

VISION, MISSION, AND FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Vision

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) aspires for national prominence and global recognition as a community-focused, comprehensive institution driving positive change and shaping the future of higher education.

Our graduates will be exemplars in an ever-changing world, known for their individual successes, dedication to sustainability, ethical leadership, and transformative global impact.

Approved by the FGCU Board of Trustees December 2023.

Mission

FGCU is a transformative, learner-centered institution dedicated to student success that strategically serves Southwest Florida and beyond.

FGCU, as a regional comprehensive institution, provides academic, economic, and cultural enrichment for our community through impactful partnerships and excellent teaching, learning, scholarship, and public service. We create pathways for our students to thrive as engaged, responsible, global citizens. Through undergraduate and graduate programs, FGCU students receive a distinctive education with experiential learning, community service, and participation in a living laboratory of sustainability practices.

Approved by the FGCU Board of Trustees December 2023.

Founding Principles

As a public institution, FGCU eagerly accepts the leadership opportunity and obligation to meet the educational needs of Southwest Florida. To do so, it will collaborate with its various constituencies, listen to the calls for change, build on the intellectual heritage of the past, plan its evolution systematically for the twenty-first century, and be guided by the following principles.

Student success is at the center of all University endeavors. The University is dedicated to the highest quality education that develops the whole person for success in life and work. Learner needs, rather than institutional preferences, determine priorities for academic planning, policies, and programs. Acceleration methods and assessment of prior and current learning are used to reduce time to degree. Quality teaching is demanded, recognized, and rewarded.

Academic freedom is the foundation for the transmission and advancement of knowledge. The University vigorously protects freedom of inquiry and expression and categorically expects civility and mutual respect to be practiced in all deliberations.

Diversity is a source of renewal and vitality. The University is committed to developing capacities for living together in a democracy whose hallmark is individual, social, cultural, and intellectual diversity. It fosters a climate and models a condition of openness in which students, faculty, and staff engage multiplicity and difference with tolerance and equity.

Informed and engaged citizens are essential to the creation of a civil and sustainable society. The University values the development of the responsible self-grounded in honesty, courage, and compassion, and committed to advancing democratic ideals. Through service

learning requirements, the University engages students in community involvement with time for formal reflection on their experiences. Integral to the University's philosophy is instilling in students an environmental consciousness that balances their economic and social aspirations with the imperative for ecological sustainability.

Service to Southwest Florida, including access to the University, is a public trust. The University is committed to forging partnerships and being responsive to its region. It strives to make available its knowledge resources, services, and educational offerings at times, places, in forms and by methods that will meet the needs of all its constituents. Access means not only admittance to buildings and programs, but also entrance into the spirit of intellectual and cultural community that the University creates and nourishes.

Technology is a fundamental tool in achieving educational quality, efficiency, and distribution. The University employs information technology in creative, experimental, and practical ways for delivery of instruction, for administrative and information management, and for student access and support. It promotes and provides distance and time free learning. It requires and cultivates technological literacy in its students and employees.

Connected knowing and collaborative learning are basic to being well educated. The University structures interdisciplinary learning experiences throughout the curriculum to endow students with the ability to think in whole systems and to understand the interrelatedness of knowledge across disciplines. Emphasis is placed on the development of teamwork skills through collaborative opportunities. Overall, the University practices the art of collective learning and collaboration in governance, operations, and planning.

Assessment of all functions is necessary for improvement and continual renewal. The University is committed to accounting for its effectiveness through the use of comprehensive and systematic assessment. Tradition is challenged; the status quo is questioned; change is implemented.

Approved by the Deans Council June 18, 1996.