

## Assessments & Measures - Strategic Plan

The 2014 - 2019 Robert Morris University strategic plan provides a comprehensive framework for building upon RMU's considerable existing strengths in order to focus attention upon its opportunities, weaknesses and threats. The University realizes that it faces many significant challenges in the next five years and that it must proactively shape its future. It will do so via a University-wide strategic plan that is supported by 23 coordinated unit-level plans and by an integrated budgeting process that addresses the strategic plan's major priorities. All of the six major initiatives and 38 goals in the RMU strategic plan, together with the strategies and measures in unit-level plans that carry out the University-wide plan, are directed towards fulfilling the University's Mission in accordance with its Core Values.

At the center of the plan is the concept of RMU providing transformational experiences for its students. This is highlighted by all students participating in engaged, active learning both inside and outside of the classroom. Such a holistic educational approach directly supports the RMU Mission of preparing students for leadership in a rapidly changing world.

A strategic plan without specific measures of achievement is a hollow promise. Each of the unit-level strategies that support the University-wide plan has qualitative and/or quantitative measures of success that have time-specific completion dates.

Initiative 1, *Advancing Academic Excellence*, contains ten goals that seek to improve the quality of RMU's schools and degree programs. This will be accomplished by maintaining program-level and regional accreditations and considering selective expansion, measurement of continuous improvement via expanded outcomes assessment, enhancement of faculty credentials, scholarship and teaching, expansion of experiential learning and innovation, and expansion of online programs.

The seven goals associated with Initiative 2, *Continue to Develop RMU as a "University of Choice"*, seek to build a distinct, quality identity for the University that will attract prospective students as well as provide a high quality college experience to current students. The preeminent goals under Initiative 2 provide a distinct, differentiable education that places enhanced emphasis upon experiential and co-curricular learning. RMU will provide more active learning opportunities via internships, study abroad, community service and student involvement with faculty research. Student affinity with RMU will be heightened by providing more co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. The University will focus upon changing its student mix while continuing to grow its enrollment and residential student population while improving the geographic, gender and racial/ethnic diversity of its student body. Increases in retention and graduation

rates are important goals of this Initiative and important measures of its success. Increased support for Athletics and a focus on quality assurance, value and affordability are also hallmarks of this Initiative.

A human capital Initiative, *“Continue to Develop RMU as an Employee “University of Choice”*, has been added to the strategic plan for the first time. Initiative 3 has 5 goals that seek to improve RMU’s degree of supportiveness, communication and recognition for its employees while also seeking to transform tasks from transactional to transformative. All of these other goals seek to improve services for RMU’s students.

Continuing improvements to RMU's facilities and infrastructure are the focus of Initiative 4, *“Develop RMU’s Living and Learning Infrastructure into a Competitive Advantage for the University.”* Facility needs will be prioritized and addressed via an updated campus Master Plan in concert with priorities set forth in the strategic plan. Critical upgrades to student living spaces as well as academic/instructional environments are a high priority of Initiative 4. Initiative 4 has 4 goals.

Initiative 5, *“Solidify and Leverage RMU Brand,”* addresses the need to bring focus and recognition to RMU's stature and presence in both existing and new markets via more and better marketing. RMU will apply more resources and strategy to enhancing and focusing its public image in both its primary market area as well as in new markets that are important to the attainment of its enrollment goals. Improvement of the University's ranking in external surveys is an important measure of the success of this Initiative. Initiative 4 has four goals.

Initiative 6, *“Strengthen RMU’s Financial Position,”* seeks to develop non-tuition revenue streams that will bolster RMU's financial strength and flexibility as well as providing the means to carry out the goals set forth in this plan. A new capital campaign is the cornerstone of this Initiative and so is the inculcation of a culture of philanthropy among RMU faculty, staff, students and alumni. The University will seek ways to improve the margin contribution from existing programs in order to boost its financial flexibility and affordability. Initiative 6 has 11 goals.