

# BUILDING ON THE PROMISE OF EXPERIENCE ONE

## Strategic Plan 2020-2026

This plan commences as Montana Western marks its sixteenth year as the only public university offering Experience One, experiential learning one course at a time. The university is poised to accomplish its vision to be recognized as the leader in innovative experiential education. This plan is designed to build on UMW's remarkable student success by adhering firmly to our values and focusing on the four objectives the university community has identified as having the greatest potential to strengthen and sustain the university: strengthening the Experience One program, calling attention to its unique characteristics and proven success to attract and retain students, increasing financial support to enhance the student experience, and continuing to follow the ten-year Campus Master Plan to enhance the physical environment for on-campus teaching and learning as well as the technological infrastructure that supports all of our programs.

**Mission:** As a leader and innovator in experiential education, the University of Montana Western educates undergraduate students through immersive practices in their field of study, strives for continuous improvement, and achieves evidence-supported student learning and achievement outcomes.

**Vision:** The University of Montana Western will be recognized as the leader in innovative experiential education.

**Values:** *These values guide our actions in every area of our work.*

**EXPERIENCE:** Continuously improve undergraduate education and experiential learning.

**EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE STUDENT SUCCESS:** Maximize campus-wide support for student success and completion. Ensure student success is equitable and inclusive, including first-generation students, low-income students, and students of color.

**STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY:** Foster responsible and sustainable campus efficiency and stewardship of resources.

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS:** Share resources and partner with the community to serve community needs and offer distinctive and relevant programs.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY:** Foster safe, healthy practices in all areas of the university.

## OBJECTIVE ONE: Strengthen the Experience One (X1) Program

Objective One is focused on promoting, assessing and improving proven experiential teaching and learning strategies. Among the eleven high impact practices promoted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, three—undergraduate research, service learning and culminating experiences (e.g., internships and student teaching)—immerse students in authentic experiences that directly support Montana Western’s mission.

*Strategy One:* Conduct an assessment of X1 that evaluates strengths, weaknesses, and needs, and develop a plan to support continued improvement of X1.

*Strategy Two:* Increase experiential learning activities and outcomes across campus programs and courses.

### *Indicators of Progress*

1. By the midpoint of the planning cycle, assessment of program, plan to strengthen program, and a feasibility study for an Experience One Institute will be completed.
2. 85% of students will complete at least two documented high impact practices prior to graduation.
3. More than 30% of students will engage in undergraduate research with faculty mentors.
4. More than 80% of seniors will participate in internships, student teaching, or a culminating senior experience.
5. More than 30% of students will engage in service learning projects.
6. Student engagement in experiential learning will reflect equitable inclusion of all student groups.

## OBJECTIVE TWO: Enhance degree-seeking student recruitment, retention, and graduation

Objective Two is focused on promoting student success and degree completion.

*Strategy One:* Practice Strategic Enrollment Management

*Strategy Two:* Promote Student Engagement

*Strategy Three:* Annually earn 100% of available Performance Funds

### *Indicators of Progress*

1. Increase degree-seeking enrollment by 6%.
2. Increase underserved student enrollment by 6%.
3. Montana Western will outperform comparator institutions based on student engagement indicators.
4. Montana Western will outperform comparator institutions based on student success indicators (retention, persistence, transfer and graduation).
5. Student engagement and success indicators will reflect equitable inclusion of all student groups.

OBJECTIVE THREE: Enhance and diversify fiscal resources

Objective Three is focused on improving sustainability of the university through fiscal diversification.

*Strategy One*: Undertake the *Experience One Campaign*

*Strategy Two*: Increase campus-wide efforts to obtain extramural funds in support of research, scholarship, student success and infrastructure

*Strategy Three*: Increase engagement with alumni, donors, and university community

*Indicators of Progress*

1. Increase annual scholarship funding to \$400,000.
2. Raise \$2 million for the Experience One Endowment.
3. Increase annual indirect cost revenue to \$130,000.
4. Standardize administrative assessment on designated and auxiliary functions.
5. Increase Foundation grants in support of academics from an average of \$0 to \$250,000.
6. Increase the number of annual individual gifts from average 1,200 to 1,500.

OBJECTIVE FOUR: Modernize and update the university's infrastructure

Objective Four is focused on improving the physical and technological attributes of the university.

*Strategy One*: Modernize key facilities to improve comfort, safety, and access

*Strategy Two*: Design and improve access to UMW (parking, alternative transportation, network enhancements, etc.)

*Indicators of Progress:*

1. Reduce deferred maintenance inventory by 15%. Inventory backlog totals \$10,326,645 as of 2020.
2. Modernize HVAC systems.
3. Expand and improve student recreational facilities and wellness opportunities as identified in the Campus Master Plan.
4. Invest at least \$4 million in infrastructure priorities as identified in the Campus Master Plan.
5. UMW will increase bandwidth, redundancy, and network speed.
6. Parking demand (lot occupancy) will be under 100% utilization during peak utilization.