

Strategic Direction Dashboards

Informational Sheet

Contents (Click to jump to section)

[Purpose of Dashboards](#)

[Access to Dashboards](#)

[Dashboard Data](#)

[KPI Principles](#)

[Navigating PowerBI Dashboards](#)

[Definitions of Key Terms](#)

Purpose of Dashboards

The dashboards available via the [Strategic Direction site](#) fall into two categories:

- Those that provide information on the **status** of individual Actions, for both the current and future years.
- Those that provide visualizations of **key performance indicators** (KPIs) measuring the impact of the implementation of the strategic plan. These KPI dashboards are split into two groups: Priority KPIs and Outcome KPIs.
 - **Priority KPIs:** Each Priority has 1-2 KPIs that showcase the best available data points to highlight progress on the 5 priorities of the strategic plan. This dashboard is embedded directly on the Strategic Direction website.
 - **Outcome KPIs:** Each of the 23 Outcomes has 1-6 KPIs that will showcase the best available data points to highlight progress towards outcomes. These dashboards are available on the Strategic Direction SharePoint site, and are only accessible to faculty and staff with GMU single sign-on (SSO) credentials. (*UNDER DEVELOPMENT*)
 - The strategic plan Priorities and Outcomes are listed within the Strategic Direction document on the [strategic plan homepage](#).

Access to Dashboards

The dashboards embedded on the Strategic Direction site (Status and Priority KPI dashboards) are available to faculty and staff once they have logged in to PowerBI with their GMU SSO credentials. Screenshots of these dashboards are available to viewers without GMU SSO credentials.

The Outcome KPI dashboards available on the Strategic Direction SharePoint site (*UNDER DEVELOPMENT*) have different levels of access depending on the underlying data. Faculty and staff with GMU SSO credentials can access the SharePoint site and open the majority of the dashboards once they've signed in to PowerBI. Those dashboards with restricted access are labeled accordingly.

Dashboard Data

The dashboards are populated with data provided to University Business Consulting in consultation with subject matter experts from across the university. The info box on each dashboard screen includes information about the data source, last update date, and update frequency.

KPI Principles

These dashboards were created using the following principles as guidance:

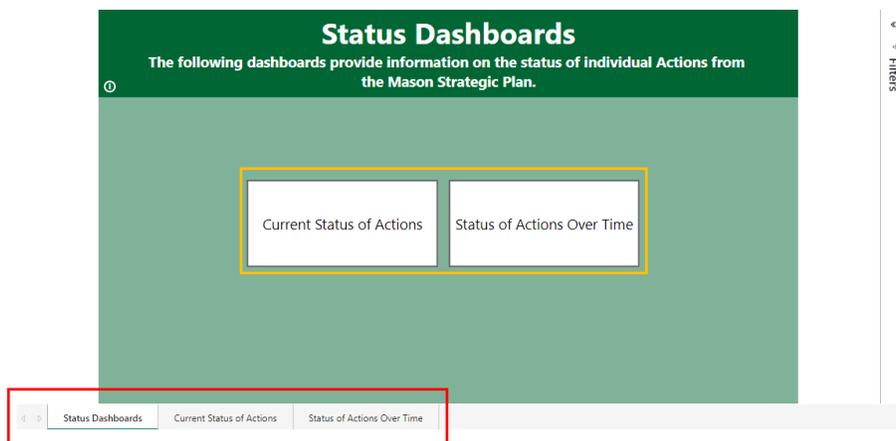
- KPIs should inform Mason's senior leadership where the needle is moving in achieving the strategic plan Priorities and Outcomes.
- These KPIs will evolve. The Phase 1 (current) KPIs are based on data available when the dashboards were first published in summer 2023.
- Where Phase 1 KPIs do not fully measure the Priority or Outcome, Phase 2 KPIs are being defined as aspirational.
- Priority KPIs are at the summary level and will be publicly viewable.
- Outcome KPIs will include both summary and component data, if available.

Navigating PowerBI Dashboards

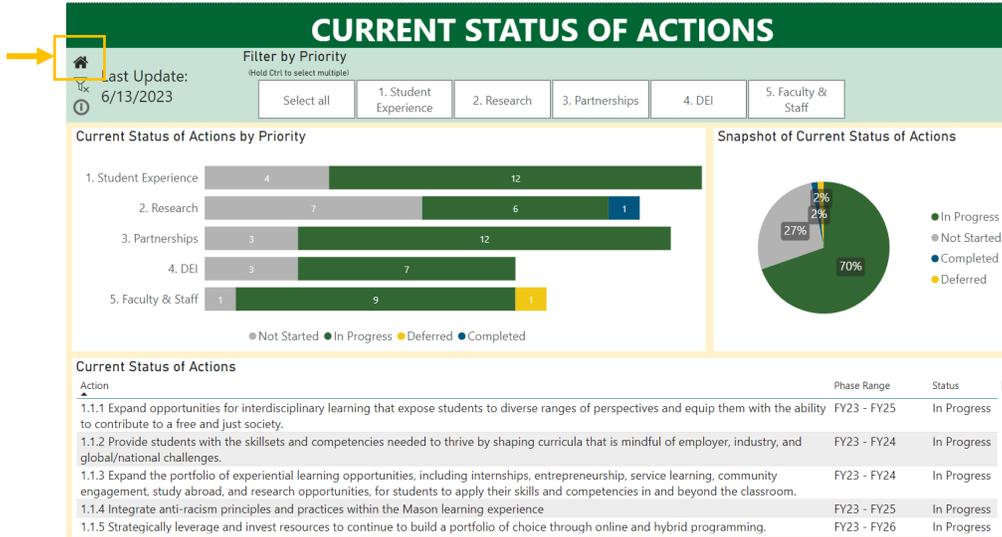
Some key tips for navigating dashboards are included below.

1.) How to navigate between dashboards

Each of the dashboards include multiple tab/screens. Users can navigate between screens by using the buttons on the home screen (outlined in yellow below) or by clicking on the bottom tabs (outlined in red below).



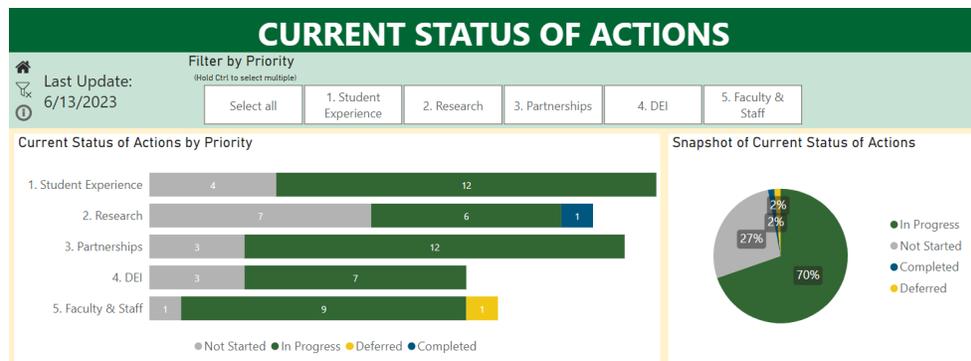
Once you have navigated away from the Home screen, each subsequent screen has a Home icon which can be clicked to return to Home (outlined in yellow below).



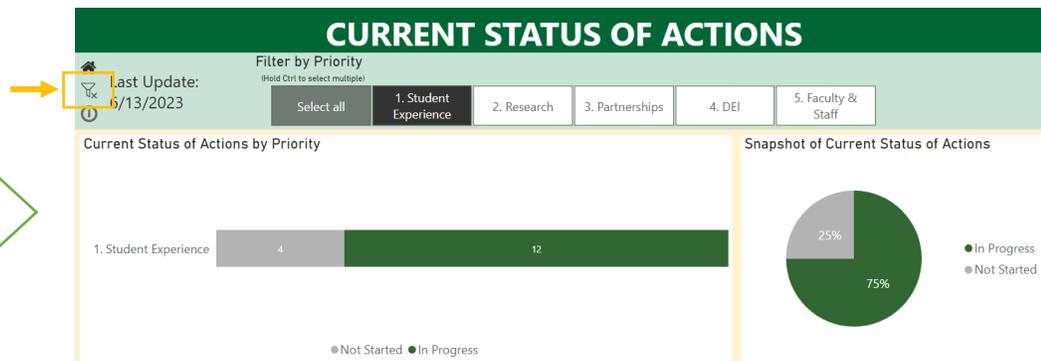
2.) How to add and remove preexisting filters

Many of the dashboards include a filter within the header. To tailor the data shown in the visualizations, you can select one or more (using CTRL + click) of the buttons or items within the dropdown list. The filter will affect some or all of the visualizations on the current screen.

Dashboard before any filters are applied.



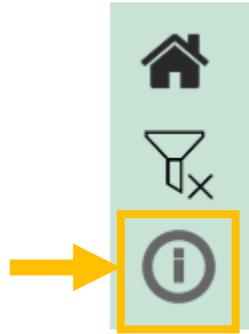
Dashboard after Student Experience filter is applied. Note that visualizations now only show a subset of data.



To deselect filter(s), click again on the selected filter button(s) or item(s) in the dropdown or use the “clear filters” icon (outlined in yellow in image above).

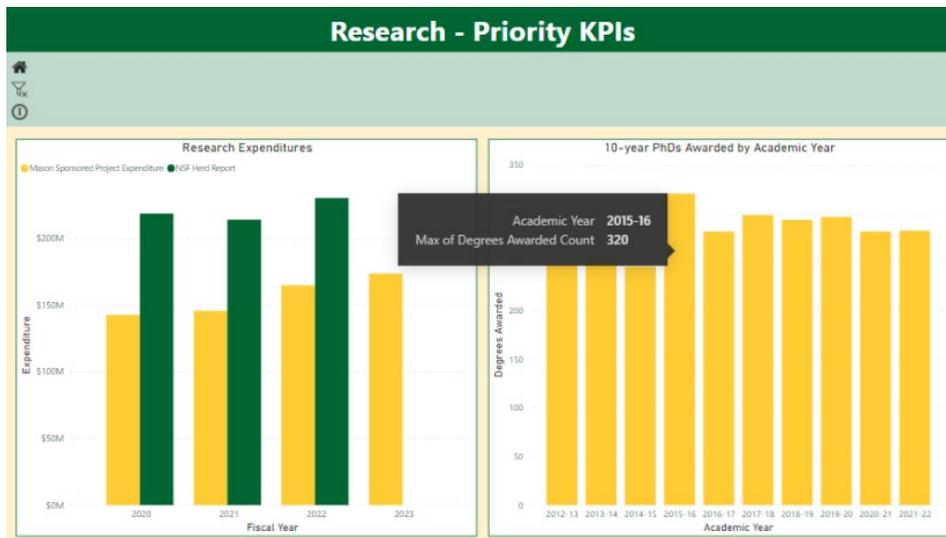
3.) How to access more dashboard information (info icon)

Each dashboard will have a description pop-up box to provide key definitions related to the metric(s), data source(s), a last update date, and update frequency. This info is available when you hover your cursor over the “i” icon (outlined in yellow below).



4.) How to view specific data points

In some visualizations, data points are automatically displayed to users. However, in many visualizations you will need to hover your cursor over a specific point (e.g. an inflection in a line chart, bar in a bar chart, etc.) in order to display the data that is beneath the visual (see example below).



Definitions of Key Terms

Academic Year: A 12-month period defined by an institution for reporting a full year of activity (usually either July 1 through June 30 or September 1 through August 31).

Cohort: The date of a cohort represents the year the students begin their time at Mason.

Fiscal Year: Mason's fiscal year is from July 1 through June 30 of the following year.

Graduation Rate: The percentage of a freshman cohort that graduates in a subsequent number of years.

Key Performance Indicator: A quantifiable measure used to gauge performance over a period of time in regards to a specific desired outcome.

Mason Sponsored Project Expenditures: Includes amounts charged to all externally sponsored awards for research, training, and other sponsored activities.

NSF HERD Report: Methodology is fully documented on the National Science Foundation (NSF) Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) website. The **NSF HERD Survey** is the primary source of information on research and development (R&D) expenditures at U.S. colleges and universities. The survey collects information on R&D expenditures by field of research and source of funds and also gathers information on types of research, expenses, and headcounts of R&D personnel. The survey is an annual census of institutions that expended at least \$150,000 in separately accounted for R&D in the fiscal year.

<https://nces.nsf.gov/surveys/higher-education-research-development/2021#survey-info>

Outcome: The results that will flow out of executing the actions of Mason's strategic plan. Each Priority includes 3-6 Outcomes, for a total of 23. Outcomes are assigned at the Priority level.

Population Type: Refers to the classification of individuals based off their affiliation with the university, such as demographic groups for classified staff, total faculty (including A/P and I/R faculty but not adjunct faculty) and students.

Priority: The Mason strategic plan includes 5 Priorities. Priorities are broad strategic statements that define high-level objectives for the longer term. Priorities align with the vision and mission statements, and either leverage or enhance key sources of value.

Race/Ethnicity: Self-reported race/ethnic identification as reported in a student's college application.

Retention Rate: Percentage of new students who enrolled as of census their first fall term, and returned to Mason the subsequent fall term(s).

Turnover Rate: Turnover rate refers to individuals voluntarily and involuntarily leaving the university during a specific period of time.

Two or More Races: Two or more race/ethnicities. This designation includes two categories: White-Asian (Non-Underrepresented Minorities (URM)) and other Two-or-more races (URM).

Variance: Amount remaining, when subtracting the current total from the goal amount.