



EVERGREEN:

A DYNAMIC PLAN FOR ALMA COLLEGE

Our Vision

An Alma College liberal arts education has never been more relevant for our world. At Alma, we instill a life-long love of learning in all of our students. We develop in every student the skills necessary for citizenship as they are expressed in our mission: we “prepare graduates who think critically, serve generously, lead purposefully and live responsibly.” Every Alma student experiences a deeply interdisciplinary education with ample opportunity for self-reflection, hands-on learning, and personal and professional development.

Alma College lives out its mission here in Alma, Michigan, and we work for the betterment of this community and region. We commit to making our home of Alma our classroom, while focusing on helping to achieve the aspirations and needs of this community. In partnering deeply with this place, we model the virtues and commitments of citizens for our students, helping to ensure that they are prepared to lead and serve their own communities upon graduation.

The college must become a more diverse, inclusive, and just community than we are today. By engaging in challenging conversations, educating ourselves and those around us, making space for diverse viewpoints, and holding each other accountable for actions, we will work to ensure that all in our community feel welcome.

As we emerge from the crisis of a global pandemic, amidst deepening uncertainty for higher education, Alma will continue the innovative work we have always done as a college. Exploration of new opportunities for academic offerings and the core student experience must continue in order to meet the needs of current and future students. We must ensure that an Alma education is accessible and affordable to all. Our curriculum will expand to offer graduate and certificate programs, and we will implement a year-round calendar with robust online coursework opportunities. We will work to reach new markets, even as we continue to innovate within our undergraduate programs. In these ways we will ensure that Alma College will thrive as we welcome the generations to come.



Themes

1. Purpose and Place
 2. Creating a Just, Supportive, and Inclusive Community
 3. New Programs and Innovation
 4. Experiential Learning
 5. Financial Vitality
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Evergreen (adj.)

universally and continuously relevant,
ever-changing

Our Plan

Each year, we will mold and shape this dynamic plan for Alma College to meet the needs of the college, the campus community, the greater Alma community, and an ever-changing world.

Regular renewal of this plan allows us to have a clear direction and focus on our shared priorities and goals as an institution. The college's annual goals will reference the plan and the work necessary to accomplish our strategic aims.

With our focus on the future, our ambitious, but attainable, goals will ensure that the college continues on the path to thriving in the years ahead.

Purpose and Place

As a campus community, we are also citizens of this place, and we need to deeply engage the communities across mid-Michigan. Alma College can be the venue for solving community problems and the source of student engagement aimed at bolstering governmental and nonprofit work across Gratiot County and beyond. Deep partnerships across our region can enable our faculty, staff, and students to transform our part of the world. By modeling the engaged citizenship expected of our students, we recognize that our relationship with our community - Alma, Gratiot County, and beyond - is a key means of expressing our vocation as a college. Our impact on communities across mid-Michigan is a key factor of living out our mission as a college.

Goals and Accountability Measures

- Connect with community leaders and organizations to help identify the needs of the community and increase student engagement on campus and with the broader local community
 - Increase Venture program opportunities and financial support for local service opportunities for students by offering at least 40 local service internships in governmental and nonprofit entities by 2022, in conjunction with increasing Ambassador support for internship development and growth
 - The graduating class of 2023 will have a 100% engagement rate with the local community through meaningful service, service learning, internships, and job shadowing experiences
- Develop and promote a culture on campus of environmental sustainability and work to reduce the college's carbon footprint to ensure that we are protecting the environment around us
 - Prioritize sustainability measures in all new construction and campus master plan work
 - Create a sustainable recycling program by the end of 2022
- Develop and expand external relationships, including the implementation of community partnership agreements for internships, job shadowing, and service activities with at least 12 community partners by fall 2022

Creating a Just, Supportive, and Inclusive Community

Alma College aspires to be a more just, diverse, and inclusive community. We will foster an environment in which faculty, staff, and students from diverse backgrounds have supportive networks in place to help ensure their success at Alma and beyond. Further investment in our faculty and staff assures their value is known and supports the good work they do to help students. The college must commit to the personal and professional development of its community members, make improvements to employee satisfaction, and create a welcoming and inclusive place where diverse perspectives and backgrounds are celebrated. As a community we will strive to cultivate an environment in which it is clear that we value a wide range of experiences and diverse identities, and create space for ongoing, transformative dialogue.

Goals and Accountability Measures

- Build a holistic culture of inclusion on campus by utilizing the campus-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion assessment to gain a better understanding of the campus climate, learn more about our current successes and shortcomings, prioritize and implement next steps based on the assessment recommendations, and share findings and next steps in a timely and transparent manner
 - Develop a detailed response and action plan to the campus assessment to be implemented by December 2021
 - Work to ensure the retention rate for students of color and Pell-eligible students improves by two percent each year
- Become a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus community with a culture of accountability and engage in an ongoing process in which we continuously evolve and evaluate our actions and campus climate
 - Provide first-generation students, Pell-eligible students, students of color, and international students with one-on-one mentoring and professional development counseling in their years at Alma by July 2021
 - Develop support networks and mentorship opportunities for diverse identities for faculty and staff by July 2022

New Programs and Innovation

We will sustain our core commitment to the liberal arts as new programs are developed, offer new avenues for learning and serve new markets. Specifically, we aim to develop additional graduate programs, certificate programs, and distance-learning opportunities. At the same time, we also aspire to become a more international campus even as we double the number of transfer students coming to Alma. Online course offerings will continue and we will renew areas of the curriculum to meet the current opportunities and student demand. The college must meet the needs of our current students, non-traditional students, and graduate students by embracing change, emerging technologies, and flexible learning options.

Goals and Accountability Measures

- Implement seven new graduate programs and enroll 100 graduate students by fall 2024
- Meet market needs and demands through evaluation, adaptation - including continuous online course offerings - and growth within undergraduate academic programs
 - Create and expand certificate and badging program offerings through the Lifelong Learning pilot, with five additional offerings in place for each of the next three academic years that is revenue positive by 2024
 - Exhibit a sustained commitment to increase accessibility, support, and enrollment of transfer and international students to support long-term expansion into new markets and positive student outcomes; increase the enrollment of non-traditional student populations to 80 transfer students and 50 international students per year, inclusive of fall and winter enrollments, by 2024
- Complete the business department redesign and engineering program expansion, and initiate the accreditation process for at least one engineering program by 2024

Experiential Learning

Alma excels at providing students with experiential learning opportunities that help them to discover their deepest passions. Such opportunities are at the center of an Alma education, whether through international study, Spring Term travel classes, one-on-one research with faculty members, or internship opportunities. Experiential learning opportunities leading to vocational exploration - including all of our career development programming - must become a central part of the work of each Alma student, enabling graduates to go on to purposeful and fulfilling lives as citizens of a diverse and ever-changing world.

Goals and Accountability Measures

- Develop a year-long action plan for the Center for College and Community Engagement (CCCE) which aligns with Evergreen: a Dynamic Plan for Alma College. The plan should include goal setting, accountability measures, prospective student recruitment tactics, and an assessment plan.
 - Expand the culture of service within athletics to integrate service learning components to student-athlete service experiences by the end of 2021
- Create pathways for students to achieve their personal and professional growth in their years at Alma, emphasizing the role of independent research opportunities, scholarship, structured service, and internships in helping them to discover their sense of vocation
 - 100% of students will engage in a transformative out-of-the-classroom learning experience during their time at Alma by 2023
 - Every incoming student will have a four-year plan by the end of the first year at Alma by April 2022

Financial Vitality

The college cannot thrive on the edge of financial viability. We need to create a budget surplus that can be reinvested into the student experience while decreasing our dependence on our annual line of credit borrowing. A commitment to growing our endowment is necessary to ensure that an Alma education is within reach of every student and to keep the college relevant, accessible, and affordable.

Goals and Accountability Measures

- Increase overall student enrollment through new programs, innovation, and pathways for international and transfer students
 - Grow overall enrollment, including graduate students, to 1,550 by fall 2023
 - Achieve a first- to second-year retention rate of 85% by fall 2023
- Spend responsibly, strategically, and consistently with our mission and values while aiming for efficiencies across campus, and invest in growth and infrastructure
 - Reduce maximum line-of-credit draw to no more than \$2 million in the FY23 academic year
 - Produce an annual operating surplus of \$500,000, after debt service, by FY23

