



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Office of the
Vice President for Research

Strategic Plan

2017-2020

wmich.edu/research



INTRODUCTION

Western Michigan University is learner centered, discovery driven, and globally engaged. It became Michigan's fourth public university in 1957 and today offers 147 bachelor's, 73 master's and 30 doctoral programs, along with one program leading to the specialist degree and several others that lead to graduate-level certificates. The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) has planning and operational responsibilities for advancing and supporting scholarship, creative activities, research, external funding, compliance, entrepreneurship, and commercialization. The WMU Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 was approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2016 and is called the Gold Standard.

VISION

The Office of the Vice President for Research at WMU will be a leader and catalyst for excellence in discovery, comprising research, scholarship, and creative activity, involving stakeholders within and external to the University.

MISSION

The Office of the Vice President for Research advances the overall discovery enterprise of the University by strategic planning and initiatives, supporting the discovery efforts of WMU faculty, staff, and students, ensuring compliance, and supporting technology and knowledge dissemination.

VALUES

Discovery: OVPR is committed to innovations in discovery and will support the pursuit of inquiry, scholarship, and innovation.

Respect: We respect others and ourselves in professional and personal interactions.

Integrity and Ethical Behavior: OVPR members will uphold high integrity and ethical behavior and will cultivate an environment in which individuals engaged in research are trained in understanding the requirements for integrity and ethical behavior in all aspects of research.

Excellence: OVPR is committed to promoting excellence and supporting its constituents in achieving distinction in research, scholarship and creative activity.

Collaboration: WMU is committed to advancing knowledge to address societal challenges through fostering collaborations.

Diversity: OVPR is committed to ensuring inclusion on a global scale of diverse ideas, disciplines, and individuals in research activities.

GOALS

GOAL 1: Build and enhance the discovery enterprise of Western Michigan University

GOAL 2: Increase the productivity of WMU's research, scholarship, and creative activity

GOAL 3: Increase the number and value of external funding submissions and awards

GOAL 4: Assure that WMU is, and remains, in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and University policies

GOAL 5: Increase WMU's research visibility

GOAL 6: Increase the generation and commercialization of WMU intellectual property



GOAL 1:

Build and enhance the discovery enterprise of Western Michigan University

Objective 1.1: Identify WMU's key research strengths and use Centers and Institutes to build capacity within these areas.

Strategies

- Establish a committee that provides recommendations on how to use Centers and Institutes to strategically position WMU's research strengths.
 - Identify, promote, and support growing research areas and trends.
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Objective 1.2: Develop metrics that can be used to assess impact of scholarly and creative work for all disciplines.


Strategies

- Use the professional activities report (PAR) digital system to capture scholarly work and creative activities.
 - Utilize appropriate metrics to evaluate research contributions, and accordingly recognize and reward accomplishments of WMU researchers.
 - Establish mechanisms to update metrics data that are applicable across various disciplines.
 - Enhance the proposal approval form (PAF) system to capture data for metrics.
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Objective 1.3: Support research efforts that strengthen undergraduate and graduate education and establish strong partnerships with community and government organizations.

Strategies

- Establish the Office of Undergraduate Research that will be housed in the Office of the Vice President for Research.
- Establish a Research Experience for Undergraduates program at WMU.
- Work with the Office of Student Affairs to develop a Signature program for all undergraduates who complete research projects at WMU.
- Raise funds to increase the number of recipients for the Undergraduate Research Excellence award.
- Develop funding mechanisms to provide support for students engaged in undergraduate research.

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- Design the website to help all students better identify research opportunities at WMU and beyond.
 - Collaborate with the Graduate College to facilitate graduate student research and enhance their research experiences.

Objective 1.4: Provide space and venues for researchers to meet, build and advance the research agenda for Academic Affairs.

Strategies

- Create a designated space for researchers to work and discuss broadening research opportunities.
- Designate space for visiting research scholars.

GOAL 2:

Increase the productivity of WMU's research, scholarship, and creative activity

Objective 2.1: Foster collaborations across departments, colleges, WMed, Cooley Law School, other institutions, and global partnerships.

Strategies

- Establish mechanisms to identify key research questions for which funding opportunities exist, and bring together WMU scholars to discuss ways to address these questions.
 - Build relationships with industry partners for the mutual benefit of WMU research and industry.
 - Foster opportunities for research partnerships with national labs to mutually support WMU and national lab researchers.
 - Work collaboratively with the Haenicke Institute for Global Education (HIGE) to strengthen programs with international partners and build our research relationships.
 - Facilitate cluster hires across departments and colleges.
 - Identify and facilitate collaborative use of instruments and facilities.
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Objective 2.2: Develop funding mechanisms to maintain and enhance WMU's infrastructure (instrumentation and facilities) and provide necessary staff support in core laboratories.

Strategies

- Forge partnerships with local, regional, and national facilities that offer access to instrumentation that can be used by WMU researchers.
 - Strategically identify resources to purchase instruments that assist in the acquisition of data that addresses significant research questions.
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Objective 2.3: Partner with the Office of Development and Alumni Relations to engage alumni and supporters to enhance WMU research programs and infrastructure.

Strategies

- Partner with the Office of Development and Alumni Relations to identify donors and establish a capital campaign to support WMU's infrastructural needs.
 - Develop strategies to communicate with potential donors regarding ongoing research projects or infrastructural needs.
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Objective 2.4: Recognize and reward units, faculty, staff and students.

Strategies

- Use metrics data and other discipline-specific metrics to recognize and reward WMU scholars engaged in quality work that includes both funded and non-funded discovery.
 - Publicize discovery work done by WMU scholars.
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Objective 2.5: Promote a culture and climate for collaborative research in multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary areas.

Strategies

- Enhance PeopleSoft reporting capabilities to be able to give credit to multiple departments or colleges for collaborative projects (publications and grants).
 - Strengthen our *Collaborative Discovery Communities* program to ensure collaborations are initiated, inclusive, and continue to flourish.
 - Define WMU's research strength areas and bring together groups, including Centers and Institutes, to enhance WMU's visibility in these fields.
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Objective 2.6: Invest in supporting junior faculty.

Strategies

- Enhance the Discover Discovery series, and implement other workshops of importance to junior faculty, for example, funding agency workshops.
- Establish a program to strengthen grant success of junior faculty and bring in experts, as part of the program, to discuss ways to increase grant success rates.
- Provide junior faculty with priority access to grant consultants to support proposal development efforts.

GOAL 3:

Increase the number and value of external funding submissions, awards and expenditures

Objective 3.1: Increase faculty awareness of funding opportunities by knowing and disseminating sponsor funding sources and trends.

Strategies

- Identify funding opportunities and distribute information to WMU community on a regular schedule.
- Work with colleges, Centers and Institutes to ensure awareness of funding opportunities as soon as they are available to the public.
- Be proactive about identifying opportunities before they are available publicly by staying in close contact with funding agencies.

Objective 3.2: Utilize constituent customer portfolios to identify funding and discovery opportunities that support faculty, research staff, and students.

Strategies

- Work closely with departments and colleges to increase awareness of ongoing projects that could benefit from specialized funding searches.
- Align efforts with departments and colleges to identify and disseminate funding opportunities to all WMU researchers.
- Identify funding opportunities for students engaged in specific research areas.



Objective 3.3: Diversify extramural research funding

Strategies

- Increase access to databases that provide funding information from foundations and other resources to support ongoing research at WMU.
 - Seek opportunities to partner with private agencies that may have interest in funding WMU research projects.
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Objective 3.4: Support WMU research to respond to emerging research opportunities through strategic investment in new areas of research excellence.

Strategies

- Identify key growing research areas and trends ongoing at WMU.
 - Closely monitor large projects ongoing nationally and determine if there is a fit for WMU researchers to contribute.
 - Identify global projects that our faculty and students can contribute to.
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Objective 3.5: Enhance administrative infrastructure to support submission of grants and contracts.

Strategies

- Provide support to enable Research Program Officers and Grant Administrators to attend conferences and workshops that strengthen their skills to support growing WMU's research enterprise.
 - Identify consulting firms that provide expertise that may not be available at WMU but can support the work of WMU researchers.
 - Implement a contract approval form (CAF) system to track and expedite the processing of sponsored contracts for WMU.
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Objective 3.6: Provide educational tools and workshops to enhance grant success rates.

Strategies

- Continue Discover Discovery series, NSF Days, and NIH Career workshops.
- Invite program managers to WMU to provide workshops and educate researchers on ways to increase grant success rates.
- Increase travel funds for faculty to visit program managers.
- Invite grant-writing experts to WMU to offer workshops to all researchers on ways to increase grant success rates.

GOAL 4:

Assure that WMU is, and remains, in compliance with federal, state, local laws and regulations, and university policies

Objective 4.1: Ensure that regulation guidelines are implemented and updated regularly.

Strategies

- Require compliance personnel to review policies and standard operating procedures annually to ensure they are in line with regulatory guidelines and requirements.
- Hire an assistant director for compliance.

Objective 4.2: Ensure that all federal guidelines for IRB, IACUC and IBC are adhered by all researchers at WMU and those affiliated with the university.

Strategies

- Implement online submission process for all research compliance.
 - Use online submission program for post approval monitoring.
 - Use online submission program reports to capture metrics.
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Objective 4.3: Increase educational opportunities for faculty, staff and students to understand the importance of compliance, how to be in compliance, and adhere to all federal, state, local and University regulations.

Strategies

- Produce videos and use webinars to provide researchers with information needed for matters related to compliance.
 - Ensure that materials are available for student training.
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Objective 4.4: Collaborate with other University units to establish an integrated and comprehensive export control program.

Strategies

- Establish a committee to address issues of export control (including members of OVPR, HIGE Aviation, Academic Affairs, Purchasing, Legal, Business Finance, Engineering).
 - Work closely with the University to ensure an Export Control Specialist is hired to oversee research that is subject to export control, and to further support other areas of the University that are subject to export control.
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Objective 4.5: Collaborate with the University's Office of Information Technology and the Libraries to enhance mechanisms for research data security.

Strategies

- Establish committee to evaluate systems that will meet data acquisition and security for various researchers at WMU.
- Develop mechanisms to train researchers in data management and storage.

GOAL 5:

Increase WMU's research visibility

Objective 5.1: Utilize innovative pathways to communicate WMU's research and creative activities to the public.

Strategies

- Collaborate with University Relations and college marketing teams to highlight and display discovery work done at WMU.
 - Strengthen use of social and broadcast media to widen WMU's discovery publicity.
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Objective 5.2: Increase regular communication with faculty, staff and students regarding research and grant opportunities.

Strategies

- Develop brown bag opportunities to offer workshops that are useful to the WMU community.
 - Provide workshops for students to encourage them to apply for competitive research grants/scholarships to support their work.
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Objective 5.3: Increase WMU's global visibility in research

Strategies

- Collaborate with HIGE on their print and recruitment information for staff and students to highlight research.
 - Provide talking points for the WMU President and VP for Community Outreach on research conducted at WMU.
 - Communicate WMU's discovery work and outcomes to key local, state, and national elected representatives.
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Objective 5.4: Offer workshops, training and support for researchers to share their research success outcomes in terms accessible to the layperson/community.

Strategies

- Provide workshops similar to the Alan Alda community of science that serve as template for trainings researchers to better communicate their work to the community.
- Provide opportunities for faculty to disseminate their work to the community.
- Collaborate with University Relations for radio spots for faculty to discuss their research.
- Support faculty interested in attending workshops on discovery communication.

GOAL 6:

Increase the generation and commercialization of WMU intellectual property

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Objective 6.1: Provide support for faculty and staff with resources and educational tools to advance research that leads to patent disclosure.

Strategies

- Provide workshops that educate WMU researchers to identify specific work in their research that warrants disclosure.
- Provide WMU researchers who have disclosed their research with patent writing training.
- Identify funding sources to support the generation of intellectual property.

COMMERCIALIZATION

Objective 6.2: Increase public awareness of WMU expertise and IP.

Strategies

- Promote university experts to serve as presenters at community group and board meetings.
 - Create list of commercialization and IP talking points for senior staff.
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Objective 6.3: Increase WMU efforts to market and commercialize WMU-born products.

Strategies

- Invite previous WMU Technology Development funded researchers to display their work at Research events on campus.
 - Host an annual event in partnership with a Kalamazoo community event to help showcase the products of researchers at WMU.
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Objective 6.4: Identify internal and external resources to support IP commercialization.

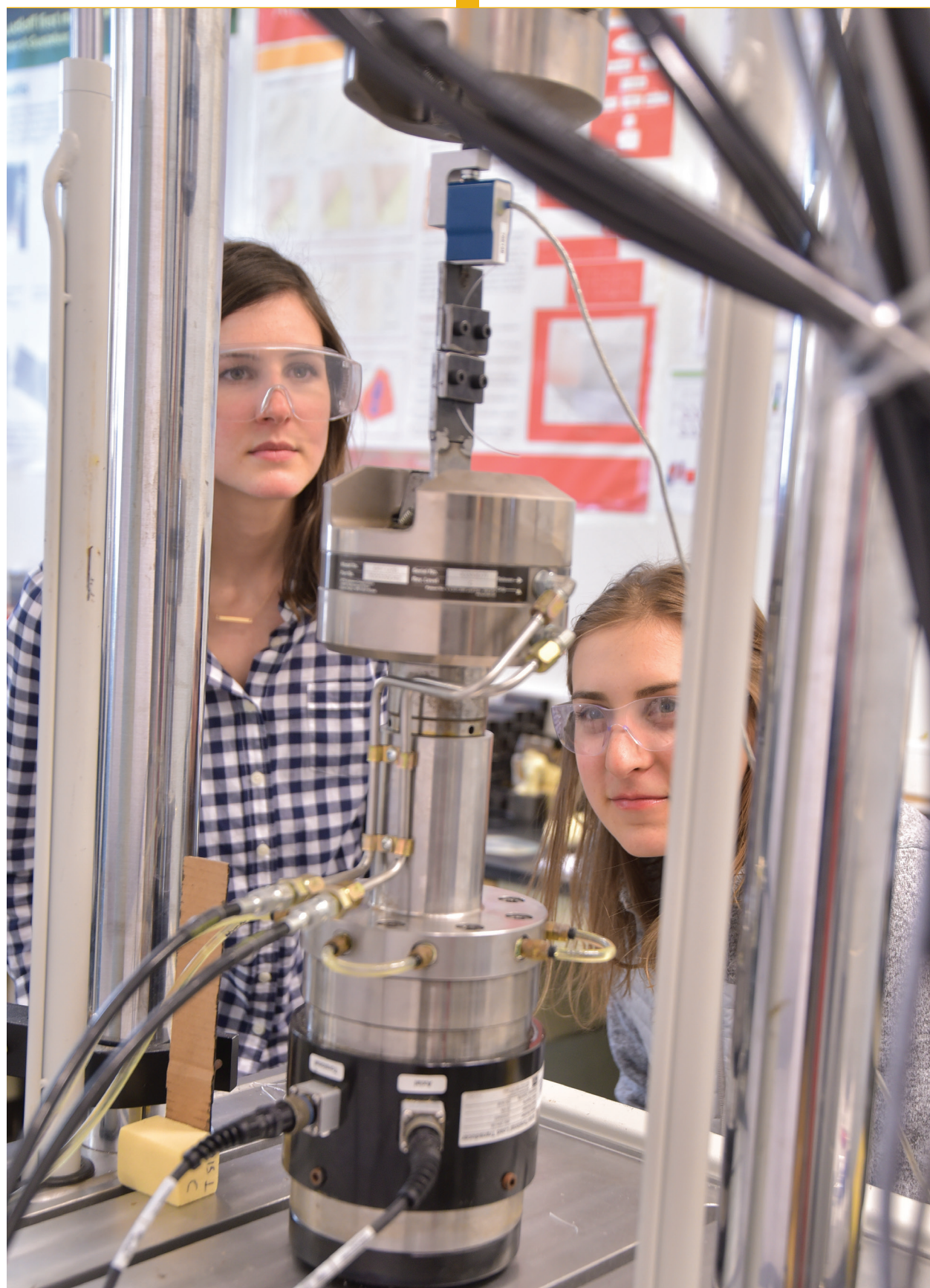
Strategies

- Establish a fundraising campaign to increase funding to support commercialization of research products arising from WMU.
 - Seek external funding opportunities that support universities to increase commercialization.
 - Work with community partners to establish mechanisms to utilize WMU technologies to improve the quality of life of local residents.
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Objective 6.5: Increase opportunities to develop industrial research partnerships.

Strategies

- Improve WMU's understanding of what industrial partners need so we can better position WMU researchers to address these needs through their expertise.
- Increase opportunities for WMU researchers to meet and have discussions with industry partners, particularly in fields that do not traditionally reach out to industry, but have much to offer.
- Invite industrial partners to visit WMU to give seminars and learn more about the University's capabilities.
- Collaborate with departmental and/or college advisory councils to identify needs and link them with WMU expertise.



NOTES



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Office of the
Vice President for Research

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