicating students at risk are immediately available to advising and student support staff, who implement actions to guide the student toward success. The survey is intended for first-time college students and undergraduate transfer students in their first semester at GVSU.
- Blueprint for Student Success: An interactive site map created to help future and current students better understand the pathway to degree completion and have quick access to the online resources to accomplish this goal. The Blueprint is built around a foundation of *challenging*, *supporting,* and *engaging* students, in and out of the classroom.
- Student CARE Reports, managed by the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, allow faculty, staff, and students to refer students who may be struggling academically or personally. Staff subsequently conduct outreach to the student of concern to coordinate or provide necessary support and resources.
- EAB Navigate software: combines predictive analytics pertaining to student persistence and success with resources and support for active intervention by faculty and staff advisors. Advisors have access to a dashboard interface for each student that highlights individualized challenges and accomplishments en-route to degree completion. Recognizing the university's responsibility to support historically underserved student populations, GVSU provides training on the use of EAB Navigate to provide additional outreach and support.
- Coordinated Care Model: was implemented in 2021 to ensure every student has an intentional place of connection to people and resources. It includes intrusive, inclusive, and intentional commitments to making sure we create connection and a sense of belonging for students. It requires collaboration across divisions and units to close gaps and interrupt unnecessary and/or redundant requests on the part of students to have their needs met.
- Oliver Wilson Scholars (OWS) Program: identifies, recruits, and develops diverse first-year and transfer students using an approach based on the literature for student success.
- The Summer Student Success Program is a comprehensive six-week program designed to transition students successfully, from high school to college, by developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for success. The experience includes academic coursework, educational workshops, and co-curricular programs, all designed to foster a strong sense of belonging through relationships with faculty, staff, and other students.
- Student Success Coaches work with students to provide tools, strategies, and resources to help them persist and complete their program of study. In person and virtual workshops are regularly available to students on topics such as time management, managing stress, and test-taking skills.
- Drop-In Tutoring is available for 12 areas of study. Additionally, we have a tutoring center where tutoring is offered for many 100 and 200-level courses, and the Knowledge Market,

which helps students with library research.
- SASC Scholars is a 5-6 week program that first-year students who are in academic jeopardy are invited to join. Students in the program get one-on-one support and access to additional resources to help them be successful in their classes.
- The Federal TRIO Programs include eight federally-funded grants. There are specifically four pre-college programs that serve middle and high school students, veterans, and non-traditional adults. Those programs include Upward Bound, Veterans Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, and the Laker Education Opportunity Center. Four college-level programs include three student support programs (Classic, STEM-Health Sciences and Teacher Preparation) and the McNair Scholars Programs which also include post-bachelors support. Each of the programs provide services for first-generation college students, low-income students, and students with disabilities. The goals for TRIO include providing early intervention and assistance to high education, providing assistance in navigating and accessing services at institutions of higher education and within the community, and providing tutoring, peer mentoring, counseling, financial literacy, study skills, and career guidance.
- Student Financial Aid Portal is a tool that allows students to securely and electronically sign and submit documents necessary for verification of financial aid eligibility. The portal enables prompt communication via email and SMS of outstanding tasks and efficient review of submitted documents so that students can receive an accurate and timely financial aid offer. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships provides a variety of forms and handouts that provide an overview on awarded aid, such as financial aid timelines, loan comparison charts, and options to pay financial aid bills.
- Grand Valley Pledge is a need-based financial aid program that covers the full cost of GVSU tuition for eligible Michigan residents.
- Laker Lifetime Learning (L3) Commitment provides a comprehensive and holistic network of services and resources that reinforce GVSU's commitment to the continued learning of its graduates. L3 provides up to $1,000 in funding to eligible students who have a prior earned GVSU degree.
- The Student Success Network (SSN): provides an opportunity to connect first-year students with faculty and student partners who are informed about the university and can provide guidance to students as they transition to GVSU. Faculty partners play an integral role in educating new students about the university culture, various support services on campus, while also providing guidance and support in intentional and meaningful ways through their first year at GVSU. Faculty are assisted by peer partners. All new Lakers (first year and transfer students) are assigned a SSN faculty partner.

The following changes to institutional practices and organizational structures represent GVSU's commitment to routine improvements that facilitate persistence, retention, and encourage program completion.

- Restructuring academic advising and clarifying collaborative student support model. This university-wide approach of coordinated services, including multiple campus locations of advising services, allows the institution to meet a wide range of student needs. A website crafted by the Laker Academic Advising Network addresses the advising concerns of undergraduates, graduate students, professional staff, and faculty. An Advising Guidebook for Graduate Students was created to meet the advising needs of incoming and continuing graduate students.
- Student academic support services were reorganized into a centralized model and renamed the Student Academic Success Center. The center provides learning skills development, tutoring,

and other instructional support. This unit focuses on the specific academic needs of select student populations, including pre-major students, students exploring or transitioning through majors, first-generation students, student-athletes, and other academically at-risk student populations. Programs under the leadership of the Student Academic Success Center include the federally-funded TRIO Student Support Services for first-generation students of limited income and the LAKER Academic Success Center for student athletes.

Currently, retention rates for first-generation and other non-traditional undergraduates are below those of traditional students and have improved for some populations while declining for others. GVSU is actively working to reduce the gap in retention with several strategies:

- The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan is explicitly organized around underserved subpopulations, with specific strategies outlined for recruitment and retention initiatives.
- The Provost asked the Equity and Inclusion faculty governance committee to create professional development opportunities for faculty around student experiences of bias in the classroom.
- The Social Justice Centers and Registrar's Office staff began connecting students with members of affinity groups in Winter 2018. Beginning in 2021, students who were members of affinity groups were also noted within EAB Navigate.

4.C.4 The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice.

GVSU's effective practices include collecting and using national standardized data and internal data, while making it easily available to campus users and the public. The university also disaggregates data for various populations.

The OIA facilitates university data collection and analysis and provides retention and completion reports on its website. The reports are easily understandable by the general public (Sample Graduate Program report).

GVSU also participates in several national data sets, including the Integrated Post secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Student Achievement Measure, and the NCAA. Longitudinal data and data that compares GVSU to other Michigan public universities are available.

Where possible, GVSU also utilizes external benchmarks and best practice tools for tracking student retention and completion and for helping students track their own progress. GVSU subscribes to two services: Educational Advisory Board (EAB) Student Success Collaborative and MyPath. Through these organizations, the institution has greater access to best practices in advising and tracking student success. External measures and reports are widely accessible to constituencies.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

GVSU demonstrates responsibility for quality of educational programs by employing a practice of regular program review and maintaining appropriate specialized program accreditation to ensure the success of its graduates.

GVSU has established a comprehensive, continuous multi-level assessment structure, including clearly stated student learning goals and effective processes to inform the extent that student education and societal enrichment are occurring, as well as ensure the quality of outcomes achieved as the result of the university's curricular and co-curricular activities. Well-established assessment processes promote continuous improvement at all levels.

GVSU has a clear commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs. The enrollment plan includes well-defined and ambitious goals for retention and completion that are appropriate to the university's mission and the populations it serves.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

5.A.1 Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.

The eight members of the Board of Trustees (BOT) are appointed by the Governor of Michigan, each serving staggered eight-year terms. Members serve on one of two committees: the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. Additional subcommittees are appointed for special purposes, such as presidential searches or nominations for Board officers. The bylaws and policies of the BOT are available on the university website, as are the agendas and minutes of its meetings.

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee reviews policies and programs that have a significant impact on institutional activities, and the Finance and Audit Committee reviews proposed policies and board actions that have significant financial impact. Both have the goals to recommend appropriate action to the BOT and to monitor results.

The Secretary to the BOT conducts a thorough orientation for newly appointed BOT members to ensure all members understand the structure, policies, and procedures that GVSU uses to guide its day-to-day operations. Board members periodically attend trainings, such as that offered by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

Example items reviewed and approved by the BOT include mission documents (page 11), strategic planning update (see President's Report, page 7), personnel appointments (page 4), institutional policies (page 4), new academic degree programs (page 3), setting tuition and housing rates (page 8),

capital construction (page 10), bond issues (page 7), endowment and investment spending (page 4), and annual appointment of external auditors (page 5).

The BOT receives routine reports including the Annual Accountability Report, the Annual Financial Reports, and the Annual Federal Awards Audit Reports. Trustees also receive updates on the university's progress in achieving strategic planning objectives.

Administration, faculty, staff, and students work collaboratively to set academic requirements, policy, and processes. A fundamental aspect of the university's operation is the principle of shared governance, including representation from all constituencies (e.g., faculty governance, student senate). Collaborative work is a hallmark of university governance. Policy revision and curricular changes often begin at the unit or department level and follow a well-established procedure (see 3.A) including approvals from college-level committees, subcommittees of the University Academic Senate (UAS), and finally the UAS. UAS and its subcommittees have representation from the faculty, the student body, and administration.

Recent accomplishments of this shared governance process include:

- Modernizing and re-instantiating the Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC)
- Creating the College of Education and Community Innovation, through the merger of two colleges.
- Developing emergency academic and personnel policies for the 2020-22 COVID period, including creating the Lakers Together initiative which was formed as a resource bank for faculty and students on COVID updates.
- Revising the definition of "effective teaching" for faculty personnel practices and enacting the policy.
- Implementing a new Fall Break, an initiative led by Student Senate.

5.A.2 The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.

GVSU's executive and strategic leadership teams center data in both their strategic and tactical decisions. Institution-level decisions, and the justifications for them, are shared through multiple outlets across the university to help build a sense of urgency, maintain support, and share the status of initiatives and institutional health. These pathways include the GVNext newsletters emerging from the Office of the President, the Lakers Ready emails from Academic Affairs, and through direct emails to the broader university community from the President and other members of the senior leadership team about important data-informed topics, such as the GVSU Campus Climate Survey results.

Data used by GVSU leadership come from a handful of carefully curated sources at GVSU. The primary source of institutional data is the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA). The OIA provides a transparent and centralized source for data on faculty, staff, and students; departments, colleges, and other academic units; courses; retention and graduation of students; and other information. Their intuitive interface and powerful search and data exploration tools allow access to current and historical data. The website also serves as a repository for a wide range of reports, including the results of faculty and student surveys and results from studies on educational outcomes and institutional performance.

OIA's website supports creation of university-level strategic documents such as the Strategic

Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP), which combined extensive data about GVSU. Executive and strategic leadership decisions are informed by updates on key performance indicators (KPIs) generated by this system, which are regularly shared with leadership and others across the university through direct communication. KPI target and current metrics are shared throughout the university and community through publicly viewable dashboards, which also show comparisons to other Michigan schools.

Data is also central in the decisions made by GVSU's system of shared governance, academic units, and other organizational units, as they implement and report progress on institutional initiatives. Unit Stability Metrics Dashboards inform key decision makers on the status of academic units, including current and historical data on enrollment in degree programs and classes; student outcomes (retention, graduation/degree conferral, time to graduation, hours at completion); faculty levels and teaching loads; efficiency (section sizes and low-enrolled classes, and measures of cost). These dashboards are built on the institutional data available through the OIA, were jointly designed through shared governance, and are implemented by the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee. This information is shared with academic deans, provost, and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

GVSU has created streamlined pathways for faculty and units to request data for uses such as proposing creation of new programs, which are then communicated to university leadership. These requests come through the Market Research and Analytics Team (a group which complements the office of Institutional Marketing), which are then used by shared governance in the curriculum development and approval process.

Administration's tactical decision-making is also supported through a host of regularly generated reports based on data from OIA, such as the Weekly Enrollment Update that provides a summary of the current state of enrollment (e.g., applications, admissions, test scores, graduation applications, financial aid, housing information, etc.), that is used to make resource-based decisions (including staffing/personnel decisions) before the start of each semester.

The Vendor Relations Manager leads GVSU's initiative to diversify supplier partnerships. As a recipient of the Jesse L. Moore Supplier Diversity Award by Insight Into Diversity Magazine, GVSU is recognized as a national leader in its efforts to engage and retain suppliers from underrepresented groups. Building a supply chain to represent and reflect the diverse campus community, the initiative has created business success for the University, suppliers, and the community, with high levels of spending with minority-owned businesses. Among their other procurement-related duties, staff in the Procurement Services Department provide research on businesses with diverse ownership to GVSU units and a list of alumni-owned businesses.

Student success is directly supported through data and technology that aligns university resources while also generating data for decisions by senior leadership. These systems include EAB Navigate, which connects students, advisors, faculty, and other support services (such as tutoring centers) with a single, shared platform that allows for unified communication and information. The myPath and Banner systems generate information on academic history, current-term enrollment and academic performance, demographic characteristics, financial aid, and other topics. These systems are used by advisors, faculty, and others to monitor and support student progress toward graduation. The CARE system, Navigate's academic referral tool, and MySuccessCheck's survey capabilities also generate real-time alerts and information on student sentiment and behaviors.

One example of data being used in support of student success occurred with the Student Success Network (SSN). When first offered during the 2018-19 academic year, the SSN connected more than

70 faculty and student partners with 1,277 students (958 residential students, 234 commuter students, and 85 students identified as "high risk" from MySuccessCheck or else had less than a 2.0 after midterm grades). Partners were encouraged to meet on at least two occasions with their groups each semester and provide regular email communication. Participating students were tracked using internal information systems and compared to non-SSN students with similar demographic and academic characteristics (high school GPA, first-generation status, ACT/SAT scores, etc.). The data showed that the SSN initiative resulted in an additional 36 students from this group being retained, with particular success among commuter students; SSN-participating commuter students had a 10.2% higher retention rate (72.1% versus 82.3%) and higher average GPA (2.88 versus 3.07) compared to non-SSN commuter students. These compelling results led to the decision to put all new Lakers (new undergraduates and transfers) into the SSN in subsequent years, and now includes almost 100 faculty partners and all incoming first-year students.

Data governance is evolving at GVSU, with data policy historically provided by the Office of the Vice President for Information Technology in conjunction with the SLT and shared governance. GVSU centralized and elevated its leadership around data and technology by creating the position of Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Digital Officer in August 2020. This VP initiated the GVSU Digital Transformation Strategy (DX). While much of the DX is structured around IT service, enterprise solutions, and innovation, it also includes significant resources to build data systems, reporting, analytics, and governance to support data-driven decision making to support student retention, completion, and success. The IT VP also chairs the University Technology Council (UTC). In conjunction with the UTC, the Data and Analytics Office (DAO) works to align data and technology with GVSU's strategic priorities and proposes data policies and standards to ensure data integrity and accessibility with input from other shared governance committees (including the Academic Technology Advisory Committee and the UAS). Expanded policy language around data domains, data classifications, responsible officers and data stewards, and subject matter experts was endorsed in October 2022.

Also in 2022, the SLT created the Retention Analytics and Action for Student Success Acceleration Team. This group of faculty, staff, and administrators was charged with making data-informed recommendations to the SLT about expanding the culture around data literacy and decision-making across the university; improving data, systems, and processes related to student retention; and expanding data and data analytics governance systems.

5.A.3 The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

University-wide policies governing the BOT, administration, faculty, staff and students are collected and published on the University Policies website. It contains the President's Cabinet Policies, which includes the procedure for creating new policies. Additionally, the BOT establishes policies that provide high-level guiding principles and direction for policies that are proposed by the administration.

Faculty-led governance committees are essential to GVSU's operations. The University Academic Senate (UAS) is the highest faculty governance body. It makes recommendations to the Provost and/or the President. Senate membership consists of faculty members elected from and by the faculty of each college and the University Libraries, and students selected by the Student Senate, including the President of the Student Senate. The powers and duties of UAS include reviewing

changes to the curriculum, changes to the academic organization of the university, recommendations regarding faculty personnel policy, budget matters, and other academic issues (see example).

To ensure that professional standards guide GVSU's decision making, numerous subcommittees compose, review, and oversee policies and proposals. The UAS has 11 standing committees. While each college has its internal governance structure, the UAS standing committees serve the entire university and report via the Executive Committee (ECS) of the UAS. Committee members are elected annually and have rules to maintain order and ensure that the university community is well-represented. Every year, the UAS provides annual charges to the 11 committees in addition to their standing charges.

GVSU has several administrative committees that provide institutional direction and achievement of mission and objectives: the Senior Leadership Team, President's Council including President Faculty Fellows and Faculty Senate leadership, Provost's Cabinet, and a Budget Resource Advisory Group. Representatives from the Student Senate and staff committees are annually invited to contribute to discussions and decisions within the President's Council. In addition, the university convenes three planning groups: the Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Task Force, the University Technology Council, and a Network of Advisors for Inclusion and Equity. The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, guided by a task force with student, faculty, staff and administrative representatives, enables distinct learner-ready strategies by harnessing strengths and resources from across the university. This co-created and action-oriented approach for student success upholds our institutional commitments to inclusiveness and community. The strategies and practices presented are intended to articulate and create a strengthened culture for student success.

Two other committees help to shape GVSU policy: the Administrative/Professional Committee (A/P) and the Professional Support Staff Committee. The A/P committee, which has an Executive Committee and four standing subcommittees: Awards, Professional Development, Salary and Benefits, and Social Justice, meets monthly and actively engages in institutional governance through collaborations with UAS and other groups/individuals. The Professional Support Staff Development Committee welcomes and supports new Professional Support Staff. They also plan and execute an appreciation event annually. To ensure all voices are included in deliberations, a Faculty/Staff Affinity Group Council, composed of representatives from GVSU's nine employee affinity groups, was established in 2016 to give regular feedback to the VP for Inclusion & Equity and Associate VP for Human Resources on university initiatives and policies, as well as share insights about campus climate.

GVSU students are represented by the Student Senate. The Student Senate is composed of 50 students who serve on seven different committees. The committees are Senate Resources, Allocations, Campus Affairs, Educational Affairs, Diversity Affairs, External Relations, and Public Relations. The Student Senate works to:

- Investigate and resolve common student problems;
- Advocate for the inclusion of students in the overall policy and decision-making processes of the university community;
- Promote awareness of the role students play in the academic community;
- Enhance the quality and scope of education at GVSU both inside and outside the classroom; and
- Empower students with leadership opportunities.

The Student Senate represents the student voice to the university governing bodies, the

administration, and the BOT in matters of institutional policies.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

5.B.1 The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

GVSU uses a conservative approach to budgeting. For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, GVSU has total assets of $1,477,573,429, total liabilities of $430,298,038 (page 26), and a 4.4% (or $15.2 million) increase (page 11) in operating revenues, resulting in a total net position of $1,051,970,116--an increase of 5.0% from 2021 to 2022 (page 11). The operating revenue increase was mainly due to the increases in revenue from auxiliary operations and other educational activities as the university began to recover from the outbreak of COVID-19. State appropriations increased by 4.8% (page 11) due to one-time supplemental funding of $3.6 million in 2022. Enrollment (page 11) dropped by 3.9% with fiscal year equated students decreasing from 21,177 to 20,343. Fall semester headcount dropped by 4.0% from 23,350 to 22,406. A new scholarship program (page 11), of which $19 million was advanced by the Thompson Foundation in 2021 commenced in Fall 2021, and gifts of $3.2 million (page 11) were received to support the return of Varsity Wrestling for both men and women.

GVSU continues to make it a priority ensuring that the institution allocates the faculty and staff to support the university mission. During the 2021-2022 academic year, Grand Valley employed 1,234 full- and part-time faculty members. Grand Valley's part-time faculty members bring invaluable industry experience and real-world learning to the classroom and provide career connections and opportunities. Ninety-three percent of regular faculty members have earned their doctorate or other terminal degree. GVSU's maintenance of an average class size of 26 students and student-to-faculty ratio of 17:1 ensures a more personal classroom experience.

Additionally, GVSU employs more than 1880 staff members to support operations and has been consistently ranked among the top Michigan employers by Forbes. Recognizing that personal well-being is critical to a productive, stable, and satisfied employee base, the university continues to offer ways for employees to thrive, both personally and professionally, to improve employee retention rates.

The Human Resources Office (HRO) has a standard hiring process for faculty, administrative staff and hourly staff, from recruitment to onboarding. Resources are provided for all faculty and staff through HRO. All position descriptions include minimum qualifications to ensure that staff are

appropriately qualified. Recruitment plans are approved by Inclusion Advocates, Appointing Officers, and HRO. The Division of Inclusion and Equity has extensive resources devoted to Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity and inclusive recruitment. Additionally, many staff on campus are part of collective bargaining agreements easily found on a single webpage.

Robust and dynamic professional development opportunities for professional support staff and administrative staff are a priority at GVSU. New faculty and staff are required to participate in an online or in-person orientation. Human Resources provides support to help supervisors with onboarding of new staff. Annually, each staff member (non-teaching faculty, professional support staff, public safety staff, and maintenance, grounds and services staff) is evaluated relative to their job responsibilities, GVSU values, and professional development goals through the PageUp Evaluation System. In addition, all employees complete mandatory training, such as Cyber Security and Sexual Harassment for Cleary Act Compliance. Faculty and staff with access to student records receive FERPA training from the Registrar's Office.

A clear priority of GVSU has been to strategically plan for and fund additional facilities to support the mission. As previously mentioned, in recent years, GVSU has added new construction and renovated spaces (e.g., the Daniel and Pamella DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health, the Innovation Design Center) to add new active learning classrooms, teaching laboratories, faculty and student research facilities, state-of-the-art simulation centers, study areas, offices, and dedicated collaborative spaces.

GVSU continuously invests (for example, see page 3) in its technology infrastructure. Information Technology (IT) supports the institution's educational mission by providing standard equipment and software in all instructional classrooms, at all GVSU locations, allowing faculty to easily transition between classrooms. IT provides and supports smart classrooms and specialized software in some labs and classrooms. Blackboard, the university's Learning Management System, provides a seamless, consistent, and accessible platform for traditional, hybrid, and online courses.

IT has made several organizational changes in response to changing technologies and academic programs, such as converting positions for obsolete functions such as telephony; switching from hardware to software support; and creating an eLearning and Emerging Technology department to support faculty, staff and students. Additional software and positions have been added to support hybrid and online courses.

5.B.2 The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.

Internal processes ensure the university meets its strategic planning goals. An overview of these efforts can be seen in the strategic plan annual progress reports (e.g., Final Report) posted publicly and presented to the BOT. The Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Final Progress Report showed that GVSU achieved (page 9) 50% of its 56 objectives, while 2% were still in progress, and 14% had to be revised. This was despite the significant impact the Coronavirus pandemic had on GVSU's community, as GVSU carefully navigated the pandemic, while continuing to meet students' needs.

The development of the Reach Higher 2025 (RH2025) Strategic Plan was built upon the recognition that GVSU's new mission, vision, values, and commitments had to be forward-looking but also realistic and reflective of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities. As such, the development process engaged more than 8,000 stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and alumni, to ensure that all voices were heard, and diverse ideas were captured as described in 1.A. The

RH2025 strategic plan is enacted as a living document, and the contents of the plan are periodically reviewed (page 7) for appropriateness, given the current environment and the institution's resources.

GVSU continues to maintain its emphasis on student-centered teaching and learning in support of its liberal arts mission. In April 2023, GVSU hosted the Reach Higher 2025 Showcase, which was an interactive public event to celebrate and recognize the forward-thinking and cutting-edge work that faculty and staff are already doing to enable GVSU's RH2025 strategic plan commitments of *An Empowered Educational Experience, A Lifetime of Learning, and A Culture of Educational Equity*. More than 120 exhibits were present to offer an array of bold initiatives, educational innovations, technological advancements, and hands-on demonstrations from a wide range of disciplines and departments across the university.

5.B.3 The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.

Budget priorities are established by the President and Vice Presidents within the broad context of GVSU's Mission, Vision and Values Statement. Overall direction is also provided by the BOT.

The University Budgets Office leads the development of the annual General Fund Budget, presented to the Board of Trustees for approval each year in June. Among other responsibilities, the Budget Office also coordinates the annual schedule, communicates due dates for budget requests, executes revenue and expenditure assumptions, and prepares various budget presentation materials for review and approval.

The Budgets Office has a procedure for budget development and an accompanying budget timeline that is monitored throughout the year to ensure that critical budget decisions are made in a timely manner. The budgeting process is informed by requests that originate at the departmental level and are then prioritized and advanced to the dean/appointing officer level. Requests must describe how the budget addition supports the university's Strategic Plan. Budgets are further prioritized by the appointing officer considering all unit requests and then advanced to the vice-presidential level.

The budget is monitored and controlled in a variety of ways. Compensation, the most significant expense in the budget, follows a position control process throughout the fiscal year to ensure that base budget funds are earmarked for all salary budgets, thereby eliminating the possibility of negative salary budget variances. New position requests during the year require Budget Committee approval, and are monitored through the Treasurer's report, which is reviewed quarterly with the President, Provost, and Vice President for Finance.

A quarterly comparison of actual versus budgeted expenditures identifies any potential budget shortfalls. Actual expenditures are consistently below budget. Several budget monitoring tools are available to appointing officers throughout the year. Reports are available following each month-end close, and labor distribution reports are available following each payroll. University Budgets prepares monthly reports, shared with departments, for institutional expenses such as utilities, bus service, and space rental (e.g., classrooms and offices). Some divisions have appointing officers review actual versus budgeted expenditures on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Moreover, GVSU's endowment spending policy maintains that only investment income is distributed from true endowments, as the principal must be maintained intact in perpetuity. Payouts are calculated quarterly for the current fiscal year based on the average balance over a rolling three-year period net of the endowment administration fee. University Development is charged with growing the

endowment and acquiring external funding.

5.B.4 The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Resource allocations are solely connected to the educational purposes of GVSU's mission and are not affected by using resources for any other elective sources. GVSU is a public institution of higher education incorporated into the State of Michigan Constitution that does not report to a superordinate body. The Board sets tuition and has exclusive control of State appropriations.

Annual university Financial Reports are independently audited, posted on the university web site, and are presented annually at a meeting of the BOT. The most recent report affirms that university funds are spent in support of the mission to educate students. The university has received (page 15) an A1 bond credit rating from Moody's Investors Service, and an A+ rating from Standard & Poors Global. Between 2020 and 2022, there was no new debt issued (page 15).

GVSU continues to be a leader in providing a high-quality education at relatively low cost. Tuition has and continues to be much lower than the State average for Michigan public universities. The university ranks 10th out of 15 in tuition cost among Michigan public institutions and 12th in terms of total cost of attendance, including room and board. GVSU continues to be recognized as an outstanding choice for learners. GVSU was named to Money© Magazine's list of 2022 Best Colleges for Value, landing in the top third of all schools rated. The rankings are based on 17 measures across these major categories: quality of education, affordability, and post-graduation outcomes.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

5.C.1 The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.

Institutional budgeting and planning efforts take place in the context of a changing state funding landscape. The Michigan Constitution specifically provides for individual autonomy and separate funding for Michigan's public universities. Despite the challenge of scarce resources and declining enrollment, GVSU continues to meet the conditions for performance-based funding and is proactive and resourceful in its budgeting and planning to ensure that the institution continues to carry out its mission to *empower learners in their pursuits, professions, and purpose.*

For example, the Graduate School awards Presidential Research Grants to graduate students to support research or scholarship for a thesis, dissertation, or final project. The Kirkhof College of Nursing continues implementation of a federal Nursing Workforce Diversity Grant, which supports more than 50 educationally or economically disadvantaged R.N.-B.S.N. students. And overall, to mitigate the impact of tuition increases on enrollment, GVSU has significantly increased need-based scholarships, including establishing the Grand Valley Pledge in 2021, which provides free tuition to qualifying students.

The university's annual budgets have been developed to fit within the state-mandated tuition increase caps, and state appropriation revenues. As part of these annual budget building procedures noted in 5.B.3, units are required to detail how their budget requests align with the institution's mission and specific institutional priorities. GVSU continues to have a transparent financial and budgetary reporting and implementation process that includes faculty governance. Every effort is made to ensure the university's budgeting process is focused on the needs of students and their academic success. Budget requests are reviewed by the appropriate leadership team (e.g., Deans and Provost Office for Academic Affairs, and Vice Presidents' offices for other divisions) and the University Budgets Office and then implemented in the operational budget process by the BOT. Additionally,

GVSU submits a five-year Capital Outlay Plan to the State of Michigan annually. This plan is also typically approved (page 4) at a fall BOT meeting.

GVSU was recently included in the first cohort of 10 institutions to receive the Diverse Organizational Impact and Transformation Certification. Institutions were evaluated by Diverse Issues in Higher Education and Coopwood Diversity Leadership & Education Universal based on four pillars: institutional leadership and commitment, curricular and co-curricular accountability, climate, and representation. This certification is a testament to GVSU's commitment to inclusion and educational access, which is embedded across the university in its Reach Higher 2025 Strategic Plan and overall allocation of resources.

5.C.2 The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.

Faculty governance and GVSU's administration collaborated to create *GVAdvance*. This multilayered assessment system contains tools to address all forms of assessment. *GVAssess* handles evaluation of learning outcomes. *GVStability* addresses program/department effectiveness (e.g., Medical Laboratory Science, FSBC Smart Growth) and this ensures budgeting is considered in assessment. And, *GVPlan* allows strategic planning to be integrated into the assessment process ensuring budget allocations for facilities and personnel are conducted responsibly (e.g., Health Campus expansion that was strategically budgeted, faculty compensation). The Assistant Vice President (AVP) for Academic Affairs is responsible for integrating assessment, accreditation, and strategic planning efforts. The AVP works closely with the University Assessment Committee to ensure GVSU is not only maintaining the short-term relevancy and impact of its program offerings, but also consistently improving the assessment process to help achieve the university's vision, which was developed through an iterative strategic planning processes involving all constituents.

5.C.3 The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

Strategic planning, assessment, and accreditation processes draw on perspectives from diverse internal and external stakeholders. The 2016-2021 Strategic Planning Process included 10 "strategic positioning conversations" with students, faculty, administrators, staff, and others on campus, as well as a Community Survey sent to advisory boards, community partners, and other community stakeholders. The input from constituents informed development of the plan. For example, a theme that emerged from the strategic positioning conversations around diversity (page 6), resulted in development of Institutional Outcome B: Grand Valley is Diverse and Inclusive. Transparency of the pursuit of these ideals is illustrated by regular reporting to a range of internal and external constituents and inclusion on public websites.

Employing the continued collaborative efforts, the development of the more recent Reach Higher 2025 (RH2025) Strategic Plan (described previously in Core Component 1.A.) involved 18 "huddles" of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, resulting in 8,000 engaged internal and external stakeholders. The feedback helped shape the final strategic plan, which was then endorsed by the UAS, Administrative Professionals Executive Committee, Student Senate and BOT (page 12). One example of the collaborative efforts that came from the RH2025 strategic plan was the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP), which was led by faculty, staff, and students across campus and is a robust recruitment and retention effort that recognizes and responds to the shrinking number of high school graduates in Michigan, as well as the declining enrollment numbers since 2016. GVSU is planning effectively for the future by strategically reallocating resources (page 24) within

the institution to meet the changing patterns of student needs. These needs include student's ability to explore and change majors while enhancing supportive services such as financial aid, career planning, counseling, etc. GVSU's proactive efforts at transparent budget projections better ensures productive planning conversations across the university with internal and external constituents.

5.C.4 The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.

GVSU actively engages in resource estimation and planning through a variety of offices and efforts to ensure that budgetary contingencies are in place to manage changing economic circumstances.

Managing enrollment fluctuations

Student enrollment and retention remain a key focus of the university as it addresses the declining demographics of the high-school aged population over the next few years in Michigan and throughout the country. GVSU is focusing on growth and retention initiatives as described in the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP). These initiatives include formidable recruitment and retention strategies designed by the Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach and specific strategies outlined by the Academic Affairs Division and Student Affairs Division along with each GVSU college. The university is pushing forward a bold agenda as outlined in the RH2025 Strategy to provide new learning opportunities in the fast-changing higher education sector, with heavy emphasis on learner outcomes, relevancy in a rapidly changing work environment, and the value of lifetime learning.

GVSU has several initiatives to expand its revenue base through the SEMP and other efforts, such as the Lifelong Educational Attainment for Determined Students (LEADS) program and online certificate programs. These programs directly support Michigan's Sixty by 30 campaign goal to increase the number of working-age adults with a skill certificate or college degree from 49 percent today to 60 percent by 2030. Additionally, the university is increasing partnership efforts with local and regional businesses to become a talent pipeline for these organizations. A recent example is the expanded nursing program for the Beaumont Health/Spectrum Health-GVSU agreement that was initially announced in April 2022.

Managing fluctuations in state support

When developing its operating budget, the Faculty Salary Budget Committee develops various scenarios that reflect the impact of enrollment, tuition, and state support. The committee analyzes detailed scenarios (e.g., 1-year post-COVID) during the budget setting process with particular emphasis placed on the impact of potential changes in state support.

The State has approved a base appropriation amount of $81.2 million (page 23) for fiscal year 2023. The increase in the university's State appropriation was significant compared to historical adjustments for the university and represents a 9.5% increase over 2022. The Legislature proposed, and the Governor approved, targeted increases for institutions to bring all Michigan public universities to a minimum funding level of $4,500 per FYES over a period of three years. After years of State underfunding per FYES relative to State peers, especially considering GVSU educates 8.8% of the students attending Michigan public institutions while only receiving 5 percent of the State's higher education appropriation, this funding increase was an important step in leveling State support amongst public universities.

Additionally, the overall budget process includes assessment of the budget contingencies and other reserve funds. The annual operating budget is developed with a predetermined contingency allocation. The contingency is intended to address the uncertainty within the enrollment process. Reserve funds are identified and allocated by the operating unit. For instance, the building and ground unit has a reserve fund designed to address unanticipated failure of equipment or an unusually seasonal weather. Reserve funds are permitted to grow; excess reserve funds are utilized for one-time non-recurring expenditures. Spending of the reserve funds is permitted with approval of senior administrators and the University Budget Committee according to University Designated and Plant Reserve Funds Policy.

5.C.5 Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.

Emerging technologies
Consistent with GVSU's strategic objectives, the Office of Information Technology (IT) assesses technological needs and supports university planning efforts across the institutional continuum. IT strives to anticipate capacity needs to improve scalability of systems, as well as consistently evaluate emerging technologies that contribute to teaching excellence while enhancing student success. The eLearning team includes institutional support for: 1) instructional design, 2) effective application of instructional technology, 3) learning management system enhancement, 4) digital media development, and 5) purposeful exploration of emerging technologies through the Atomic Object Technology Showcase.

Maximizing cyber safety (and the ethical use of technology) and minimizing potential threats is a growing IT focus. This is operationalized through policy development and implementation, advice regarding phishing and ransomware, mandatory cyber security training for GVSU faculty and staff, and regular communications with university faculty and staff. The IT Technical Support and Academic Support teams facilitate at least annual updates to the system, including Blackboard upgrades, and appropriate classroom technology upgrades.

Shifting demographics

The shifting demographics relevant to GVSU include the increasing emphasis on health care employment opportunities in the region and declining number of high school graduates in Michigan.

In response to emerging needs and careers in health care, and as the leading provider of health care professionals (page 3) in West Michigan, GVSU opened the Daniel and Pamella DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health to accommodate the 9,300 students enrolled in the 20 health-related programs at GVSU. This new facility houses one of the largest state-of-the-art simulation centers in Michigan. The 17 classrooms and 12 interactive laboratories are fitted with the latest technology and learning labs, which provide students with various modes of simulated learning, including electronic 3-dimensional modeling and imaging of the human body and organs, virtual anatomy tables, virtual reality immersion rooms, and patient simulators. Faculty within the Simulation Center are mandated an additional orientation specific to understanding the capabilities of the Simulation Center. In 2022, the Simulation Center was accredited by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare.

Additionally, the College of Health Professions (CHP) developed new programs, including Health Information Management, Respiratory Care (in a cooperative with Muskegon Community College), and Histotechnology. The CHP also engaged with members of the regional community by offering courses through the Kent Career Tech Center and Rockford Public Schools with dual-enrollment

courses, and the GVSU Traverse City location, where Pre-Physician Assistant Studies is offered to complement the satellite graduate Physician Assistant Studies program approved for the Traverse City location.

In order to increase student access and retention, GVSU has an enhanced focus on programming for nontraditional learners, and the Center for Adult and Continuing Studies was recently restructured to coordinate these efforts. The center operates the Michigan Learning and Education Advancement Program (MiLEAP) at the Traverse City Regional Center. MiLEAP helps fund underemployed or dislocated workers who want to transition from education and training programs to higher skilled jobs and careers. Additionally, the institution has a well-established program of support for veterans and active-duty military individuals through the Peter Secchia Military and Veterans Resource Center. A few unique programs are the Military Police Veteran's Academy, which offers military police veterans the training needed to transition effectively to civilian law enforcement service, and the Veterans Advance Progressive Work-based Learning program, which provides a competitive wage and career progression while veterans are in school.

In 2020, GVSU opened a new bus line, the Laker Line, that connects the Pew, Health, and Allendale campuses more efficiently and effectively. The bus line meets the needs of the growing enrollment within the downtown Grand Rapids campuses.

Globalization
Globalization is an integral part of the efforts at GVSU, with many of these efforts coordinated by the Padnos International Center. In 2019, 762 GVSU students participated in study abroad programs, 29 faculty-led abroad programs were conducted, and GVSU ranked seventh in the nation for study abroad participation among master's level institutions.

In the context of changing federal guidelines that affect international study and travel, employment of international faculty and staff, and enrollment of international students, GVSU remains committed to continuing its long tradition of study abroad and welcoming international students and faculty to campus. Engagement with the world is a hallmark of GVSU and has strong support from university administration. Notably, although overall enrollment has been declining, enrollment of international students has seen a steady increase from 2020-2022 in terms of both undergraduate and graduate students.

One of the current top priorities to enhance student learning and outcomes that also align with the university mission is the planning and development of the proposed Blue Dot Lab (page 29). This is the renovation of an existing 1988 academic building plus a new addition. This building will house computer science, data science and transdisciplinary degrees at the intersection of Computing, Business, and the Humanities.

Information Technology has a bold Digital Transformation Strategy that demonstrates a strong effort to respond to feedback from faculty, staff, and students. With IT's support, the Blue Dot Lab aims to be a beacon of opportunity igniting a new model of collaboration, transforming how we live and learn, through a unique fusion among educational institutions, startup organizations, entrepreneurs, local businesses, and corporate partners.

Operational savings would result by centralizing digital learning, use of software tools, production labs, fabrication labs on campus for students in all colleges, and areas of study. The Blue Dot Lab (page 41) will promote cross disciplinary teaching, collaboration and connection between faculty, students, community, and industry with spaces right sized and technology enhanced. Graduates will

have a trans-disciplinary foundation and a mindset to better adapt and respond to future societal changes.

5.C.6 The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Since 2007, the President has issued an annual Accountability Report to demonstrate how the state and its people are receiving excellent returns on their investment. GVSU continues to be efficient and student-centered, while providing a powerful economic catalyst (page 21) through various construction investments and jobs created throughout Michigan counties. As mentioned, the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA) provides a rich repository of information reporting performance. Enrollment data assists in understanding the composition of the institution and supports planning exercises. GVSU monitors progress on student outcomes annually through a publicly available website and an annual progress update given to the Board.

GVSU produces high-quality graduates to improve Michigan's future. The OIA provides links to licensure and certification exam pass rates, which reveal all 12 programs had a pass rate above 80% with 7 having over 90% pass rates. Approximately 83% of recent graduates (page 3) are employed or in graduate school, and 85% of our graduates (page 6) are employed and/or live in Michigan. GVSU's 6-year graduation rate increased from 52.4% in 2007 to 67.1% in 2021, and GVSU had the fifth highest overall retention and fourth highest graduation rates among the 15 Michigan public universities. This outcome is most impressive considering that the university has historically received lower state investments per degree compared to peer institutions. In fact, the most recent figures reveal that the state invested $13,160 per degree for GVSU (page 17), with the state average for all Michigan public universities being $20,423 per degree and even two universities receiving over $30,000 per degree.

The campus community and the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) use a variety of measurement tools to track student feedback and satisfaction with programs/services offered and to review progress and initiate improvements. For example:

- The Coordination, Assistance, Response, and Education team creates an annual report detailing referrals received and services offered to students.
- The DSA surveyed students on their satisfaction with university services during COVID-19, and while there were areas for improvement, the majority of students felt supported by GVSU during this time.
- The Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution utilizes workshops to address student issues of academic misconduct, ethical decision-making, and navigating interpersonal relationships. Surveyed participants unanimously report that they find these workshops present helpful information and would recommend them to fellow students.
- Service outcome results from the University Counseling Center (UCC) from the 2019-2020 academic year demonstrated that the majority of UCC clients reported both improved well-being and increased positive feelings about themselves after attending group therapy, while individual psychotherapy outcome results also demonstrated a significant positive effect of receiving counseling services on psychological symptoms. These positive results support the UCC's continued offerings and delivery methods.
- Retention rates for first-time-in-any-college (FTIAC) students that participate in Recreation and Wellness programs continue to be higher than non-recreation participants. In Fall 2020, 84.8% of FTIAC recreation participants were retained, compared to 72.9% of FTIAC non-Recreation participants. This indicates higher levels of satisfaction and potential sense of

belonging among Recreation participants.

The Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC), a standing subcommittee of the UAS, works to provide an informed understanding of the financial health of the university. The committee's reports and guidance help units and programs improve operations and performance. Along these lines, the FSBC, in an effort to better inform faculty of the costs of curricular decisions and stimulate faculty involvement and innovation, provides units with stability metrics. Units are asked to reflect on the trends in each of these metrics and provide commentary on the analysis. Within the self-study conducted by each unit, there is an entire section on Reflections on Unit Stability. These reflections are based upon the stability metric data compiled for each department (e.g., Criminal Justice (page 10), Integrative Studies (page 15)).

GVSU further documents performance and implements its improvement plans by engaging an independent auditing firm to conduct an audit on internal control over financial reporting and compliance and an audit of financial statements. The audit reported in 2022 identified no deficiencies in internal control that would be considered weaknesses.

GVSU's achievements are also recognized and documented by external publications. GVSU continues to rank highly in terms of return on investment for students (e.g., "Best Value Colleges in America", "Best Colleges for Your Money") and academic excellence (e.g., "Top Performers on Social Mobility", "Best Universities in the Country"). Additional recognition can be found on the Awards & Recognition page. These recognitions and awards help to demonstrate the value that GVSU provides for students and that GVSU maintains a robust and strong continuous improvement process.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Summary

GVSU maintains a strong, collaborative shared governance model ensuring good stewardship of scarce resources while enabling data-informed decision-making and progress toward its mission.

The university employs strategic care in its budgeting process to avoid strapping students with excessive tuition increases or excessive debt. The university ranks 10th out of 15 in tuition cost among Michigan public institutions and is consistently recognized as an outstanding value for learners.

A bold Strategic Enrollment Management Plan has positioned GVSU for a healthy and diverse future, and a collaborative effort to develop and implement Reach Higher 2025 has positioned GVSU for a thriving future to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Sources

There are no sources.