

Pathways to Success: Road Map

Pathways to Success: The Pathways to Success program is Ferrum’s framework for guiding students (with their advisors’ assistance) as they seek to accomplish the College’s Hallmarks and Student Learning Outcomes. Through curricular and co-curricular learning experiences, students travel through multiple “Gateways” that represent key developmental milestones along their Pathway to Success.

Gateways: The Gateways along the Pathways to Success provide a milestone-by-milestone map that helps guide student learning and achievement, progressing from the first year through graduation. Students demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways as they progress through the Gateways. Many of their demonstrations of learning are archived in their “ePortfolios.”

ePortfolio: The ePortfolio is an electronic repository for storing artifacts of learning -- e.g., documents, examples, checklists, degree plans. This repository allows students to collect examples of their best work and to demonstrate their progression of learning through various curricular/co-curricular experiences aimed at the Ferrum College Hallmarks and Student Learning Outcomes.

Hallmarks of a Ferrum College Graduate

- Ferrum College graduates are professionally capable individuals who think critically, use creative inquiry, communicate effectively, and apply knowledge drawn from multiple disciplines.
- Ferrum College graduates are ethically, physically, socially, and spiritually engaged citizens of their community, nation and the world who serve others and appreciate diversity.

There are 25 Student Learning Outcomes that cluster into five categories:

- ∞ Communication
- ∞ Creative inquiry and critical thinking
- ∞ Multidisciplinary learning
- ∞ Professional Capability
- ∞ Citizenship

The Pathways to Success Framework

The Pathways to Success Framework serves as a general guide for students that aims them toward demonstrating their accomplishment of key milestones as they progress in their curricular and co-curricular learning from the first year through graduation. There are five Gateways along the Pathway to Success: 1. Connection; 2. Exploration; 3. Integration; 4. Commitment; and 5. Commencement.

I: Connection Gate – Gateway Program

A. Definition: The Connection Gate involves students deciding to matriculate at Ferrum, learning what they can expect of the college and what the college expects of them, becoming aware of the college's student learning outcomes and processes, and getting involved in the curricular and co-curricular life of the college. They connect to the integrative, participatory campus culture. Students are in the Connection Gate by virtue of communications with the college admissions staff, attending PAWS and the Gateway Weekend, and enrolling in the Gateway Seminar. The academic advisor is a student's Gateway Seminar instructor.

B. Possible items to appear in the ePortfolio include:

- Completed Student Learning Plan
- Freshman FFYVE Alive service-learning assignment
- Documentation of campus involvement
- Sample work demonstrating communication, creative inquiry and critical thinking, and multidisciplinary learning
- Sample work demonstrating liberal arts core information competency
- Resume & Reference List

II: Exploration Gate (double doors of Liberal Arts & Major)

A. Definition: Transition to The Exploration Gate occurs primarily during the spring of the first academic year when each student is transferred very likely to a new major or pre-major advisor. The Exploration Gate involves students exploring the early stages of a major or options as a pre-major, career and other life interests, the liberal arts curriculum, and community engagement and service. It is expected that they will move from basic elements of written and/or oral expression to expressing themselves according to the demands of various fields of study and of various forms of knowledge. The new advisor is a student's major or pre-major advisor.

B. Possible items to appear in the ePortfolio include:

- Declaration of major / pre-major
- Updated Resume & Reference List
- Updated writing sample
- Documentation of participation in campus clubs, organizations, events
- Documentation of participation in service learning projects
- Checklist for graduation

III: Integration Gate

A. Definition: Transition to the Integration Gate is less concretely defined than transition from I to II. It may equate with the junior year, but developmental progress may be faster or slower with individual students. The advisor does not change (unless the student changes major or requests a change), but the student's

relationship to the advisor does. The student becomes more academically proactive, perhaps having a class schedule well thought out and prepared upon appearance at pre-registration. Because of inner motivation, students likely will experience both their curricular and co-curricular activities in a deeper, more meaningful way than in the exploration stage. This integration of personal values with knowledge and action enables them to engage in role-modeling in a variety of experiential learning settings.

B. Possible items to appear in the ePortfolio include:

- Degree plan & updated checklist for graduation
- Updated Resume & Reference List
- Updated writing sample
- Written description of a identifiable role in curricular or co-curricular organization
- Reflection piece regarding a service learning activity as it applies to the Liberal Arts or Major
- Documentation of leadership & service learning activities
- Documentation of career exploration activities such as shadowing, internships, interviewing

IV: **Commitment Gate**

A. Definition: Again, there is no concrete transition from III to IV, nor will the timing for each student be the same. At the Commitment Gate, the student has reached a level of self-motivation, ability, and confidence as to become committed to a personally defined range of values, ideas, and communities, perhaps to exercise leadership in these commitments. The student also will have accumulated impressive examples of curricular, co-curricular, and service learning and given evidence of having synthesized these elements with an understanding of community, national, and global citizenship. Their oral and written expression should, therefore, be more compelling than before, with greater pride in clear and correct form as well. Some students may be at the Commitment Gate in some respects when they first matriculate, and some students may not reach this gate at all. Therefore, it may or may not equate with the senior year, but experience suggests that that is when it usually occurs.

B. Possible items to appear in the ePortfolio include:

- Refined degree plan and updated checklist for graduation
- Updated writing samples
- Projects, Senior thesis, Capstone experience, Internship Paper from Major
- Resume, References & Cover Letter
- Evidence of being a role model, mentor, leader, or coordinator in a course, organization, or service learning project
- Showcase (performance, workshop, paper, exhibit, etc.) of a talent or skill related to curricular or co-curricular endeavors

- Documentation of preparation for career & graduate school such as GRE, LSAT, MCAT, College Skills 201, mock interviews, protocol dinner, career fairs, internships, practicum experiences
- Sample work demonstrating information competency in the major

V: Commencement Gate

A. Definition: At Gate V, the Commencement Gate, students begin applying for the first time their full gateways I - IV liberal arts and professional learning in the world outside of the Ferrum campus. Most students will likely enter this gate during their last semester at Ferrum and will continue the process through their transition after graduation to pursuing a career, graduate education, or other life interests. This final gateway is permeable, with the intention being that the student will continue to access the expertise of those who have influenced the student on campus, and continue to share expertise from their own pursuits with the campus. It is hoped that students realize at the Commencement Gate both how much they still have to learn and how fulfilling it would be to share that journey of discovery as alumni with Ferrum students still experiencing the earlier gateways on the Pathway to Success.

B. Possible items to appear in the ePortfolio include:

- Resume reviewed by Career Services Office or other professional in the discipline
- Completion of all requirements for graduation, including artifacts of experiential requirement
- Evidence of civic engagement as demonstrated on the campus, or in the community, nation or world
- Certification for Graduation
- Completed ePortfolio