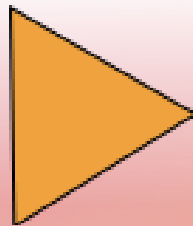
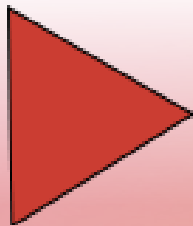
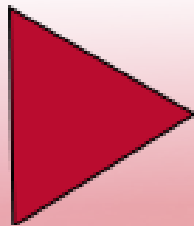


FERRIS FORWARD ▶

2024–2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE



Ferris State University
1201 South State Street
Big Rapids, Michigan 49307

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

FERRIS.EDU

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2024-2027 Strategic Plan

FERRIS FORWARD: RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE



16.1

student to faculty ratio



180+

degree programs



72.2%

graduates with experienceships



5

student success hubs connected to community colleges
across Michigan





Message from the President

Dear Ferris State family,

Commencements are some of the most special days of the year for me. Every time I shake the hand of a smiling graduate crossing that stage, I know we are seeing a life changed for the better.

Our mission hasn't changed in the 140 years since Woodbridge and Helen Ferris boldly created this institution and set the foundation we continue to build upon.

I also know that student wasn't alone on that journey. Their success is the result of their own hard work, but also the

talent, expertise, and determination of caring Ferris State University faculty and staff members. We tell our students very

truthfully that they are never in this alone.

Commencement is what happens at the end of the journey. Our strategic plan is what happens out in front. There is no pomp and circumstance or cheers as we start this work. But we don't arrive at a very special, celebratory destination without first having a vision and setting the course. Our mission hasn't changed in the 140 years since Woodbridge and Helen Ferris boldly created this institution and set the foundation we continue to build upon.

They might not have used the terms relevant and responsive. But that's exactly how they envisioned the work they did then, and the work we do today. What we do here matters. We are unlike any other institution in Michigan. We have standout programs that are known and respected across the country. We provide opportunities for students to have impactful lives in careers and in their communities. This strategic plan is where everything starts. We look at our goals, our

values, and our focus. It is the result of true collaboration, with input from across our university. Thank you to all who participated in any way. We are stronger when we work together.

Please know that I am as proud of this guiding strategic plan as I am of the students I greet in their caps and gowns.



This strategic plan is where everything starts. We look at our goals, our values, and our focus. It is the result of true collaboration, with input from across our university.

Bill Pink
President



Letter from the Co-Chairs

Since its founding as the Big Rapids Industrial School in 1884, Ferris State University has been committed to improving the world. Our founder's most famous speech was "Making the World Better." For many years, that simple phrase served as the official (later as the unofficial) mission of the University he founded. Over 140 years later, this dedication endures. Ferris State University remains resolute in supporting students from diverse backgrounds, guiding them through their academic journey, and empowering them to shape a brighter future for themselves, their families, and society.

Entitled *Ferris Forward: Relevant and Responsive*, this strategic blueprint underscores the University's unwavering dedication to societal advancement. Anchored on four interconnected pillars—belonging, innovation, student excellence, and sustainability—it embodies our holistic approach to fostering student growth and societal impact. Central to this endeavor is cultivating a university culture where every student feels a profound sense

of belonging—an essential factor in student retention and success. However, our commitment extends beyond mere belonging; we strive for student excellence, entailing rigorous academics, nurturing environments, recognition of achievements, mentorship, collaborative opportunities, and comprehensive support for holistic development. Through this approach, we aspire to nurture future leaders and citizens who will positively shape our nation and beyond.

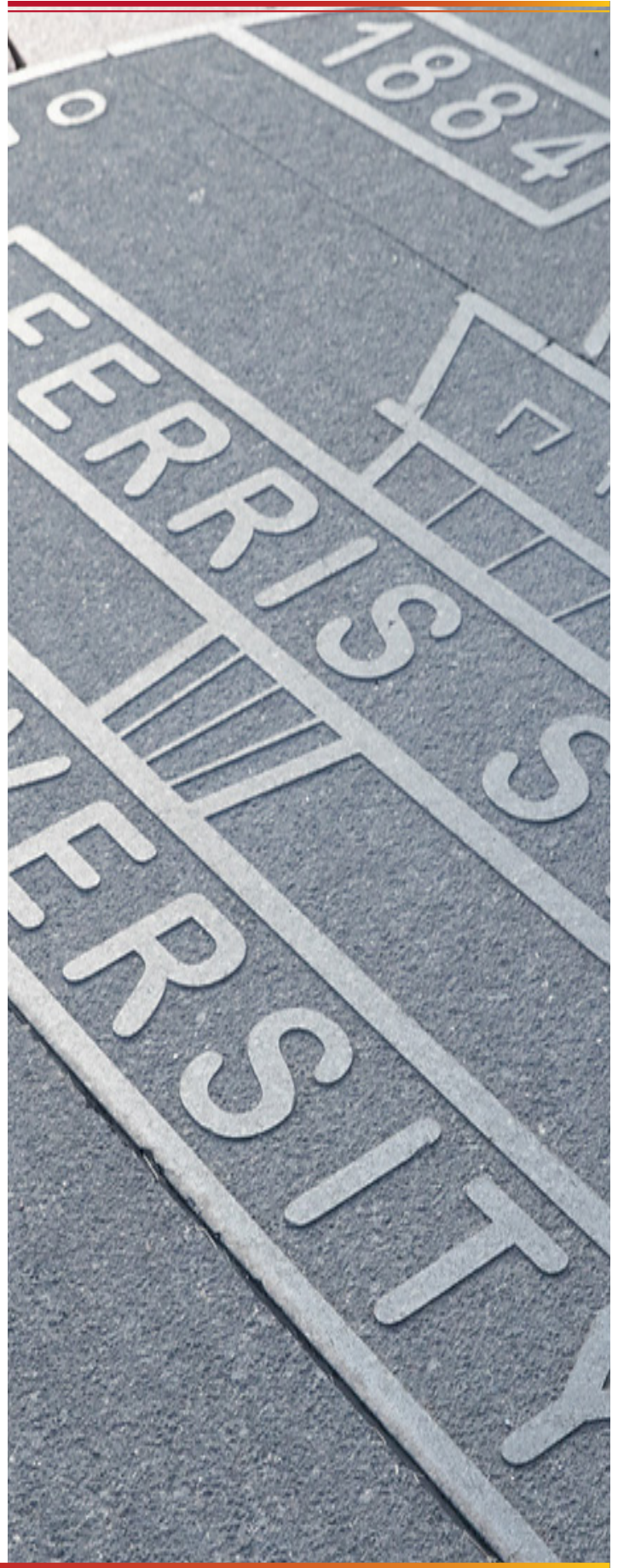
We demonstrate our dedication to the public good by shaping future leaders, nurturing our campus environment, and fostering economic vitality. We aim to benefit present and future generations through resource conservation and enhancement. Inspired by our founder's vision, we aspire to leave a university and world that surpasses what we inherited. The subtitle, "Relevant and Responsive," for this strategic plan is deliberate. It highlights that our plan is not merely a static roadmap; instead, it is a dynamic framework driving us toward ongoing

success and significant impact. Created with careful consideration, this plan ensures our adaptability and effectiveness in today's ever-changing environments. Through environmental analysis, stakeholder engagement, and precise goal setting, we've prioritized initiatives to propel the University forward. By fostering organizational alignment, tracking progress, and embracing innovative problem-solving, we are poised to effectively address the needs of individuals, the state, the nation, and the global community.

Jennifer Johnson, Co-Chair

David Pilgrim, Co-Chair

Relevant & Responsive



Process

Guiding Principles

In order to construct and maintain a strategic vision that is both comprehensive and inclusive, the processes of writing, updating, and executing this plan are guided by the following shared principles:

- The strategic plan should align with and be driven by the University's core values, vision, and mission.
- Words matter. We will search hard for the right words. But ultimately, we must work to create the University where we want to study and work.
- We must do more than say, "It's all about the students." Our actions must be relentlessly student-centered.
- The plan will build on current work at the University but not be limited by that work.
- All university community members will be given opportunities for meaningful participation in this planning process.
- This plan will serve as a lead document for other major university planning efforts, including planning for the Higher Learner Commission and the

Academic Plan.

- We recognize the financial challenges of the University, but we must still, where possible, be aspirational.
- We will look for opportunities to prioritize the University's work, beginning new efforts while ending some current work.
- The actions in this plan must be relevant and responsive.

Overview

This plan is constructed on the foundation of the University's Mission, Vision, and Core Values. It is critical that we return to this foundation consistently and mindfully as we carry out the work outlined here, always recalling that a plan that moves Ferris Forward is also one that continuously moves us closer to the ideals of our shared mission and vision.

Building upon this base, the 2024 Ferris State University Strategic Plan is comprised of four key pillars, defined as follows:

Innovation is a creative approach to problem-solving and experimentation that

leads to implementation of new ideas that continuously improve and add value to all Ferris State University stakeholders.

Belonging is a multifaceted experience occurring when individuals are provided a secure environment that values, respects, supports, and celebrates individual similarities and differences, allowing each person to thrive authentically.

Student Excellence is a commitment to personal and academic growth through

relevant experiences and a mastery of applicable knowledge. Excellent students develop the capabilities to continuously learn, adapt, serve, and perform in their careers and as active citizens.

Sustainability is achieved through making deliberate decisions serving the people, environment, and economic viability of our campus in a regenerative manner, thereby conserving and enhancing our resources to the benefit of current and future generations.





Mission, Vision, & Core Values

The foundation of this plan is built upon the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the University.

MISSION

Ferris State University prepares students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. Through its many partnerships and its career-oriented, broad-based education, Ferris serves our rapidly changing global economy and society.

VISION

Building on the vision of our founders, Ferris State University will be an agile and transformational university. By integrating theory and practice, we will foster opportunity, discovery, and professional preparation for a dynamic global society.

CORE VALUES

Collaboration

Excellence

Diversity

Learning

Ethical Community

Opportunity

Pillars

The 2024-2027 Ferris State University Strategic Plan is comprised of four key pillars Belonging, Innovation, Student Excellence, and Sustainability.



Belonging

Ferris State University embraces and is committed to cultivating an environment of belonging. As part of the institution's fabric, the work of belonging is the shared responsibility of students, faculty, staff, administrators and stakeholders.

Initiative 1: Create and sustain a university environment of access, inclusion, and representation.

Initiative 2: Develop, revise, and implement trainings, programs, opportunities, and spaces that elevate safety, belonging, and connection within the University and its surrounding community.

Initiative 3: Center and incorporate belonging in teaching and learning.





Innovation

Ferris State University is dedicated to cultivating a dynamic, ethical culture of continuous improvement where creativity thrives, ideas flourish, and bold innovators emerge as leaders of positive change. We are committed to educating and empowering all stakeholders to overcome challenges in pursuit of fearless exploration and the implementation of transformative ideas.

Initiative 1: Foster a culture of innovation that encourages and empowers university stakeholders to develop and experiment with new ideas.

Initiative 2: Promote learning around innovation through community engagement and collaboration with strategic partners.

Initiative 3: Celebrate and promote the work of university stakeholders who are engaged in innovative work.

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2024-2027 Strategic Plan





Student Excellence

Ferris State University's commitment to student excellence is comprehensive and multifaceted, encompassing academic rigor, a supportive learning environment, career readiness, celebration of achievements, collaboration, and resources for holistic development. Through these commitments, we strive to empower our students to excel academically and thrive as individuals prepared for future challenges and opportunities.

Initiative 1: Foster holistic student development to address student success barriers.

Initiative 2: Foster career readiness through occupational related experiences.

Initiative 3: Recognize and celebrate student excellence.

FERRIS FORWARD

2024-2027 Strategic Plan





Sustainability

Responsible citizenship to our community and a willingness to learn, adapt, and transform our practice to meet the challenges of our dynamic global society is at the core of who we are and what we do. Ferris State University is committed to embracing and implementing environmentally sustainable practices and approaches in how we operate our campus, engage with our community, and prepare the leaders of the future.

Initiative 1: Build capacity for sustainability.

Initiative 2: Commit to carbon neutrality.

Initiative 3: Review and improve university infrastructure and systems.

FERRIS FORWARD

2024-2027 Strategic Plan



Key Strategic Targets

It is paramount that the University measure its progress toward implementing the strategic plan. Not all progress is quantifiable; however, it is important to identify numerical targets. These targets allow the University to regularly track and monitor performance and help identify areas where adjustments are needed. This ensures that the strategic plan remains relevant. The numerical targets listed below are representative—not exhaustive—of all the quantifiable targets that will emerge with the implementation of this strategic plan.

Belonging

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO “FEEL LIKE A PART OF THE COMMUNITY AT THIS INSTITUTION” (AS INDICATED BY NSSE*) FROM 74 PERCENT TO 80 PERCENT.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO UNDERSTAND “PEOPLE OF OTHER BACKGROUNDS (ECONOMIC, RACIAL/ ETHNIC, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS, NATIONALITY, ETC.)” (AS INDICATED BY NSSE*) FROM 61 PERCENT TO 70 PERCENT.

INCREASE ENROLLMENT OF UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITY (URM) STUDENTS BY 2 PERCENT.

INCREASE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT TO 300.

* as indicated by the National Survey of Student Engagement



Innovation

ENGAGE AT LEAST 10 PERCENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS IN INNOVATION-FOCUSED LEARNING EXPERIENCES (I.E., WORKSHOPS, COMPETITIONS, INNOVATION GRANTS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP INCUBATORS, INDUSTRY-SPONSORED PROJECTS, ETC.).

ANNUALLY, HOLD AT LEAST THREE INTERNAL EVENTS THAT CELEBRATE THE INNOVATIVE WORK OF ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, AND/OR STUDENTS.

ANNUALLY, ESTABLISH THREE NEW STRATEGIC PARTNERS WITH INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT, OR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

ANNUALLY, SECURE \$2 MILLION IN GRANTS (SPONSORED PROJECTS OR PHILANTHROPIC) FOR INNOVATION INITIATIVES.



Student Excellence

IMPROVE THE RETENTION RATE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 4-YEAR PROGRAMS FROM 73 PERCENT TO 80 PERCENT.

ANNUALLY, ADVANCE FIVE STUDENT EXCELLENCE ACHIEVERS TO NATIONAL PROMINENCE.

INCREASE THE CREDIT COMPLETION RATE AMONG FIRST YEAR UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITY (URM) BACHELOR DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS BY 2 PERCENT.

IMPROVE THE OVERALL SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATE FOR FULL-TIME BACHELOR DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS FROM 55 PERCENT TO 65 PERCENT.



Sustainability

ENSURE ALL NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION IS LEED CERTIFIED OR ITS EQUIVALENT.

ANNUALLY, SECURE \$2 MILLION IN GRANTS (SPONSORED PROJECTS OR PHILANTHROPIC) FOR SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES.

INSTALL LEVEL II AND III EV CHARGERS IN AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF PARKING LOTS.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN COURSES THAT ANALYZE AND PROVIDE SOLUTIONS TO REAL-LIFE SUSTAINABILITY PROBLEMS AT FERRIS.



Steering Committee and Work Group Members

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC) was composed of a broad cross-section of the University community. The SPSC was charged with developing a new strategic plan to help guide the University's strategic priorities.

Steering Committee

Lina Blair, Dean of Student Life

Elise Bohn, Library Director

Gayle DeBruyn, Professor and Chair, Collaborative and Master of

Arts in Design; Sustainability Officer

Dan Eichinger, Vice President-Governmental and External Affairs

Fredericka Hayes, Associate Vice President, Human Resources

Franklin Hughes, Video, Graphic, and Media Specialist

Emmanuel Jadhav, Associate Professor, Public Health

Jennifer Johnson, Professor and Chair, Social and Behavioral

Sciences - Co-Chair

David McCall, Associate Professor, Retention and Student Success

Jake McGaha, Student

Jonathan Moroney, Professor and Chair, Product Design

David Pilgrim, Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion, and Strategic

Initiatives - Co-Chair

Pedro Saltini, Student

Jennifer Todd, Associate Vice President for Advancement

Kasey Thompson, Associate Professor, Management and Special

Assistant to the President for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Spence Tower, Professor, Management

Jeanine Ward-Roof, Vice President of Student Affairs

Cindee Wilcox, Director of Purchasing

Work Groups and Co-Chairs

Belonging Workgroup

Elise Bohn, Library Director, KCAD - Co-Chair

Lina Blair, Dean of Student Life - Co-Chair

Emily Mohill, Asst to Dir of Student Engage KCAD Student Engagement

Dani Hiar, Coord Student Initiative

Melanie Mulder, Asst. Dir. Financial Aid

Eric Warner, Associate Professor Languages and Literature

Susan Devuyt-Miller, Associate Professor Pharmacy Practice

Rita Walters, Associate Professor Social Work

Taylor Spidell, Student

Innovation Workgroup

Kasey Thompson, Assoc. Professor - Co-Chair

Jon Moroney, Professor - Co-Chair

Steve Hundersmark, Professor

Thomas Dowling, Asst Dean, Prof Development & Research

Lisa Eshbach, Professor

David Brown, Professor

Luke Hedman, Program Coord/Asst Prof PDET

Sonali Kurup, Professor

Hazelle Williams, Student, School of Social Work

Spencer Hope, Student, Kendall College of Art and Design

Student Excellence Workgroup

Jeanine Ward-Roof, VP of Student Affairs - Co-Chair

David McCall, Associate Professor - Co-Chair

Carleen Rose, Community member

Tim Haist, BR Superintendent

Jennifer Hegenauer, Assoc Dean. EIO

Jimmie Joseph, Associate Professor

Nicole Dekraker, Director of Student Engagement

Jeff Ek, Associate Professor

Becca Brumels, Asst. Dir. of Student Conduct

Lianna Moodie, Student

Lisa Ortiz, Director of Housing and Res Life

Sustainability Workgroup

Gayle DeBruyn, Professor - Co-Chair

Dan Eichinger, Vice President - Co-Chair

Susan Owens, Professor

Chris Cosper, Professor

Michele Upton, Asst Dir Safety, Health, Environment & Risk

Brianna Wichmann, Student

Riley Wetzel, Student

Conclusion

Ferris State University's Strategic Plan, *Ferris Forward: Relevant and Responsive*, is our commitment to advancing our institution's mission and values. This plan is a roadmap that reaffirms the University's role as a leader in higher education in Michigan—and in the United States—by fostering a culture of belonging, nurturing creativity through innovation, promoting sustainability, and enhancing student excellence. As we embark on this journey, we remain committed to the principles exemplified by Woodbridge Ferris, our founder, who believed that education should be attainable for all people regardless of their racial and ethnic background, their economic status, their political views, or their level of academic preparedness when they enrolled at Ferris. We will continue the work begun by our founder.



FERRIS STATE

University

1884

FERRIS FORWARD:
RELEVANT AND RESPONSIVE



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ferris.edu

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Students with disabilities requiring assistance or accommodation may contact Educational Counseling & Disabilities Services at (231) 591-3057 in Big Rapids, or the Director of Counseling, Disability & Tutoring Services for Kendall College of Art and Design at (616) 451-2787 ext. 1136 in Grand Rapids. Employees and other members of the University community with disabilities requiring assistance or accommodation may contact the Human Resources Department, 420 Oak Street, Big Rapids, MI 49307 or call (231) 591-2150.

Inquiries or complaints of discrimination may be addressed to the Director of Equal Opportunity, 120 East Cedar Street, Big Rapids, MI 49307 or by telephone at (231) 591-2152; or Title IX Coordinator, 805 Campus Drive, Big Rapids, MI 49307, or by telephone at (231) 591-2088.