



Office of the President

December 13, 2019

Mr. Chris Kolb
State Budget Director
111 South Capitol
P.O. Box 30026
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Director Kolb:

Central Michigan University prepares students to be leaders from day one, and it goes far beyond job title. CMU students learn that leadership is a daily opportunity. With access to more leadership programming than any other university in the state – and likely in the country – CMU students understand that as members of the CMU family, they have a profound responsibility to help meet the needs of the state, its residents, communities and businesses.

Our student and faculty researchers help preserve the earth's resources, discover new ways to treat diseases and advance innovative methods to improve teaching and learning. Our alumni are doctors, physical therapists, physician assistants, researchers and military officers. They are CEOs, lawyers and policymakers. They are top broadcasters, meteorologists, journalists, fashion designers, entrepreneurs, engineers, data scientists, psychologists and social scientists.

CMU is among just six percent of U.S. universities in the highest two Carnegie research classifications. We offer approximately 300 academic programs at the undergraduate, master's, specialist and doctoral levels; these are focused especially in STEM, health care and business. CMU students have boundless opportunities for hands-on, real-world experiences that prepare them for careers, including research endeavors that often begin their freshman and sophomore years.

CMU was established in 1892 as a teachers' college, to assist the state with filling a shortage in this important field. CMU has grown to offer nationally acclaimed programs in areas ranging from the health professions and engineering, to business and communications, and science and technology. CMU has nearly 20,000 students enrolled on its Mount Pleasant campus, online and at more than 30 locations across North America.

As we scan the current higher education landscape today and over the next decade, there is no question that we are operating in a competitive environment that is ripe with disruptive traits. The prevailing issues directly affecting higher education include, but are clearly not limited to:

- The discussion of costs/price (including student debt) and value of returns on investment in higher education.
- Demographic shifts.
- Public funding that has not kept up with inflation over time.
- New competitive entrants outside the traditional market sector.
- Political and social trends and their effect on access to higher education.

To that end, CMU is embarking on a strategic envisioning process with a working title of *Realizing Rigor, Relevance and Excellence* that is future-focused and creates strategic pathways that will guide us for the next decade. Ten years is a longer planning horizon to allow for bold and innovative thought to take place. It enables us to think in transformational terms, not in annual and short-term transactional and operational forms. We will reshape CMU and position ourselves to better serve our students, foster innovation and economic development, ensure civic and social advancement, and spur new creations that will impact our region, our state and beyond.

The following five strategic pathways will guide CMU moving forward:

1. Enhance the overall academic quality and environment of CMU with a renewed commitment to rigor, relevance and excellence in our curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.
2. Distinguish CMU as the equitable and inclusive marketplace of ideas, thoughts and actions.
3. Build and foster a reciprocal ecosystem of innovation, economic development and cultural enrichment between and among the many communities throughout the state of Michigan, with a primary connection to the rural and underserved communities that CMU has honorably and successfully served.
4. Understand and proactively address the dynamic nature of the college student - both current and future.
5. Redefine and expand our business model to include opportunities in lifelong learning, partnerships with organizations, and mid-career educational needs.

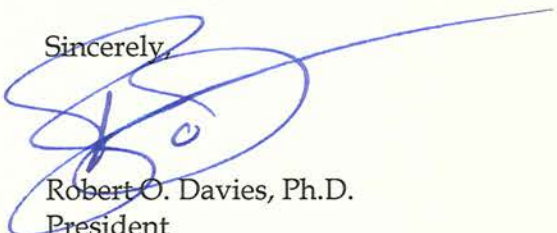
These five pathways will guide our planning and set long-range concepts in motion. Through this process, three-year tactical plans, which will be reviewed annually, will be developed by each division and college, along with a university-wide prioritization process.

At CMU, we pride ourselves on academic excellence and cocurricular activities that combine to teach students to think critically, focus on solutions and work in teams. We teach students to be leaders, giving them the support and opportunities that build their résumés and prepare them to start successful careers that benefit the state of Michigan.

Thank you for your continued support.

The following information responds to the questions you asked in your letter to us.

Sincerely,



Robert O. Davies, Ph.D.
President

Driving Student Success:

1) To what extent does your institution collaborate with other education partners and the business community to help bridge the gap between job openings and skills needed to fill them, preparing students to better fill the needs of tomorrow's workforce?

CMU has a significant number of advisory boards for our academic departments, where employers can provide feedback on current curriculum, ensuring we are preparing students for the careers of the future. Also, our Academic Planning and Analysis office prepares a gap analysis before any new program is created. This important analysis studies industry demand and degrees conferred in regions across the state.

The fact that we are preparing students for the careers of tomorrow can be highlighted through the First Destination Survey and the Employer Survey. Our most recent First Destination Survey shows that over 93 percent of our recent graduates have found employment or advanced to pursue graduate school within six months of graduation. Likewise, in the most recent Employer Survey, 91 percent of employers stated that CMU students were better or equally prepared compared to other institutions from which they recruit talent. CMU's Career Development Center worked with over 8,300 Michigan companies interested in recruiting CMU students during the 2018-19 academic year.

CMU also works to educate those who are already part of today's workforce. We do this through continuing education agreements with businesses, non-profit organizations and governmental entities. We also provide non-credit professional development for organizations that have a need for their employees to grow in specific areas.

CMU has many articulation agreements with community colleges and actively participates in the MiTransfer Pathways Initiative, which allows for a more seamless transition for transfer students. We also have a unique partnership with Mid Michigan College through our Chippewa Achieve Program. This program allows Mid Michigan College students to live in CMU residential housing, identify a route for transferring to CMU and leverage campus resources to help them along their educational journey.

CMU's program offerings are robust and reviewed on a continual basis for content and marketability. We currently offer programs in the following critical skills areas:

- Astronomy
- Athletic Training
- Audiology
- Biology
- Biochemistry and Chemistry
- Biomedical Science
- Communications Disorders
- Computer Engineering
- Computer Science
- Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
- Electrical Engineering
- Environmental Studies
- Fermentation Science
- Geography
- Geology
- Health Administration

- Health Sciences
- Industrial Engineering Technology
- Information Systems
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Medicine
- Meteorology
- Neuroscience
- Nutrition and Dietetics
- Nursing
- Physics
- Physician Assistant
- Physical Therapy
- Public Health
- Speech-Language Pathology
- Statistics

Over the past five years, CMU has experienced significant demand and growth in our engineering, health professions and medical programs. Our Board of Trustees recently approved an undergraduate environmental engineering program. Demand for entry-level environmental engineers has grown in recent years by 51 percent in Michigan and 26 percent in the Great Lakes Bay region, with more job openings than graduates. CMU recently launched an online Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree completion program and an online Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree. Both address employer and student needs across the state and beyond. Our College of Medicine is assisting in responding to a major shortage of medical providers in the state.

CMU's College of Medicine prepares diverse, culturally competent physicians to improve access to high-quality health care, especially in medically underserved populations. To that end, a new 25-year affiliation agreement between the college and Covenant HealthCare in Saginaw strengthens medical student education and research. Clinical rotations at Covenant facilities increase opportunities for research on public and community health issues in the Great Lakes Bay Region. In other partnerships:

- CMU Medical Education Partners provides physicians the opportunity to complete their specialty training in Saginaw residency programs.
- Through a new affiliation with Spectrum Health Lakeland, the college expanded into southwest Michigan, which faces health care challenges such as poor access and a shortage of physicians. Other regional facility affiliations for medical student clinical rotations and resident physician training include Ascension St. John Hospital in Detroit, MidMichigan Health, Ascension St. Mary's Hospital in Saginaw, Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center in Saginaw, Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers and HealthSource Saginaw.
- The nonprofit Mid-Central Regional Area Health Education Center plays an integral role in teaching and training the next generation of health professionals. It serves 19 mid-Michigan counties in partnership with the College of Medicine.
- The College of Medicine leads and collaborates on health care issues and initiatives with area corporations, nonprofits and service agencies, including the Michigan Health Improvement Alliance, Transforming Health Regionally in a Vibrant Economy, Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance, Great Lakes Bay Region Mental Health Partnership, Saginaw County Medical Society, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Barb Smith Suicide Resource and Response Network, BlueWater Angels, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Saginaw County Health Department, and The Dow Chemical Company.

CMU's College of Business Administration partners with many employers to provide our students with experiential learning opportunities while working on their degrees. Each year, dozens of employers and hundreds of students team up for the annual CMU ERPsim Invitational Competition.

For nearly half a year, students practice playing the SAP-based business simulation game with guidance from professional mentors from companies around the state and, increasingly, around the nation. The simulation places students at the head of fictional companies, and they must develop a business strategy that includes sales forecasting, purchasing raw materials, setting competitive pricing, managing inventory and marketing their product.

In addition to building valuable technical skills with SAP, students develop and practice professional skills such as leadership, communication, problem-solving and teamwork. Many employers participate with the intent of recruiting talent – dozens of students receive offers for internships and even full-time jobs on the day of the event.

Students with an entrepreneurial mindset have unique opportunities here at CMU. Each spring since 2011, teams of student entrepreneurs compete for what is now more than \$100,000 in seed capital, cash prizes and in-kind services in CMU's New Venture Competition. Preparation begins each fall and includes workshops; pitching events; and opportunities to connect with experienced entrepreneurs, angel investors, CMU faculty and regional business leaders. The competition, open to all CMU students, has spawned several businesses, including Ignite Donuts, a baked goods retailer; Elemental, maker of an insulated bra for cancer survivors; and Earthworm Castings Unlimited, a natural fertilizer maker.

Entrepreneurship is a huge potential growth area for the state of Michigan, and the Central Michigan University Research Corp., or CMURC, offers would-be business owners the tools and guidance to accelerate their success.

The CMURC is a professional co-working space offering many programs focused on product and business strategy development. The CMURC leverages the resources of CMU, the Mount Pleasant SmartZone and the Michigan Economic Development Corp. and brings together local, regional and statewide partners to support entrepreneurs and growing businesses.

Among the state's MEDC-funded business incubators, CMURC ranks first in terms of jobs created and companies formed. In the past three years, CMURC opened centers in Bay City and Saginaw, to assist with business start-ups throughout the Great Lakes Bay region. CMURC continually focuses on supporting entrepreneurship and economic development in the region and plans to open a Midland center in the spring.

Overall, CMU regularly collaborates with businesses and other education partners across the state to ensure we are serving our students, employers, local communities, the region and the state in the best way possible as we work to meet the evolving needs of society.

2) What strategies does your institution employ to foster an environment where students feel safe and well-supported as an overall effort to improve student retention rates?

Student Safety

At CMU, the safety of our students is a top priority. Our commitment to student safety spans across the entire campus and the surrounding areas. The CMU Police Department, currently celebrating its 50th anniversary, is a professional department of 35 employees, including nearly 30 sworn officers; 32 student employees; 10 marked patrol vehicles; three Safe Rides vans, and some of the most advanced training and equipment in the state. Officers have trained alongside the U.S. Secret Service, are state leaders in digital forensics, lead in safety and security best practices, and are wholly committed to student success. CMUPD works closely with its regional partners to maintain a safe community, training together frequently with Mount Pleasant and Shepherd police, the Isabella County Sheriff's Department, and Michigan State Police. In the department's community team policing model, officers focus on outreach, relationship building, crime reduction and student success. Innovation, creativity, leadership and communication are crucial team policing skills.

CMU continually invests in technology and equipment to keep our students safe. We currently utilize over 1,200 security cameras across campus to help ensure student safety. Also, residence life upgrades are making CMU's campus more secure. In 2019, CMU modernized the north residence hall community inside and out, including improvements to safety and electrical systems, and added interior access controls and other improvements to the south community.

Since 2016, CMU's 22 residence halls, graduate housing and academic buildings installed new access security measures, including building access controls and mechanical and electronic door locks.

Student Wellbeing

CMU also focuses on the wellbeing of students. This begins with the work of our Care Team, who meet weekly during the academic year and as needed throughout the summer. The team reviews care reports submitted by CMU faculty, staff or students when they believe a student may be having a difficult time. During the 2018-19 school year, over 1,000 care reports were submitted to the Care Team. Care Team members follow up with students to ensure they are aware of available services and that they get the specialized assistance they need.

Many CMU students leverage our Counseling Center to assist with mental health issues. The center employs licensed professional counselors who are very dedicated to the mental wellbeing of our students. CMU has invested significant resources in this area as we see growing demand for services. We introduced a new service model this fall that increased access to services and eliminated a waiting list for the first time in seven years.

Student wellness also extends into other areas such as finances and food insecurity. There are many expenses associated with attending college, and CMU's Financial Wellness Collaborative offers

students the tools and resources to understand costs, build a budget, make plans for repayment and take control of their finances.

Led by a team of graduate and undergraduate students, the Financial Wellness Collaborative offers a variety of programs for both individual students and student organizations. Money Mentors, trained Financial Wellness Collaborative students, served nearly 4,000 students in the 2018-19 academic year and hosted the first Journey to Financial Wellness Conference in April 2019.

We know that as many as 30 percent of CMU students struggle with food insecurity. CMU is addressing this in many ways. We are very mindful of the cost of higher education and have maintained the lowest cumulative increase of any Michigan public university over the last ten years. Also, we opened the CMU Student Food Pantry in 2018. In its inaugural year, the Student Food Pantry distributed approximately 7,426 pounds of food to 222 students in need. In addition, 132 CMU students volunteered 346 hours in the food pantry to help meet their peers' basic needs.

This spring, CMU will launch a meal swipe program in our residential restaurants where students can share a portion of their allotted meal swipes and guest passes with others who are in need.

Student Advising, Academic Support and Success Coaching

Academic advising is critical to the success of our students. CMU has made significant investments in additional academic advisors and is in the process of implementing an advising CRM software solution. This spring, students also will be able to register for multiple semesters at once, alleviating the stress of not knowing if they will get the classes they want or need as part of their educational journey.

CMU has numerous academic support centers across campus that are tailored to assist students in areas such as math, presentation skills, statistics and writing skills. CMU also supports online students through our Online Ally program. Students who work with an Online Ally benefit from improved time management skills, increased test performance, enhanced studying tactics, additional research assistance, course management and increased motivation to succeed.

CMU's Office of Student Success provides success coaching to students in Residential Success Centers supporting the transition to college. Over 25 percent of CMU freshmen met with a success coach last year and those doing so in their first semester have significantly higher grades and overall retention. Academic colleges also house success centers for student mentoring and support.

Diversity Initiatives

CMU is a diverse community of scholars, inclusive of people from many backgrounds, religions, cultures, perspectives, opinions and identities. To create an environment that feels welcoming to all, this year CMU formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council led by Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer A.T. Miller. Members of the council include representatives from every academic college and administrative division, as well as representatives from the Student Government

Association and the Graduate Student Union. The council recently released plans for more than 60 university-wide initiatives to increase diversity, equity and inclusion at CMU.

In September, CMU opened the new Institute for Transformative Dialogue to support curricula, programs and trainings that help students learn and work effectively across social group dynamics, especially groups with a history of conflict or unequal relations. In addition, CMU has added new mandatory diversity, equity and inclusion training for all incoming students and added an additional required course in social discrimination to the existing required course in racial discrimination. Faculty and staff performance reviews now also include annual goals and expectations related to learning, training and development in diversity, equity and inclusion.

Student Involvement

The Sarah R. Opperman Leadership Institute at CMU was expanded this year to support a larger group of students. This program has demonstrated results in impacting retention (98 percent to second year) and a four-year graduation rate of 86 percent.

CMU offers more leadership programming than any other institution in the state, teaching students about responsibilities to each other, their communities and their employers. We fuel leadership skills such as communication, collaboration and critical/innovative thinking, through programs such as Leadership Safari, which immerses about 2,000 incoming students in a five-day leadership experience before classes start.

CMU's IMPACT program is an interactive two-day program designed for students from diverse backgrounds and focusing on mentorship and making strong campus connections. Ninety-seven percent of the participants said they felt more prepared to begin college because of the program.

The Mary-Ellen Brandell Volunteer Center at CMU focuses on providing students with opportunities to be more engaged on campus and in communities across the nation. Students involved in registered student organizations are more likely to continue their education at CMU and persist to graduation. One very popular program is our Alternative Breaks program.

CMU students go on the third most Alternative Break trips of any university in the nation. Last year, over 750 CMU student volunteers participated during the holidays and spring/summer breaks. CMU students rank No. 1 among all Michigan public universities for their participation, providing more than 39,000 hours of service to communities around the world.

CMU continually invests significant resources in ways that positively impact the lives of our students. Retention is critical to the success of CMU and our students.

Strategic Investment

1) Has the existing formula helped improve degree completion at your institution? If so, in what ways might the existing performance funding formula better recognize your efforts in this area?

CMU is very mindful of the state performance funding metrics as we develop our strategic plans and measure our performance. Our primary reason for focusing on degree completions is because that is what is best for our students. The performance funding metrics related to critical skills degree completions and total degree completions is a secondary factor in our efforts.

Overall, CMU performs quite well under these current performance funding metrics. The metrics attempt to reward institutions for improvement and success in their respective categories. That being said, the portion of performance funding related to these degree completion categories is small in proportion to overall state appropriations. Also, the current areas listed as critical skills should continue to evolve as higher education and societal needs are changing. CMU's strategic envisioning process will assist in identifying the programs needed in the future and ensure CMU is providing our students with rigorous programs in relevant areas of study.

2) What suggestions do you have to improve the way funding is allocated by the state? Are there additional metrics you might recommend that emphasizes performance and incentivizes each institution equitably while recognizing their unique mission?

The current year increase in state funding based on performance funding metrics equates to .5 percent of the overall appropriation for higher education. This is a very small portion of funding being measured by ongoing performance funding metrics.

CMU recommends that the state remove the performance funding category "Proportional to 2010-11" and the research and development expenditures metric under the category "Performance Funding Proportional to Share of Total".

Half of the current year performance funding increase is allocated proportionately to the FY 2010-11 appropriation, which does not align with student outcomes, and simply continues the longtime disparity of appropriations across Michigan public universities.

The metric related to research and development expenditures only benefits half of the institutions across the state, based on their unique missions. Furthermore, institutions who perform research are already rewarded by receiving the grants or sponsored programs and the related portion of funds that can be used toward operations through indirect cost recoveries on the funding. The current metric adds another layer of reward and primarily benefits the institutions who already receive the highest levels of state support.

CMU also recommends the addition of a new metric to reward institutions who keep tuition increases low and provide access for students. The metric would work as an equalizer, with institutions who have the lowest tuition increases being rewarded with the largest proportion of a percentage of new categorical state funding. This metric could replace the “Proportional to 2010-11” category. In the past, institutions were eligible for all performance funding if they stayed within the tuition restraint limit set by the state. This would act as an additional reward to institutions that hold tuition increases much lower than the tuition restraint cap. This metric could be based on annual tuition increases or a longer period of time to reward cost containment.

As CMU embarks on a strategic envisioning process and focuses on bold initiatives through 2030 and beyond that will position CMU as a leader in preparing students for their careers and meaningful lives, we also recommend the state be bold and review historical appropriation allocations. The disparity among institutions hinders innovation among the institutions receiving lower levels of appropriations per fiscal year equated students and perpetuates funding largely based on political influence.

CMU primarily serves students from the state of Michigan. We enroll students from almost every county in Michigan and nearly 90 percent of on-campus students are from Michigan. Historically, about 70 percent of CMU graduates choose to live and work in Michigan. More than 145,000 CMU alums currently reside in Michigan and contribute to the state’s economy. Our alumni are leaders in their communities and genuinely care about the betterment of our state. We believe this information is extremely relevant as the state reviews funding allocations moving forward. CMU looks forward to participating in future discussions regarding potential new metrics and funding allocation methods.