

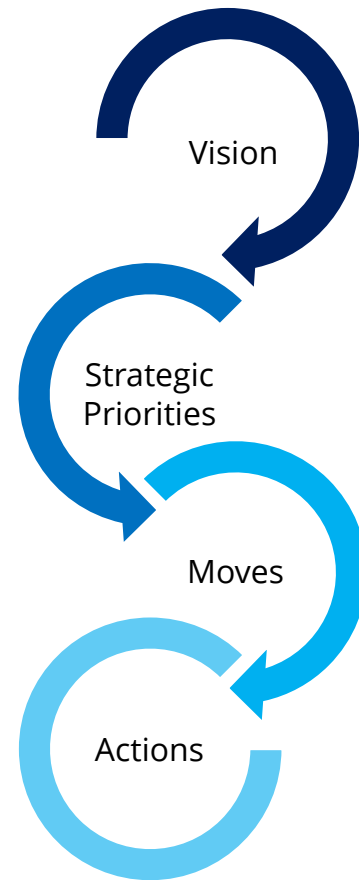
Division of Academic Affairs

Draft Strategic Framework 2025-2030

Introduction

Academic Affairs stands at the heart of our institution's mission to foster intellectual growth, innovation, and societal impact. This strategic framework presents a collaborative vision for the future, centered on academic excellence, curricular and pedagogical innovation, transformative student experiences, teaching and scholarly activity, and engagement with our communities.

This framework is both a roadmap and a call to action. Together, we will shape a vibrant future that empowers learners, inspires discovery, and contributes meaningfully to the public good. Our framework is integrated and supports strategic leadership and engagement within and across Academic Affairs. As we look ahead, Academic Affairs will lead with purpose by ensuring that our academic enterprise remains future-ready, resilient, and deeply connected to the world around us.



Anchored in the need to:

Advance student success

Foster connections and community

Spark discovery and partnerships

Ensure a positive impact for people, place, and planet.

Vision

The Academic Affairs' vision serves as a guiding light to propel us towards our future. This vision is not just a destination—it is a call to act.

As we drive Grand Valley's mission, we:

Lead with intention. Collaborate with purpose.

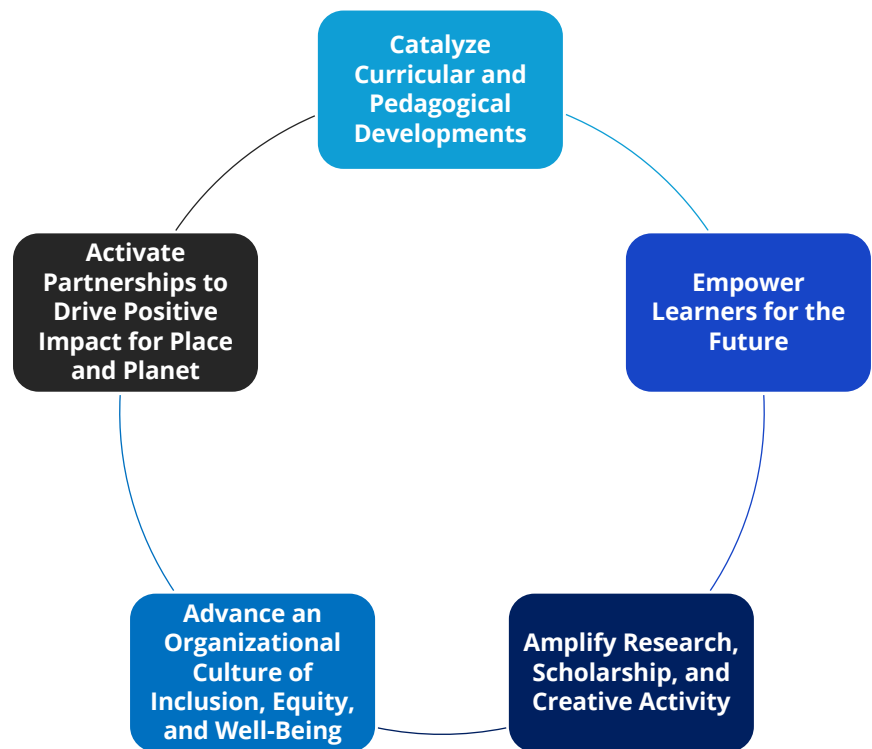
Create a lasting impact for generations to come.

DRAFT Strategic Priorities

Academic Affairs' strategic priorities support and enhance the University's commitments.

We acknowledge that the nature of our work exists in an ecosystem.

Our strategic priorities are distinct yet interrelated and interconnected.





A. Catalyze Curricular and Pedagogical Developments

We shape our academic portfolio to address the diverse needs of the learners and communities we serve.



B. Empower Learners for the Future

By blending the breadth of liberal education with career-focused preparation, and by opening new doors to higher education for every learner, we equip them with the knowledge, skills, and agency to flourish in work and life.



C. Amplify Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

As teacher-scholars, we integrate high-impact teaching with research, scholarship and creative activity to advance the public good.



D. Advance an Organizational Culture of Inclusion, Equity, and Well-Being

We cultivate an inclusive, equitable, and supportive Academic Affairs organizational culture where faculty and staff thrive at Grand Valley.



E. Activate Partnerships to Drive Positive Impact for Place and Planet

We engage with community, industry, government, and alumni partners to drive economic growth, cultural vitality, and environmental sustainability.

DRAFT Strategic Priorities and Moves

Legend

A. **Strategic Priority** – The high-level goal we are working toward.

1) Move – A major lever or approach we take to advance the Strategic Priority.
(Numbered 1, 2, 3...)

A. Catalyze Curricular and Pedagogical Developments

We shape our academic portfolio to address the diverse needs of the learners and communities we serve.

- 1) Drive and empower inclusive curriculum development and pedagogical innovation
- 2) Expand opportunities for career design and access to lifelong learning
- 3) Ensure digital literacy and fluency for all

B. Empower Learners for the Future

By blending the breadth of liberal education with career-focused preparation and opening new doors to higher education for every learner, we equip them with the knowledge, skills, and agency to flourish in work and life.

- 1) Solidify the first-year academic experience to create a foundation for long-term success that meets learners where they are
- 2) Design academic journeys that center belonging, agency, and excellence to create transformational experiences for every learner
- 3) Ensure barrier-free access to multiple experiential learning opportunities to foster real-world application and meaning-making
- 4) Become a national model for learner-readiness as we advance educational equity, grow educational attainment, and foster career resilience

C. Amplify Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

As teacher-scholars, we integrate high-impact teaching with research, scholarship, and creative activity to advance the public good.

- 1) Advance a research infrastructure, support systems, and recognition mechanisms to drive innovation and creativity within and across the disciplines
- 2) Cultivate and nurture interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to research, scholarship, and creative activity
- 3) Accelerate externally engaged, mutually beneficial research, scholarship, and creative activity
- 4) Develop research capacity to solve problems and meet societal needs related to technology, healthcare, and the environment

D. Advance an Organizational Culture of Inclusion, Equity, and Well-Being

We cultivate an inclusive, equitable, and supportive Academic Affairs organizational culture where faculty and staff thrive at Grand Valley.

- 1) Foster an inclusive, connected Academic Affairs community through intentional shared leadership, collaboration, and celebration
- 2) Champion meaningful work, continuous professional growth, and organizational effectiveness for faculty and staff
- 3) Optimize policies, processes, and practices to foster equity and drive operational excellence
- 4) Develop a dynamic resource allocation strategy informed by data, strategic impact, and evolving organizational needs

E. Activate Partnerships to Drive Positive Impact for Place and Planet

We engage with community, industry, government, and alumni partners to drive economic growth, cultural vitality, and environmental sustainability.

- 1) Coordinate a strategic approach to external engagement and partnerships to advance strategic priorities and external impact
- 2) Deepen authentic community, professional, institutional, and industry partnerships for mutual benefit
- 3) Strengthen our networks of alumni and donors for long-term growth
- 4) Lead boldly in areas of excellence to drive human and environmental resilience

DRAFT Strategic Priorities, Moves, Possible Actions, and Steps

Legend

A. **Strategic Priority** – The high-level goal we are working toward.

1) Move – A major lever or approach we take to advance the Strategic Priority. (Numbered 1, 2, 3...)

a) **Action** – A specific initiative or activity to implement a Move. (Lettered a, b, c...)

i) **STEP** – A detailed sub-task or milestone that supports an Action. (Labeled as i, ii, STEP.)

A. Catalyze Curricular and Pedagogical Developments

We shape our academic portfolio to address the diverse needs of the learners and communities we serve.

1) Drive and empower inclusive curriculum development and pedagogical innovation

a) Leverage data-informed curricular portfolio review processes to identify growth areas and gaps as well as consider employer-aligned competencies

i) *STEP: Establish an ongoing program 'health check' process*

b) Expand high-impact, equity-minded teaching practices that advance liberal education outcomes

c) Scale technology-enabled immersive teaching innovations

d) Integrate open learning innovations and materials

e) Elevate and grow graduate programs

f) Prioritize high-demand programs and flexible delivery models

g) Enhance faculty development programs to support curricular and pedagogical innovation

2) Expand opportunities for career design and access to lifelong learning

- a) Evolve and scale professional and workforce-aligned programs to reach more learners and regions for continued workforce readiness
- b) Build online and stackable credentials, micro-pathways, and upskilling routes across the lifespan
- c) Activate alumni and lifelong-learning networks to support professional mobility, career resiliency, and civic engagement
- d) Engage students, advisory boards, and community partners in curriculum development and design

3) Ensure digital literacy and fluency for all

- a) Integrate digital and AI literacy in General Education, foundational courses, and discipline-specific curricula
 - i) STEP: Collaborate with academic units to scaffold digital and AI literacies as pertinent
- b) Expand applied digital learning experiences
 - i) *STEP: Expand partner-led digital apprenticeships, internships, and practica with external organizations*
- c) Co-develop a technology-enhanced ecosystem (e.g., BlueDot, AA AI Steering) to support adoption, governance, and continuous improvement
- d) Guarantee equitable access to AI and data fluency
 - i) *STEP: AI integration into assignments and other coursework across disciplines*
 - ii) *STEP: Expand curricular and co-curricular AI learning opportunities*

B. Empower Learners for the Future

By blending the breadth of liberal education with career-focused preparation and opening new doors to higher education for every learner, we equip them with the knowledge, skills, and agency to flourish in work and life.

1) Solidify the first-year academic experience to create a foundation for long-term success that meets learners where they are

- a) Establish a collaborative, structured, relational First-Year Framework for a seamless transition into higher education

2) Design academic journeys that center belonging, agency, and excellence to create transformational experiences for every learner

- a) Develop a comprehensive strategy and robust infrastructure to guide student success efforts
 - i) *STEP: Systematically gather and use student lived-experience data to inform improvement*
 - ii) *STEP: Develop and implement a Student Success Data Dashboard*
 - iii) *STEP: Define and assess learner mindset outcomes (e.g., growth mindset, self-efficacy, resilience) within advising, gateway courses, and program learning outcomes*
- b) Radically collaborate with Student Affairs to integrate curricular, co-curricular, and student life supports for a seamless college readiness and positive student experience
- c) Enhance career exploration and design opportunities
- d) Partner for ongoing skills development post-graduation
- e) Develop metrics and a monitoring system for post-graduation attainment and success

3) Ensure barrier-free access to multiple experiential learning opportunities to foster real-world application and meaning-making

- a) Elevate awareness of and access to student-friendly experiential learning opportunities
- b) Expand career-connected and workplace-based learning opportunities
- c) Evolve infrastructure and support to develop and coordinate experiential learning opportunities
 - i) *STEP: Align administrative processes across the range of experiential learning opportunities*
 - ii) *STEP: Develop a comprehensive student navigation model to surface experiential learning, mentoring, and funding options*
- d) Expand community-based learning opportunities

4) Become a national model for learner-readiness as we advance educational equity, grow educational attainment, and foster career resilience

- a) Adopt learner-readiness frameworks tailored to diverse learners and academic journeys
- b) Equip faculty and staff with knowledge, skills, and tools to support learners at every stage of their journey
- c) Expand the range of learners who can thrive at Grand Valley
- d) Review and revise academic policies to remove hidden barriers and inefficiencies.
- e) Actively partner around enrollment planning to foster growth

C. Amplify Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

As teacher-scholars, we integrate high-impact teaching with research, scholarship, and creative activity to advance the public good.

1) Advance a research infrastructure, support systems, and recognition mechanisms to drive innovation and creativity within and across the disciplines

- a) Establish goals and strategies around external research and government funding
 - i) *STEP: Strengthen partnerships with external funders by aligning seed funding and faculty incentives with national and regional priorities*
- b) Conduct a comprehensive audit of research infrastructure
 - i) *STEP: Identify opportunities to streamline internal funding processes*
 - ii) *STEP: Enhance funding opportunities*
 - iii) *STEP: Enhance knowledge of funding opportunities, grant writing, and contract development, as well as support from submission to completion*
- c) Articulate a comprehensive communication plan for research, scholarship, and creative activity
 - i) *STEP: Identify and map existing and emerging areas of scholarly strength*
 - ii) *STEP: Define and disseminate University Strategic Research Priorities*
 - iii) *STEP: Increase university communication on successful research projects*
 - iv) *STEP: Acknowledge, highlight, and reward scholarship and creative activity within the University*

d) Improve coordination and collaborative approaches to advance research

i) *STEP: Coordinate research efforts across channels (Associate Deans of Research → VPRI)*

ii) *STEP: Support the establishment of Research Hubs*

iii) *STEP: Establish Research Council*

2) Cultivate and nurture interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to research, scholarship, and creative activity

a) Enhance peer-to-peer research mentoring

b) Launch a Faculty Research Fellowship Program aligned with strategic priorities

c) Establish strategic selective research clusters in fields of high demand, relevance, and distinction (e.g., sustainability, AI)

3) Accelerate externally engaged, mutually beneficial research, scholarship, and creative activity

a) Expand and coordinate community and industry research partnership and efforts

4) Develop research capacity to solve problems and meet societal needs related to technology, healthcare, and the environment

a) Explore selective PhD programs in high-demand fields to advance strategic research priorities

b) Align incentives and opportunities with strategic areas of focus and excellence

D. Advance an Organizational Culture of Inclusion, Equity, and Well-Being

We cultivate an inclusive, equitable, and supportive Academic Affairs organizational culture where faculty and staff thrive at Grand Valley.

1) Foster an inclusive, connected Academic Affairs community through intentional shared leadership, collaboration, and celebration

- a) Strengthen faculty, staff, and student engagement in governance and planning
- b) Improve collaboration, trust, and shared purpose to enrich shared initiatives
- c) Acknowledge and celebrate faculty and staff contributions, successes, and milestones
 - i) *STEP: Empower faculty and staff to celebrate each other*

2) Champion meaningful work, continuous professional growth, and organizational effectiveness for faculty and staff

- a) Engage in a comprehensive review of workload levels to define balanced, equitable workloads and role clarity
- b) Identify and support career progression pathways and development opportunities
- c) Ensure access for faculty and staff to skill-building and development opportunities that support individual aspirations, shared leadership, and collective success
 - i) *STEP: Leverage our internal expertise through mentorship, peer engagement, and community-based learning models*

- d) Clarify roles, workload expectations, and advancement pathways for affiliate faculty

3) Optimize policies, processes, and practices to foster equity and drive operational excellence

- a) Reshape incentives and valuation of diverse types of work in policy, practices, and performance reviews while centering inclusive practices
 - i) *STEP: Enhance the valuing of community-embedded research efforts and service*
 - ii) *STEP: Promote and incentivize flexible faculty roles that support a balanced integration of scholarship, teaching, and service/leadership*
 - iii) *STEP: Ensure performance evaluation guidelines for faculty and staff explicitly recognize a wide range of contributions, including collaborative, applied, community-based, and interdisciplinary work*
- b) Evaluate and evolve personnel policies to advance equity and inclusion
- c) Develop an Academic Affairs AI strategy and governance framework that advances equity, academic integrity, privacy, and accessibility across teaching, research, and operations

4) Develop a dynamic resource allocation strategy informed by data, strategic impact, and evolving organizational needs

- a) Revise the budget allocation strategy and process
- b) Improve operational efficiency and reallocation processes to sustain high-impact, high-value efforts
 - i) *STEP: Define and implement a framework for evaluating the success and sustainability of operational and strategic initiatives*

E. Activate Partnerships to Drive Positive Impact for Place and Planet

We engage with community, industry, government, and alumni partners to drive economic growth, cultural vitality, and environmental sustainability.

1) **Coordinate a strategic approach to external engagement and partnerships to advance strategic priorities and external impact**

- a) Establish a coordinated framework for partnerships that align cross-functional efforts, enhance strategic alignment, and maximize collective impact
 - i) *STEP: Launch a partnership playbook and seed fund to accelerate interdisciplinary external collaborations*
- b) Create a coordinated front door to enable easy interactions between outside entities and GVSU
 - i) *STEP: Host collaboration events for scholarly output to connect faculty, community, and industry*
 - ii) *STEP: Explore seed funding for partnership/industry development*
- c) Develop a mechanism to highlight faculty and staff expertise

2) **Deepen authentic community, professional, institutional, and industry partnerships for mutual benefit**

- a) Collaborate with other GV divisions to build long-term partnerships that support sustained collaboration
 - i) *STEP: Develop and leverage partnerships with other institutions*
 - ii) *STEP: Leverage international partnerships via study abroad and collaborative research/teaching*

iii) STEP: Leverage Blue Dot, OMNI, the Detroit and Battle Creek Innovation Centers as scalable models

- b) Radically collaborate with community partners to create knowledge and be in thought partnership

3) Strengthen our networks of alumni and donors for long-term growth

- a) Cultivate meaningful relationships with alumni and donors by fostering ongoing dialogue and mutual value
- b) Develop scalable, consistent approaches to engaging alumni in student success and program development

4) Lead boldly in areas of excellence to drive human and environmental resilience

- a) Align and invest in centers and hubs (AWRI, Blue Dot, OMNI, Detroit/Battle Creek Innovation Centers) to connect community partners with GVSU expertise and scale regional impact
- b) Coordinate a university-wide Great Lakes Resilience portfolio, linking AWRI with public health, engineering, and community engagement, to advance freshwater quality, human health, and climate adaptation outcomes