

Assurance Argument
Central Michigan University - Mount
Pleasant, MI

Review date: 04-13-2026

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

Administrative Structures and Shared Governance

Central Michigan University (CMU) enables administration, faculty, staff, and students to participate in setting academic requirements, policies, and processes through effective structures for collaboration. These structures ensure continuous, effective functioning, even as the institution responds to external changes.

CMU's commitment to effective administrative structures and shared governance is exemplified by the creation of the University Transformation Office (UTO), highlighted by President MacKinnon in a recent press release. The UTO drives data-informed decision-making by engaging faculty, staff, and leadership in institutional initiatives, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives inform strategic planning. By overseeing projects that emphasize continuous improvement, the UTO fosters an inclusive environment where data analysis guide collaborative processes. With clearly defined goals, transparent communication, and ongoing feedback loops, the UTO underscores CMU's dedication to bringing stakeholders together, leveraging evidence-based insights, and sustaining a culture of shared responsibility. To support shared governance, the UTO has created the Change Champion Network which is a university-wide coalition of faculty and staff (i.e., "Champions") dedicated to supporting the successful implementation of transformational initiatives by serving as trusted conduits between their respective units (i.e., colleges and departments) and the UTO.

This practice is also evidenced by the creation of new offices and positions. For example, CMU restructured the Office of Information Technology to address emerging needs. Recent changes include establishing a security office led by the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), creating the Office of the Chief Information Officer CIO and Deputy CIO, and elevating the VP of Information Technology/Chief Information Officer to the President's Cabinet.

Another organizational effort to support effective administrative structures was the separation of Enrollment and Student Services into two divisions, the Divisions of Student Recruitment and Retention and of Student Affairs, and the alignment of the institution's online operations into a new unit called Innovation and Online, positioned under the Provost. In April 2025, CMU merged the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with the Division of Student Affairs and created the Division of University Engagement and Student Affairs, further strengthening student support and aligning efforts to create a culture of care across campus and the community, as well as providing resources, professional development, and training for faculty and staff while holistically supporting student learning and development.

A third example is the realignment of Academic Advising under the Provost as part of the Academic Organizational Review process, which included committee participation from students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Implemented in 2018, this initiative aimed to examine "...the organizational structure of the academic and administrative divisions for ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness that will enhance student success." Together, these organizational changes reflect CMU's commitment to collaborative processes and its ability to recognize and adapt to institutional challenges.

CMU also demonstrates shared governance through several formal mechanisms. The Shared Governance Council, formerly the Shared Governance and Communications Committee, which was created in 2013 by the then CMU President and Academic Senate, fosters communication and collaboration among faculty, staff, students, administrators, and trustees. In addition, the Budget Priorities Committee brings together faculty, staff, students, and senior administrators to increase transparency in the budget process, provides recommendations to the Cabinet, and regular updates to the campus community on budget related actions. For example, communications regarding the new budget model were shared with the President's Cabinet, the Academic Colleges, and the broader campus community through a variety of avenues.

CMU's strategic plan is a prime example of shared governance as it required a collaborative effort from diverse stakeholders, as discussed in more detail below. A further example of shared governance is found in the CMU/CMUFA 2024-2029 Agreement (see, Article 10) which defines the process for developing and evolving academic department bylaws, which exist across all departments and are regularly revised through collaborative processes between faculty and administration.

Data-Informed Decision Making

At CMU, data-informed decision making is a cornerstone of strategic planning and continuous improvement. University-wide committees are formed to provide comprehensive data analysis that guides decisions aligned with CMU's mission to deliver exceptional educational support to students. As with the process used to shape the 2023 Strategic Plan, CMU convened three presidential committees to conduct detailed analyses of reorganization options for administrative and non-academic units, academic units and colleges, and financial data and budget models.

The Committee I Reorganization Recommendations (January 29, 2018) illustrate how data were used to evaluate academic structures. By analyzing student success metrics and academic program performance, the committee identified opportunities to restructure departments and colleges for greater focus and efficiency. While not all recommendations

were implemented, many influenced subsequent changes, such as renaming the College of the Arts and Media and rebranding the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, both outcomes of data-guided planning.

The Committee II Reorganization Recommendations (January 29, 2018) highlight CMU's reliance on data to optimize non-academic units and student support services. Through analysis of advising, recruitment, and counseling operations, the committee identified areas for improvement and proposed centralization and consolidation to deliver more effective and coordinated student support. These efforts informed later realignments, including placing Academic Advising in the Academic Division, specifically under Academic and Curricular Affairs.

The Committee III Reorganization Recommendations (January 29, 2018) underscore CMU's use of financial data to guide resource allocation and budget management. The committee's analyses shaped subsequent university-wide changes and laid the foundation for developing a new budget model. Although not every proposal was adopted, the work collectively demonstrates CMU's commitment to evaluating evidence, synthesizing findings, and incorporating data into long-term strategic decisions.

Beyond these ad hoc efforts, there are more ongoing examples of how CMU embeds data into decision making. The Academic Planning and Analysis (APA) office provides ongoing data-driven insight for a wide range of institutional functions, from enrollment benchmarks and projections, retention and graduation rates, to program analyses and peer comparisons. This supports transparency and shapes policy, planning, and evaluation across the university.

Another example is CMU's Hybrid Budget Model, which includes "Data-Informed" as a guiding principle. The budget model uses enrollment projections, historical revenue/expense data, and financial forecasts to allocate resources. The process involves campus stakeholders so that data are accessible, understood, and used in decision-making for long-term fiscal planning.

The Institution Engages its Internal and External Constituencies

CMU systematically engages its internal and external constituencies in governance, planning, and decision making. Through a network of long-standing groups and committees, the university ensures that faculty, staff, students, administrators, trustees, alumni, and community partners all contribute to the life and direction of the institution.

The university relies on formal governance bodies, including the Board of Trustees (the board), President's Cabinet, Academic Senate, Provost Advisory Council, Deans Advisory Councils, Council of Chairs, Student Government Association, Shared Governance Council, and the Budget Priorities Committee, to guide planning, policy development, and oversight. CMU holds open forums to engage the campus community at large.

The board, established under the Michigan Constitution, is the ultimate governing body responsible for the business and other affairs of the university. Its bylaws outline responsibilities including clarifying the institution's mission, approving long-range plans, assessing educational programs, ensuring financial solvency, and preserving institutional assets. Article V, Section 2 specifies the board authority over adoption of operating and capital budgets, tuition and fee setting, presidential appointment and evaluation, investment

policy, and audit oversight. Internal Audit reports functionally to the board through its Audit Committee (Article VII, Section 1.G. of the board bylaws). Upon appointment, Trustees undergo orientation with university leadership, faculty, and students, supplemented by an online resource manual. Knowledge transfer is ensured through rotation of appointments and ongoing presentations, discussions, and board retreats.

The board meets formally five times per year and operates through standing committees that directly engage internal constituencies. In February of this year, as referenced in Criterion 2, the board added five new committees to better address the changing landscape of higher education, placing a more pointed strategic focus on areas such as enrollment, advancement, workforce development, and campus climate. The board dissolved the Enterprise Risk Committee; however, the board expects work in this area to continue through the various CMU administrative offices. The new committees include the following:

- The Enrollment, Retention and Student Success Committee
- The University Advancement Committee
- The Innovation and Workforce Partnerships Committee
- The Access, Belonging and Community Impact Committee, and
- The Athletics Affairs Committee.

Continuing committees include the following:

- The Academic and Student Affairs Committee
- The Audit Committee
- The Finance and Facilities Committee
- The Policy and Bylaws Committee
- The Trustees-Faculty Liaison Committee
- The Trustees-Student Liaison Committee. and
- The Policy and Bylaws Committee.

The two liaison committees further extend engagement: the Trustees-Faculty Liaison Committee, brings trustees together with faculty leadership and senior administration to discuss shared priorities, and the Trustees-Student Liaison Committee, serves as the main channel of communication between the board and students.

The President's Cabinet, made up of vice presidents and senior officers, serves as the executive council to the CMU President and reviews all university-wide policies. The Provost's Advisory Council, composed of all academic deans, senior vice provosts, and leaders of research and online learning, meets regularly to guide the Academic Division. Broader leadership engagement occurs through the Senior Leadership Team, which brings together senior representatives from all divisions of the university for quarterly professional development, discussion of institutional initiatives, and open discussion with the CMU President.

At the college level, each dean convenes a Dean's Advisory Council (DAC), typically composed of associate deans, department chairs, and the college business manager, to guide planning. The Council of Chairs meets monthly to discuss issues affecting academic departments, share information from administration, and provide input to campus leadership.

CMU strengthened its commitment to shared governance particularly in recent years through accepting recommendations from the 2023 Shared Governance Task Force. The

CMU President adopted changes that recast “principles” as “core tenets,” required decision makers to provide clear and timely rationale, and elevated the former Shared Governance and Communications Committee into an 18-member Shared Governance Council. This group includes faculty, staff, students, and administrators, and is charged with identifying lapses in shared governance, advising on implementation of the core tenets, and recommending improvements. Regular monthly meetings between the President and the Academic Senate Chair further sustain shared governance across the academic enterprise. The Senate itself functions through a network of standing committees that oversee academic policy, assessment, service learning, global education, and other domains.

Faculty and staff are engaged through multiple additional structures. Monthly meetings between the President and the Faculty Association provide opportunities for discussion of issues beyond contractual matters. The University Community Advisory Panel (UCAP) brings together leaders from faculty and staff unions, graduate assistants, and senior administrators to share perspectives. The Professional and Administrative Council represents nearly 800 P&A staff, fulfilling its role of providing recommendations and feedback on university-wide initiatives. Staff unions meet regularly with Employee Relations/Human Resources leadership to discuss concerns and participate in university planning. Faculty unions also engage in Article VII meetings with administration to maintain collaborative relationships. Article VII of the CMU/CMUFA 2024-2029 Agreement and the CMU/CMUUTF 2025-2028 Agreement states that representatives of the union and CMU shall meet at least once each academic year for the purpose of discussing those matters necessary to the implementation of the agreement.

Students are not only represented on governance committees such as the Academic Senate, UCAP, Shared Governance Council, Budget Priorities Committee, and senior search committees, but also drive their own academic and policy agenda through the Student Government Association. CMU also engages alumni as valued partners, serving on advisory boards (examples – CMU, CAM, CSE, MPA), participating in mentoring and internship programs, and providing feedback that informs academic and co-curricular offerings. Their continued involvement strengthens CMU’s ability to connect academic preparation with career outcomes and lifelong support.

Externally, CMU maintains partnerships that extend the university’s mission into the broader community. The Community Relations Committee works with civic leaders to enhance economic vitality and promote a welcoming environment for students, employees, and community members alike. Additional partnerships with regional employers, K–12 schools, and health providers create opportunities for experiential learning, professional pipelines, and joint research. These external connections ensure that CMU remains responsive to societal needs while reinforcing the university’s role as a driver of regional development.

Finally, the Budget Priorities Committee exemplifies broad engagement in fiscal decision making. Established jointly by the President and Academic Senate, the committee shares budget information with the campus community, advises the President on institutional priorities, and develops communication strategies to increase understanding of university finances.

Together, these administrative structures and practices demonstrate CMU’s longstanding commitment to engaging its constituencies, internal and external, through participatory governance, shared responsibility, and partnerships that extend the university’s mission into

the wider community.

Sources

- 2023-2028 Strategic Plan
- Academic Organization Review 2018
- Academic Planning and Analysis
- Academic Senate Standing Committees
- Board of Trustees Bylaws
- Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda of Apr 2025
- Board of Trustees
- Budget Priorities Committee Report June 2025
- Budget Priorities Committee
- CAM Alumni Board
- Change Champion Network
- CMU Alumni Board
- CMU and CMU Faculty Association Agreement 2024-2029
- CMU and CMU Union of Teaching Faculty Agreement 2025-2028
- Committee I Reorganization Recommendations
- Committee II Reorganization Recommendations
- Committee III Reorganization Recommendations
- Community Relations Committee Announcement
- Council of Chairs
- Division of University Engagement and Student Affairs
- Hybrid Budget Model
- Internal Audit
- Master of Public Administration Advisory Board
- OIT Organization Structure
- Open Forums Announcement
- P and A Council Responsibilities
- Presidents Cabinet
- Professional and Administrative Council Meeting Agenda Mar 2025
- Provosts Advisory Council
- Science and Engineering Advisory Board
- Shared Governance Council
- Staff Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Student Government Association
- University Budget Update Fall 2024
- University Transformation Office Press Release
- University Transformation Office
- OIT Leadership

4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

Financial and Personnel Resources Effectively Support Current Operations

CMU supports its operations through careful stewardship of both financial and personnel resources. The university's reimagined hybrid budget model provides shared responsibility between deans or departmental leaders and central administration, balancing local authority with institutional oversight (Budget Handbook). This approach has enabled CMU to maintain a strong financial profile and continue investing in infrastructure despite enrollment fluctuations over the past decade.

The annual budget process is collaborative, and data informed. Each September, the Office of Financial Planning and Budgets (FPB) publishes the operating and capital budget calendar for the following fiscal year. In January, Academic Planning and Analysis (APA) works with each college to develop semester credit hour (SCH) projections for on-campus and online/distance locations, which become the basis for tuition revenue modeling. FPB then prepares multiple tuition scenarios for leadership review. In April, the board approves tuition rates, which FPB uses to finalize tuition and personnel expenditure projections. In June, the board adopts the final operating and capital budget.

Implementation is supported by accountability measures. Following the board approval, FPB conducts a budget kickoff meeting with colleges and divisions, distributing work papers that include tuition and appropriation projections and accurate salary and benefit information. Colleges prepare detailed budgets, which FPB reviews and consolidates into the university's operating plan. Departments reconcile monthly activity against their budgets, and real-time financial reports are available through CMU's enterprise planning system. Accounting Services produces regular budget-to-actual comparisons, follows up on variances, and provides oversight to the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services.

The hybrid budget model attributes tuition revenue to the colleges that generate it while state appropriations cover fixed costs such as debt service, utilities, and insurance. Shared expenses are distributed across six cost pools: academic support, administrative/research support, infrastructure, recruitment and retention, institutional scholarships, and university-wide services. A subvention pool provides support to high-cost academic programs. This system ensures transparency, aligns costs with activity, and empowers deans, who are closest to their operations, to make resource decisions while safeguarding central needs.

To support innovation and growth, units may submit base budget or special initiative requests. Proposals are reviewed at the department, college, and division levels before advancing to the President's Cabinet for final approval. Recent initiatives funded through this

process include the Fund for Program Innovation and Excellence (\$3M in 2020), allocation of infrastructure, technology, equipment, and maintenance, and safety (ITEMS) funds from the State of Michigan (\$750K in 2024), and Go Grants for faculty, staff, and student projects aligned with the Strategic Plan (\$500K in 2025, with over 120 proposals submitted).

CMU's commitment to high-quality facilities further supports operations. Over the last decade, the university has invested more than \$51 million across 290 academic and student-centered projects. Major initiatives include the Biosciences Building, expansion of the Business Education Building, the Center for Integrated Health Studies, and renovations to residential housing. Targeted projects such as the Bush Theatre sound and lighting upgrade, Nursing Skills Lab, Adobe Digital Lounge, Culinary Nutrition Center, Engineering and Technology Innovation Lab, and EV/Drone Battery Storage facility demonstrate investments that directly enhance the student experience.

Personnel resources are equally critical. CMU maintains two dedicated personnel offices, Human Resources (HR) for staff and Faculty Personnel Services (FPS) for graduate assistants, and fixed term and regular faculty, ensuring that all employees are hired, onboarded, and supported through consistent and transparent processes.

For staff, HR administers formal hiring procedures that require clear minimum and preferred qualifications, structured interviews, and reference checks. Once hired, staff complete orientation and engage in ongoing training coordinated by HR and other offices. Policy updates are paired with communications and targeted training. For example, the rollout and multiple revisions of the Sexual Misconduct Policy since 2015 were supported with mandatory education to ensure awareness and compliance.

For faculty, FPS oversees all phases of academic hiring, including search committee formation, advertising and recruitment, evaluation of candidate credentials, and coordination of interviews. Faculty appointments require evidence of scholarly and teaching qualifications, as well as approval through shared governance and administrative review. Upon hiring, new faculty participate in an orientation that introduces them to CMU's mission, academic policies, and teaching resources. FPS also coordinates onboarding related to tenure and promotion processes, faculty development opportunities, and compliance training. Together, HR and FPS provide structured pathways that reinforce CMU's commitment to hiring well-qualified, student-focused professionals and supporting their success across their careers.

The university also invests in professional development for current employees at multiple levels, departmental, interdepartmental, college, and university wide. Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in professional learning at least biannually, both on and off campus. In 2025, CMU reinstated base funding for a full-time Manager of Professional Development to strengthen offerings. Strategic Priority 3 of the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan underscores this commitment, emphasizing organizational culture and personnel development to ensure faculty and staff feel valued, empowered, and able to see the positive impact of their work.

CMU's Financial Management Balances Short-Term Needs with Long-Term Commitments and Ensures its Ongoing Sustainability

CMU actively manages its resources to balance immediate operational priorities with

long-term sustainability. The hybrid budget model serves as both a short-term management tool and a long-term strategy by directing revenues to the units that generate them while allocating shared costs and maintaining central oversight. This ensures that short-term needs are met while also sustaining mission-critical programs through subsidies from the subvention pool.

The university also emphasizes long-term financial planning. In 2020, the board directed leadership to modernize the budget model, resulting in a two-year campus-wide effort that produced the current hybrid model with guiding principles of transparency, accountability, and collaboration. This process reinforced CMU's capacity to adapt to changing enrollment and fiscal conditions while maintaining strategic investments.

CMU's fundraising and advancement efforts significantly bolster sustainability. In FY2024, the university raised \$25.9 million, the largest annual fundraising total in its history, supporting scholarships, faculty development, and program innovation. Advancement efforts continue to surpass institutional records with \$79 million raised in FY2025.

The university's endowment provides a stable funding stream for academic and operational priorities. Managed under the board approved endowment fund investment policy, the Investment Committee, comprising trustees, alumni, financial experts, and staff, meets regularly with advisors to monitor performance. The endowment has more than doubled over the past decade, reaching \$263.4 million in FY2024 and generating \$10.2 million in drawdowns that directly support programs across campus. The investment philosophy balances annual distributions with long-term asset preservation.

CMU also demonstrates strong debt management. Over the past decade, four bond refundings generated more than \$10 million in net present value savings. The FY2024 audited financial statements reported a net position of \$913.1 million, with credit ratings of A1 from Moody's and A+ from S&P confirming institutional strength. The university's composite financial index has remained "Above the Zone" for public institutions each year for the past decade, with FY2024 producing the strongest performance in ten years.

Diversified revenue sources further support sustainability. As of September 2024, CMU managed \$87.6 million in active grant funding across 308 agreements, with more than 1,100 grants awarded in the past six years. Annual totals have ranged from \$18 million to \$79 million, depending on project cycles, reflecting consistent success in attracting external research funding.

CMU's real assets provide additional long-term value. The 871-acre Mount Pleasant campus, two field stations (Beaver Island and Neithercut), and approximately 8 off-campus centers extend CMU's educational reach and research capabilities. These resources are integral to both current academic operations and the university's ability to adapt to future needs.

Through its hybrid budget model, investment discipline, fundraising growth, diversified revenue streams, and strategic use of physical and financial assets, CMU demonstrates that it can balance short-term needs with long-term commitments. These practices ensure sustainability while enabling the university to continue delivering on its mission well into the future.

Sources

- A+ from S and P
- A1 from Moodys
- Active Grant Funding
- Adobe Digital Lounge
- Advancement Efforts of 79 Million
- Annual Award Totals
- Annual Financial Report 2023-2024
- Beaver Island
- Biosciences Building
- Budget Handbook
- Center for Integrated Health Studies
- Culinary Nutrition Center
- Endowment Fund Investment Policy
- Endowment Investments and Distributions
- Faculty New Hire Information
- Faculty Personnel Services
- Go Grants Initiative
- Hiring Procedures
- Human Resources
- Hybrid Budget Model Campus Update
- Hybrid Budget Model
- ITEMS Funds
- Neithercut
- New Employee Orientation
- New Faculty Orientation
- New Faculty Resources
- New Hire Faculty Checklist
- Off-Campus Centers
- On-Campus Semester Credit Hour Projections
- Operating and Capital Budget Calendar
- Operating Budget 2025-2026
- Professional Development Programs
- Program Innovation and Excellence Fund Announcement
- Residential Housing Upgrade Announcement
- School of Engineering and Technology Facilities
- Sexual Misconduct Policy Mandatory Education
- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Strategic Priority 3
- Targeted Projects
- Program Innovation and Excellence Fund

4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

CMU Engages in Systematic Strategic Planning for Quality Improvement

CMU grounds its strategic planning in robust, ongoing analysis of student data to ensure institutional priorities are aligned with student needs and experiences. Regular review of student satisfaction measures, engagement indicators, and exit survey feedback provides essential insight into academic quality, campus climate, and areas for improvement, directly informing the development and refinement of university-wide strategic initiatives. CMU uses an institution-wide strategic planning framework to guide priorities, investments, and continuous improvement. The current Strategic Plan, developed through a 2022–2023 process after the prior plan sunset, centers on student success, community engagement, organizational culture, and institutional sustainability. The board charged a Strategic Planning Executive Committee to design an inclusive process; the planning team then hosted broad engagement sessions with faculty, staff, and students as well as focused consultations with groups such as the Student Government Association, Board of Trustees, President’s Cabinet, Provost’s Advisory Council, Senior Leadership Team, divisional leaders, Senate Executive Board, Academic Senate, academic colleges, the Budget Priorities Committee, the Council of Chairs, the Innovation and Online unit, alumni and advancement leaders, major donors, local and state government partners, business and civic leaders, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council, and the Greater Mount Pleasant community.

The resulting plan established SMART goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) across four domains, Enrollment, Financial, Institutional Outcomes, and Key Benchmarks, with documented targets or ranges, data sources, review frequencies, and assigned owners. The plan functions as the umbrella for quality-improvement work across academics and operations.

CMU demonstrates efforts in quality improvement in its academic offerings through two examples. First, CMU launched a Quality Initiative to re-envision General Education, using shared governance to review the current state and test multiple models for efficiency, coherence, interdisciplinary, and major alignment. Through Academic Senate processes and administrative review, the General Education Committee developed a new program called “Central Education” that focuses on Foundational Skills and Perspectives and Inquiry, which will provide students learning opportunities in: The Arts, Humanities, Natural Science, The Big Picture, Cultures in Context, The Public Good, Decision Making and Social Science. The Academic Senate, since fall of 2025, carefully considered the recommended model developed over several semesters with input from faculty, students, and staff, and voted in support during its March 3, 2026 meeting.

Second, CMU sustains a robust Program Review approach. As part of the Program Review Process, all distinct programs, including majors, concentrations, graduate degrees, stand-alone minors, and stand-alone certificates, undergo review on a seven-year cycle; Honors and General Education are included, while programs on hiatus are exempt. Internally reviewed programs. i.e. programs reviewed using CMU's program review process rather than that of a specialized accreditor, complete a self-study, external review (as applicable), a strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats (SWOT) analysis, and an improvement plan; externally accredited programs document successful accreditation and submit targeted improvement actions where needed. Departments begin preparation in the spring prior to the review year, complete self-studies and external visits in the review year, implement changes in year two, and collect follow-up data in years three through seven. All materials prepared for external agencies are reviewed by the appropriate college dean and by the Provost, or the Provost's designee, typically the Senior Vice Provost of Academic and Curricular Affairs, to assure institutional accuracy, compliance, and quality. Program review findings inform college and institutional resource decisions by the dean and provost and connect directly to assessment and accreditation documentation.

Strategic planning also integrates specialized institutional plans. Although the Campus Master Plan (space utilization, facilities condition, land use, and a 10-year capital plan) was developed in 2012-2013 with extensive input via focus groups, surveys, and open meetings, and includes area development plans for Academics, Administration, Athletics, and Student Affairs, the Campus Master Plan continues to guide capital investment at CMU (update from 2021). CMU has regularly engaged in a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) approach to coordinate recruitment, enrollment, and retention actions in light of demographic headwinds and is in the final phases of development of the next SEM Plan. A comprehensive Information Technology Strategic Plan is in development, and engages faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders to align technology priorities and budget. Academic governance structures support new program development through college processes and the Academic Planning Council, which evaluates mission fit, demand, qualified students and faculty, and resource feasibility before the provost's recommendation.

CMU's operational learning feeds back into planning. The university has updated the system support for the Academic Senate's Curriculum Authority Document workflow to reduce time-to-approval for new programs; invested in a new academic systems support program infrastructure system; conducted program prioritization to reallocate funding toward growth areas; expanded the business data warehouse and departmental budget dashboards to improve decision making; committed to LEED-certifiable building standards; and established an annual base allocation of \$5.7M to address approximately \$400M in deferred maintenance. Marketing investments informed by research led to the "We Do" campaign, aligning identity and enrollment strategies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CMU rapidly implemented HyFlex instruction across more than 300 classrooms, coordinated by the Offices of Information Technology and Curriculum and Instructional Support, an example of accelerated, data-guided planning that preserved instructional continuity and strengthened institutional resilience.

Finally, CMU's academic portfolio is actively managed to meet student, employer, and community needs. In 2024, the board formed the Strategic Academic Operating Plan Ad Hoc Committee to deepen understanding of academic operations. Data presented showed alignment with doctoral-class peers and preparation for 27 of Michigan's 28 "Hot Jobs" requiring a bachelor's degree. Between 2015 and 2024, CMU added 112 programs and

deleted or placed on hiatus 174, evidencing a disciplined approach to program vitality. Organizational changes since 2016 positioned Innovation and Online to serve post-traditional learners and regional hubs (e.g., Saginaw and Traverse City), with ongoing adjustments to centers as demand evolves.

CMU Relies on Data, Integrating Insights from Enrollment Forecasts, Financial Capacity, Student Learning Assessment, Institutional Operations and the External Environment.

Data are the connective tissue of CMU's planning and improvement systems. Enrollment forecasts begin with semester credit-hour projections developed with each college; these forecasts inform tuition modeling and course-delivery planning, including the on-campus/online mix managed by Innovation and Online. Financial capacity is modeled by Financial Planning and Budgets, which prepares current and long-range plans, allocates resources through the annual budget, monitors budget-to-actuals for academic and service centers, prepares state-required reports (e.g. Capital Outlay, Five-Year Capital Outlay, Operating Budget Letter, Use and Finance Statements) delivers campus training on budget processes, and manages position control and HRIS budgeting. State appropriations are incorporated into multi-year scenarios (e.g., \$95,413,800 in FY2023–24 and \$97,771,900 in FY2024–25), allowing leadership to anticipate revenue shifts and adjust priorities.

As discussed in greater detail above, in Criterion 3.A. and 3.E., student learning assessment is coordinated by the Assessment Council. Programs use assessment data to drive changes. Assessment evidence threads through accreditation self-studies and program reviews, which conclude with action plans and ratings by program faculty, the dean, and the provost, followed by budget and curricular adjustments.

Institutional operations are continuously measured. Real-time dashboards and point-in-time comparisons support persistence, graduation, and post-graduation outcomes (including National Survey of Student Engagement, Graduating Student Exit Survey, and First Destination surveys). Outside academics, divisions complete annual reviews and file required reports to regulators (e.g., NCAA, Public Broadcasting, credit rating agencies). Health, well-being, and safety data flow through CMU CARES (collaboration, assessment, response, education, and support), enabling early interventions that bolster student success.

CMU integrates external environment signals into planning. Demographic analyses inform strategic enrollment initiatives and staffing models. Market and labor data shape program development and revision through the Academic Planning Council. Consultant partnerships [e.g., Education Advisory Board (EAB) for financial aid leveraging] and new systems (e.g., Regent for financial aid, CRM Engage for advising) have supported policy refinements in suspension/probation practices, increased proactive advising and required interventions, and expanded tutoring and supplemental instruction. Cross-functional student-success summits and ad hoc analytic groups monitor persistence and graduation trends and recommend timely action.

This data infrastructure enables coordinated decision making. Assessment and operational findings inform program review. Program review then guides planning and budgeting. Enrollment and financial models set realistic capacity and investment envelopes. External scans surface risks and opportunities. Master planning translates these insights into facilities and technology priorities. Together, these processes create a documented, iterative cycle of

planning, doing, checking, and acting that advances quality across the institution.

Sources

- 2019 Global Campus Student Survey
- 2023-2028 Strategic Plan
- Academic Governance
- Academic Planning Council
- Academic Systems Support
- Annual Budget
- Assessment Council
- Campus Master Plan
- Capital Outlay
- Capital Plan 2017
- Central Education
- CMU CARES
- Data Warehouse Dashboards
- Deferred Maintenance
- Departmental Budget Dashboards
- First Destination Surveys
- Five-Year Capital Outlay
- General Education Quality Initiative
- Graduating Student Exit
- Innovation and Online
- Master Plan Update
- National Survey of Student Engagement 2025
- On-Campus Semester Credit Hour Projections
- Online Semester Credit Hour Projections
- Operating and Capital Budget Calendar
- Operating Budget Letter
- Priority Four - Institutional Sustainability
- Priority One - Student Success
- Priority Three - Organizational Culture
- Priority Two - Community Engagement
- Program Review Presentation
- Program Review Process
- Program Review
- Quality Initiative Proposal
- SMART Goals and Operational Benchmarks
- State-Required Reports
- Strategic Academic Operating Plan Ad Hoc Committee Discussion
- Strategic Academic Operating Plan Ad Hoc Committee
- Strategic Enrollment Management Plan
- Strategic Planning Process
- Strategic Planning Team
- The Building Perspectives Model
- The Efficiency Model
- The Interdisciplinary Model
- The Major-Focused Model

- Use and Finance Statements
- We Do Campaign Announcement
- We Do Campaign

Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

CMU enables and expects administration, faculty, staff, and students to participate in setting academic requirements, policies, and processes through collaborative leadership. This is evidenced by the recent creation of the University Transformation Office and development of the Change Champion Network, dedicated to supporting successful implementation of transformational initiatives. CMU also demonstrates shared governance with the recent transition to a Shared Governance Council, successor to the Shared Governance and Communications Committee. Also requiring robust collaboration from a diverse contingent of various university stakeholders is the strategic planning process culminating in the 2023 Strategic Plan.

CMU supports its operations through careful stewardship of both financial and personnel resources. The university's hybrid budget model provides shared responsibility between deans or department leaders and central administration, which is then formally approved by the board. Strong infrastructure also requires the highest quality faculty and staff which CMU is proud to have. CMU has been very successful in offering attractive start-up packages to new faculty and providing a welcoming and supportive environment for all employees.

CMU manages a multifaceted strategic planning process through skilled leadership and shared governance. Input from faculty, staff, and students as well as external consultants and community members inform the planning process for university projects. Conservative budgeting, tight containment of costs, and enhanced student recruitment efforts have allowed CMU to remain fiscally sound. Despite a decreasing Michigan market, the university is focused on growing enrollments through robust strategic initiatives such as the Central Career Guarantee, improved student retention, and increased online offerings while concurrently achieving greater efficiency through integrating and realigning services.

Sources

There are no sources.