



**GREAT FALLS  
COLLEGE**  
MONTANA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

2022-27 STRATEGIC PLAN

# FORGING FUTURES



## Inclusivity

- Clear the path for students to accomplish their educational goals
- Foster an environment that expands enrollment and celebrates student resilience
- Create excitement for campus activities and events



## Opportunities

- Distinguish Great Falls College by building brand recognition and community awareness through consistent design and promotion
- Intentionally target populations to support strategic initiatives of Great Falls College
- Develop opportunities to connect alumni with one another and Great Falls College



## Excellence

- Seek and encourage efficiency and innovation in the work of the college
- Align human, physical and/or financial resources to support strategic plan initiatives

# Year Three Report

## Summary

During the 2024–25 academic year, the Strategic Analysis and Reporting Committee (StAR) implemented an enhanced requirement within the goal submission process. Units and committees must now include a detailed timeline outlining goal completion, data collection and analysis, and reflection to determine next steps. This change ensures that reflective practice is embedded in all goal-setting efforts. The [submission form](#) includes prompts to guide this process. Additionally, multi-year goals must now specify annual indicators to support a realistic timeline and establish clear, measurable targets.

Again, in year three, updates to Strategic Action Plans were due by Jan. 31 and July 31. These updates are compiled into one main report that was shared at College Council in October 2024 and May 2025. The progress updates are also used to update the strategic goal report on the [planning website](#) and as progress is made towards strategic goals, that information can be included in these annual reports.

## Strategic Initiatives

Strategic initiatives are specific, focused projects or actions that will help achieve the goals in the strategic plan. The current strategic initiatives for *Forging Futures* have been identified from the progress updates of each Strategic Action Plan and are documented in the goal progress report available [online](#) and are also saved in the College Council Teams > Forging Futures channel > Strategic Initiatives folder. These initiatives play a critical role by translating high-level strategy into actionable steps. By focusing resources on key initiatives, the College can effectively prioritize efforts and drive progress toward achieving its strategic plan goals.

## Resource Allocation

In fall 2024, 10 strategic spending requests were submitted and six of them were approved. The projects that were approved were:

- Alumni outreach campaign (\$13,250)\*
- Annual conference on the first-year experience for DREAM committee (\$12,000)\*
- Assessment 101 workshop for Student Learning Assessment committee (\$13,500)\*
- Dual enrollment graduation cords (\$2,500)
- Online student success mailing (\$12,800)
- Updated diploma covers (\$10,000)

\*Three of the projects directly aligned with *Forging Futures*.

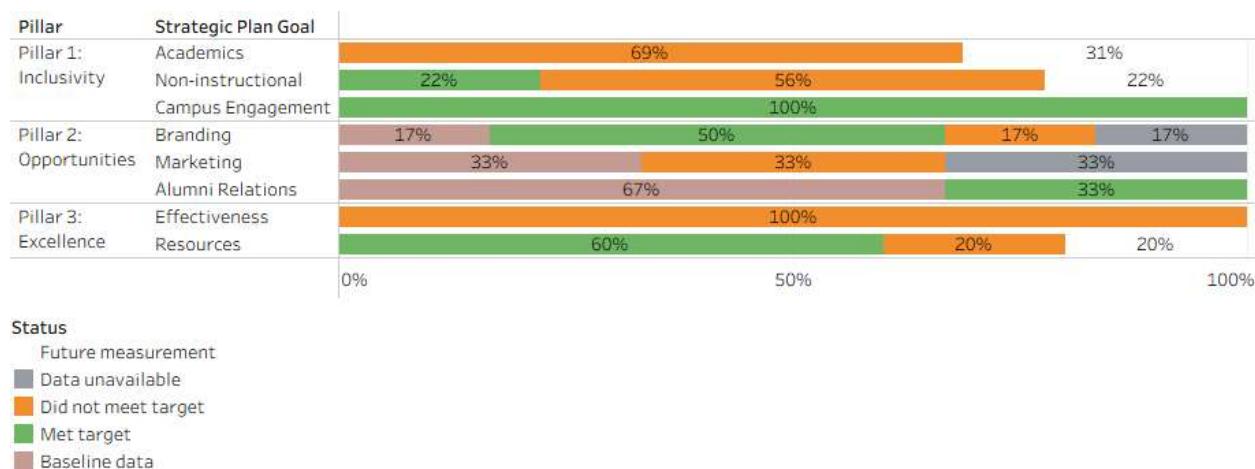
## Assessment of Target Metrics

There are 46 target metrics within *Forging Futures* that are monitored by the StAR committee annually. To measure progress, the StAR committee has defined that meeting, or almost meeting, at least 70% of the annual target metrics in year five is one way to measure mission fulfillment.

### Year Three

As of Sep. 26, 2025, the College met 28% (n= 13), almost met 0% (n=0), and did not meet 43% (n= 20) of the target metrics for year three (academic year 2024-25). Another 28% (n= 13) of the target metrics did not have data available, were future measurements, or were baseline data.

The image below shows the status of all target metrics by pillar and strategic plan goal.



To be on track to reach the goal of having met or almost met 70% of the target metrics in year five, the College needed to meet at least 58% of the target metrics in year three.

## Recommendations from the StAR Committee

*Forging Futures* was developed by gathering campus input to create an inclusive strategic plan. The strategic goal setting and reporting process was new to the College, so there have been many best practices identified and lessons learned. To preserve this knowledge for future strategic plans the StAR committee makes the following recommendations:

### 1) Document data-informed decision-making

The College has made significant progress in using data to stay informed. The next strategic step is to emphasize taking action based on those data—specifically, making and documenting data-informed decisions. Assessment is an ongoing

process that uses data to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional initiatives and identify opportunities for improvement. Incorporating data-informed decision-making into this process will strengthen the College's efforts to enhance student outcomes and institutional performance. Equally important is the documentation of these decisions and the reflection on their results to inform future actions.

Feedback from the Year Three site visit by peer evaluators from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) highlighted the importance of systematic, data-informed decision-making—particularly with respect to disaggregated student achievement data. In response, StAR recommends including a metric in the next strategic plan to track data-informed decisions that are made based on the analysis of student achievement data.

2) Metric related to student learning outcomes assessment

It is a best practice to track the assessment of student learning as a key performance indicator. If the student learning outcomes assessment process has data available by 2027, then the College should consider adding a metric related to student learning to the next strategic plan or as a Mission Fulfillment Indicator.

3) Strategic metrics

*Forging Futures* includes numerous target metrics that effectively serve as departmental key performance indicators, but less so as metrics for a strategic plan. For the next strategic plan, we recommend the College thoughtfully select metrics that are both meaningful and measurable—while ensuring they align with the strategic goals and have available baseline data to track progress effectively.

4) Strategic Goals for Units and Committees

At the outset of *Forging Futures*, only units and departments were required to develop goals aligned with the strategic plan. Committees, by contrast, were initially only responsible for setting annual goals that did not need to align with the strategic plan. This was later revised to require that committees also align their goals with the strategic plan. Since then, the Administrative Unit Review process has required all units to implement action plans and document their efforts toward continuous quality improvement and mission fulfillment. Faculty now participate in Data Days, using course assessment data to create and document action plans aimed at enhancing student achievement and learning outcomes. Additionally, academic programs that receive recommendations for improvement from the Internal Academic Program Review Committee will be required to develop corresponding action plans beginning fall 2025. With all of these efforts

documenting the work towards mission fulfillment and to follow best practices with strategic planning, StAR recommends that beginning with the next strategic plan all units and committees are asked to set goals but whether they align with the strategic plan is up to them and their priorities.