

College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan 2007-2012

The College of Arts and Sciences is the largest of the five colleges that make up the University of North Florida, whether size is measured by credit delivery, majors, or numbers of faculty. Because it provides instruction in the liberal arts, the intellectual basis upon which rest the applied curricula of the four other professionally-oriented colleges, it also constitutes the core of the university. Instructional responsibilities for the college's 287 faculty members extend from the lower level general education program, through diverse majors for undergraduates, to a growing number of graduate programs. The college consists of fourteen academic departments, and also houses a variety of centers, including a newly established Center for Environmental Studies, as well as pre-law and pre-medical programs.

Mission

The mission of the College of Arts & Sciences is to provide excellent instruction in the liberal arts to its diverse student body at every level of the curriculum; to graduate students who possess the knowledge, values, and skills that are required of an educated and responsible citizenry inhabiting a global, multicultural society; to offer academic programs that are committed to the highest level of quality as evidenced by the active scholarship and research of their faculties; and to contribute to both the immediate and life-long intellectual development and career aspiration of the college's students, faculty, staff, and friends, as well as to the intellectual, economic, social, ethical and cultural needs of the community and region.

We accomplish this mission through five encompassing and mutually informative goals, each characterized by our focused use of resources and our commitment to rigorous and ongoing scrutiny and improvement.

Strategic Plan of the College

Goal 1: The College will recruit academically ready and culturally diverse students, and create opportunities for their success at UNF and after they graduate.

Action 1.1: Review, and revise as appropriate, the General Education curriculum offered by the college. The College will continue to implement and refine an assessment plan for the General Education program to ensure the alignment of the General Education curriculum with the General Education student learning outcomes.

Action 1.2: Foster connections between the liberal arts and applied fields in order to fully realize the relevance of liberal to professional education, especially through programs like writing across the curriculum.

Action 1.3: As relevant, extend and incorporate the general education learning outcomes into major upper-division and capstone courses as consistent with Academic Learning Compacts.

Action 1.4: Improve advising services to all Arts & Sciences students by increasing faculty mentorship, reducing the ratio of students to professional advisors, and increasing student access to advisors, and by implementing the recommendations of the Academic Advising Task Force.

Action 1.5: Expand the range and number of already existing and substantial opportunities for student research, study abroad, and other transformational learning opportunities, as identified in the department strategic plans.

Action 1.6: Promote multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary student learning communities through Freshman Interest Groups, Common Boundary programs, and other interdisciplinary courses and programs.

Action 1.7: Enable faculty to provide innovative individualized attention to students through flexible assignments.

Action 1.8: Work collaboratively with Career Services to foster connections between liberal arts majors and professional careers through internship opportunities and career placement advice.

Action 1.9: Continue to convene the Student Advisory Council to seek perspective on the manner and effectiveness with which it is meeting the needs of its students, particularly with regard to such factors as advising, faculty accessibility, and opportunities for transformational learning.

Goal 2: Advance the scope and quality of academic programs in a manner consistent with the mission and resources of the college.

Action 2.1: Allocate new faculty positions to balance departmental and general education staffing needs to continue moving toward ideal student-faculty ratios with highly qualified full-time professors and instructors. This action must be adopted by Academic Affairs as well as the college if the university is to maintain its distinctive quality.

Action 2.2: Review and revise department majors and minors in response to long-term discipline-specific trends, identified in department strategic plans.

Action 2.3: Develop existing and new undergraduate programs in response to student interest, faculty expertise, and—as feasible—community needs.

Move toward creation of baccalaureate programs in Art History, Communication Studies, Music Education, Religious Studies, and French Studies. Examine the feasibility/advisability of establishing separate BFA degrees in each area of the Fine Arts; a cross-college BS in Interdisciplinary Math and Computing; and a BS in Social Work or Social Welfare.

Action 2.4: Develop existing and new master's programs in response to student interest, faculty expertise, and—as feasible—community needs.

Move toward creation of master's programs in the Fine Arts, Professional Writing, Music, and Spanish. Examine the feasibility/advisability of master's programs in Environmental Management and Material Science (both interdisciplinary, cross-college programs), Biochemistry, Communication Studies, Public Policy, and Anthropology.

Action 2.5: Develop doctoral programs in response to student interest, faculty expertise, and—as feasible—community needs. The Department of Psychology, for example, will investigate the possibility of establishing a doctoral program in an applied aspect of that discipline.

Action 2.6: Consistent with university planning, support development of select programs to flagship candidacy.

Action 2.7: Increase privately raised support to equip new buildings, support faculty development, provide special learning opportunities, supplement existing merit-based scholarships with additional scholarships targeted at high-achieving students, and provide graduate and faculty fellowships. This responsibility primarily falls to the Dean and the Director of Development, with the support of departments, Institutional Advancement, and Academic Affairs.

Action 2.8: Incrementally fund—through E&G, PECO, grants, and private support—modernization of equipment, especially for technology-intensive departments such as art (e.g., art gallery, printmaking facility), biology, chemistry, communications (e.g. television studio), physics, the polling center, and psychology (e.g. animal care facility).

Action 2.9: Continue to implement and refine effective assessment mechanisms across the entire curriculum.

Action 2.10: In accordance with state mandate, refine Academic Learning Compacts and use them to monitor student learning in all college degree programs.

Goal 3: Advance the strengths and scholarly engagement of the faculty.

Action 3.1: Recruit talented faculty (including department chairs) who bring intellectual distinction, add diversity, and demonstrate commitment to the teaching-learning process.

Action 3.2: Increase grant-supported research through seed funding and supporting faculty attendance at grant-writing workshops.

Action 3.3: Provide competitive start-up funds for new faculty, especially in the sciences.

Action 3.4: Provide research course releases for junior faculty in their tenure-earning years: one release during the first year, and another in the year following third-year review.

Action 3.5: Help faculty balance their commitment to the dynamic relationship between teaching and research by fostering flexible scheduling and research releases for exemplary faculty, where possible within programmatic and resource constraints.

Action 3.6: Continue to support and value research, scholarship, and creative endeavors.

Goal 4: Advance community outreach and partnerships.

Action 4.1: Commit College resources to enhancing the intellectual and cultural life of the university and the community, as resources permit.

Action 4.2: Through curriculum development and collaboration with community-based agencies, expand and foster opportunities for students to engage in community-based research, learning and service.

Action 4.3: Foster applied scholarly and service activities in the college's publicly oriented centers, including the University Gallery, the Ethics Center, the Environmental Studies Center, the Center for Community Initiatives, the Florida Center for Public and International Policy, the Center for Race and Juvenile Justice Policy, the Public Opinion Research Lab, and the Center for Research and Consulting in Statistics.

Action 4.4: Expand public awareness of and access to college programs (e.g., lectures, concerts, exhibitions, readings, visiting scholars) through targeted publicity, student recruitment, and enhancement of college web sites.

Action 4.5: Provide excellent professional service that is relevant to the communities the College serves, ranging from national and international professional associations to

student and community organizations which can benefit from the professional expertise of the faculty.

Action 4.6: Continue to work with the Dean's Leadership Council to seek perspective on the manner and effectiveness with which the College is meeting the needs of the community and its external constituencies.

Goal 5: Advance the College's efforts to administer, organize, and govern itself effectively and in an environment of civility and tolerance.

Action 5.1: Identify and assess the most critical administrative processes and develop formal procedures for the improvement of these processes in preparation for SACS reaffirmation.

Action 5.2: Work with the officers of the College Faculty Association to enhance the collegial governance system of the College.

Action 5.3: Convene a meeting of USPS personnel to seek perspective on the manner and effectiveness with which the College is meeting the needs of its employees, and to seek their advice on improving administrative processes.

Action 5.4: Conduct the business of the Dean's office in an environment of civility, tolerance, and collegiality, and foster similar conduct in all offices within the College.