Glossary of Terms 2016 - 2021

Baseline

A baseline describes the status of each objective, as measured by the selected metric, when the plan is launched, at Time 1, before the new strategies or actions are deployed. Thereafter, specific results achieved during the period of plan implementation are compared with the baseline to determine the direction and extent of changes. Baselines may be defined in terms of an average status (or mean) over time or in terms of other measures.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is an activity in which people work to make a positive difference in the life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. Additionally, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. (Adapted from Thomas Ehrlich, 2000)

Co-curricular

Co-curricular refers to programs and initiatives that enhance student learning inside and outside the classroom. These programs and initiatives are designed with specific learning outcomes.

Community Based Learning

GVSU values its connections to, participation with, and responsibility to local communities. We value the collaboration of faculty members, staff members, and students with external partners in addressing mutual interests and community needs. Students are encouraged to take part in various service learning and volunteer opportunities in their communities and abroad.

In community-based learning (CBL) students engage in a community experience. A core assumption of CBL is that all partners bring rich knowledge, skills, and other expertise to a problem, research question, or learning goal being addressed.

Courses must meet the following criteria to be designated as CBL:

- **Learning objectives:** The learning objectives in the syllabus articulate the specific interaction with the community partner.
- **Application and integration:** Guided by their instructor and working with a community partner, students engage with a community issue, integrating theory and practice.
- **Reciprocity:** The community experience seeks to offer value to the community partner as well as to the students.
- **Reflection:** Students participate in an articulated reflection process around the ethical and civic dimensions of the community experience, the discipline, and themselves.

We recognize that community-based learning extends beyond academic coursework and may include a field experience, practicum, internship, capstone, research project, clinical, co-op, or co-curricular activity. The experience may be a direct service/activity that takes place on site, or research or other off-site work that benefits the community partner. A community partner may include a for-profit business or industry, educational institution, health organization, nonprofit organization, government agency, professional association, and/or community group. Communities may be local, regional, state, national, or global.

Community Engagement

Community engagement describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their communities (local, regional/state, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. (Adapted from the Carnegie Foundation)

Division, College, or Unit Outcome

A division, college, or unit outcome should be written in an active voice and linked to the division's, college's, or unit's mission, vision, and values. Outcomes are results-focused, not process-oriented.

Division, College, or Unit Objective

A division, college, or unit objective is a statement of the results to be achieved. An objective generally includes a time frame during which the objective will be reached, the target of change, specific results, a metric, and criteria for successful achievement. Objectives state results, not activities. Objectives, when accomplished, systematically lead to the attainment of outcomes.

Global Learning

Global learning is the critical analysis of and engagement with complex, interdependent global systems, and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability. (AAC&U, Global Learning VALUES Rubric, 2014)

High-impact Learning Experiences

High-impact learning helps educators develop high-quality learning experiences for all students. It addresses theories of learning and illustrates how to translate theory into practice. The experience is designed to help participants use effective strategies and pedagogies as the means to advance equity and make excellence inclusive. High Impact experiences include, First-Year Experiences, Common Intellectual Experiences, Learning Communities, Writing-Intensive Courses, Collaborative Assignments, and Projects, Undergraduate Research, Diversity/Global Learning, Service Learning, Community-Based Learning, Internships, Capstone Courses and Projects or similar activities. (ACC&U, *Curricular Framework: 2015 Institute on High Impact Practices and Student Success*).

Institutional Objective

Within the framework created by the strategic priorities and institutional outcomes, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited (SMART) objectives represent key changes Grand Valley is committed to pursuing to achieve the five institutional outcomes within the four priority areas over the six-year period (2016-2021).

Institutional Outcome

The five institutional outcomes identified in the 2016-2021 strategic plan describe the efforts intended to achieve in each of the strategic priority. The outcomes are written in an active voice and linked to the university's mission, vision, and values. They are stated as results, not as processes or activities.

The *priorities and outcomes* provide a framework for conceptualizing the measurable changes toward which the university community will work and toward which its resources will be prioritized.

Integrative Learning

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds on across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus. (AAC&U, Integrative Learning *VALUES* Rubric2014)

Interdisciplinary

Interdisciplinary is an approach to teaching, learning, research, or problem-solving that seeks to integrate the concepts and methods of different academic disciplines or modes of inquiry in order to solve a problem or understand a phenomenon. An interdisciplinary program of study integrates the methods, concepts, and modes of inquiry of different academic disciplines in order to achieve a multi-dimensional, more complete understanding of an area of interest than can be provided by the methods and concepts of a single discipline.

Metric

A metric is the measure detailing the criteria by which a division or college will determine the extent to which it has achieved each objective. Each objective requires at least one metric.

Non-traditional Students

Undergraduates 24 years or older, veterans, and students with children.

Objective

An objective is a statement of specific results to be achieved en route to the accomplishment of an outcome. Objectives generally include a time frame, a target of change, specific results to be achieved, and criteria for successful achievement. Objectives state results, not activities.

Quality Initiative

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) expects that institutions are always engaged in quality improvement. The HLC accreditation process requires an institution to designate one major improvement effort it has undertaken as its Quality Initiative for reaffirmation of accreditation. The Quality Initiative should suit the institution's present concerns or aspirations. It takes place between years 5 and 9 of the 10-year accreditation cycle. GVSU's Quality Initiative is the assessment of student learning in the 200 courses comprising Grand Valley's General Education (GE) Program.

Resources

Resources are the physical, human, fiscal and other assets a college or division requires to achieve a specific objective.

Responsible Person or Group

The primary person or group who is responsible for implementing the planned strategy(ies) or action(s).

Status

Status provides a "point-in-time" measure of the extent to which an objective has been reached. The GVSU Strategic Plan envisions that at the end of each calendar year, all colleges, divisions and units will provide a status update on each of their objectives.

Strategy or Action

Strategies or actions spell out specific activities a college or division intends to engage in or perform to achieve each objective. Several strategies may be described for each objective, or, in some cases, a single strategy or action is all that is required.

Strategic Priority Area

The four strategic priority areas in the strategic plan establish the focus of GVSU's improvement efforts and the locus of change between 2016-2021.

Student Success

The strategic plan is focused on ensuring that Grand Valley is well prepared to provide all students with the resources and supports they require to accomplish their education in a timely manner; attain the key performance milestones needed for their future success; and secure the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to be lifelong learners and productive, contributing members of society.

STEM Fields

Acronym for academic disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Timeframe

The timeframe provides an estimate of the start and end dates during which the college or division will engage in a specific action or strategy to achieve a specific objective. Customarily timeframes are expressed in terms of years, ranging from one year to five years, during the planning period. For the current plan, the total timeframe is 2016 through 2021.