

Strategic Plan: College of Arts and Letters, Old Dominion University: 2009-2014

Vision for 2014

The College of Arts and Letters will be recognized for excellence in scholarly and creative research, dedication to teaching and engagement in the local, national, and global communities.

Mission of the College

The College of Arts and Letters is committed to extending knowledge of the arts, humanities, and social sciences. The College celebrates its students' desire for learning and its faculty's commitment to scholarly and creative research within and across disciplines. It plays a major role in Old Dominion University's evolution as a comprehensive research institution of higher education. Through the myriad accomplishments of its students and faculty, moreover, the College enriches the communities it serves.

The College plays a fundamental role in preparing students for their future lives as engaged and responsible citizens. It cultivates intellectual honesty, ethical behavior and a commitment to justice. The College accomplishes its teaching mission for all of the University's students by:

1. developing the essential skills of critical reading and thinking, of effective oral and written communication, and of technological proficiency;
2. providing core knowledge in the arts, humanities and social sciences for all undergraduates;
3. fostering global awareness and sensitivity to the breadth and diversity of the human condition, including the roles of gender, race, ethnicity, and culture;
4. and supporting a broad array of cultural experiences that deepen their lives and those of the academic and larger community that surrounds them.

For students enrolled in the College's undergraduate majors and graduate programs, the College accomplishes its teaching mission by:

1. offering a diverse range of discipline-based and interdisciplinary programs of study at both the undergraduate and graduate levels that expose students to contemporary scholarly debate and innovation;
2. providing an atmosphere for the free exchange of ideas among faculty and students true to the ideals of academic and intellectual freedom;
3. promoting challenging internship and service learning opportunities, research projects, and collaborative learning experiences that connect students with the community, preparing them for the world of work.

The College is committed to scholarly research in the social sciences and humanities and to creative research in the arts. Its faculty members are nationally and internationally recognized for the excellence of their publications, performances and exhibits. Their scholarly and creative profile enhances the university's burgeoning

reputation as a comprehensive research university. Their dedication to research informs their teaching, ensuring that students are exposed to the most current developments in all of the College's fields.

The College accomplishes its research mission by:

1. recruiting and retaining world-class scholars;
2. supporting innovative research and creativity with the best facilities and funding for these activities; and
3. assuring the faculty's legacy of intellectual excellence and innovation through the training of the next generation of scholars in its graduate programs.

The Process

Broad Strategic Plan Goals were discussed at meetings of the College Council of Chairs and Directors Fall 2008 and draft document was prepared by the Dean on the basis of those discussions. A revised version of the document was placed on the web in January 2009. This draft was discussed at meetings of Chairs and Directors and at College Faculty Advisory Council in January 2009. Chairs and Unit Directors were requested to develop unit plans with faculty. The deadline for sending in unit plans to the Dean's Office was February 18, 2009. Meanwhile, instructions from the Provost on the design of the Strategic Plan were circulated to all units. The Dean also appointed an ad-hoc Committee of six faculty members and administrators to put together the final plan. An Open College Forum to discuss the evolving draft plan was held on Thursday February 5, 2009 between 12-30-1.30 PM in BAL 9024. The forum was attended by about 40 faculty members and the discussion was led by Professor Jeff Richards, member of the ad-hoc committee. Meanwhile, the Dean discussed an early draft of the plan with the External College Advisory Council on February 11, 2009. Once the unit plans were received in the Dean's Office, the ad-hoc committee met five times to put together the final plan. The plan was then discussed at a meeting of Chairs and Directors on March 4 and circulated to the faculty on March 5 before the report was finalized on March 6, 2009. While the current economic environment made us look carefully at our plans and adjust timelines for implementation, we agreed that our strategic plan needs to reflect our hopes and aspirations, albeit tempered by reality.

SWOT Analysis

Some of the discussion in the units and in the college was devoted to a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. We also reflected on the achievements under the last Strategic Plan. Such achievements included setting up two new doctoral programs, the establishing new undergraduate majors in Asian Studies and African and African American Studies, developing a major in Work and Professional Studies at the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center, increasing endowed Professorships in the college with the appointment of the Diehn Professor of Music, the establishing new journals in the college including the *Journal of Race and Policy* and the student journal *International Topics*, completing the renovation of the Batten Arts and Letters building, and finally, the planning for a new Art Department building and of extensions to the Diehn Fine and Performing Arts building.

Strengths

The SWOT analysis of the college and its units identified a number of strengths. They included the quality and productivity of faculty members in terms of research. In 2008 alone Arts and Letters faculty published 15 books including three edited works and a translated book. The latest Annual Research Report (2007-08) noted that faculty in the college published 17 book chapters and 24 articles in that academic year, won 13 awards and were officially involved in 20 journals. It also lists 77 performances, exhibitions, and creative works for which college faculty were responsible. Awards won by faculty in the past year alone include the Chevalier d'Égion d'Honneur conferred by the Republic of France, two ASCAP Awards, the Library of Virginia Literary Award for Fiction, the Critical Criminologist of the Year Award of the American Society of Criminology, the Ernest Sandeen Prize for Poetry, the Gilbert Grosvenor Honors for Geographic Education and a Fellowship from the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Study. Faculty members in the college are known for their excellence in teaching, and this year, when Larry Hatab won the SCHEV Award, he became 11th of 24 ODU SCHEV winners to come from the College of Arts and Letters. Interdisciplinary activities and teaching (both within departments and between departments), community and civic engagement, undergraduate research, collegiality within the college, and a commitment to cross-cultural understanding were also mentioned as strengths

Weaknesses

The use of so many part-time adjunct faculty (needing more supervision and training) was seen as a pivotal weakness. It has severe implications across the curriculum and affects departmental effectiveness. The lack of adequate resources to hire and retain faculty (salaries, work load, research money) was seen as a factor contributing to the burnout of the faculty who work in the college. The lack of support staff and of graduate program support in the context of a 360% rise in doctoral FTEs between 2003 and 2007 was clearly stated. Indeed, despite the University's stated commitment to increasing attention to programs in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, it is clear that graduate education in Arts and Letters is undeveloped in comparison to the rest of the university. In 2007-08 for instance, 16.3% of FTEs in the university were in graduate courses but in Arts and Letters the proportion was 3.5% despite the availability of outstanding faculty and demand in key areas. This was seen as a result of continued marginalization of the college in graduate education. Funding is inadequate for the increasingly expensive technology for several programs such as Art, Communication, English, Film, Foreign Languages, Geography, Music, Sociology and Criminal Justice. A faculty teachload higher than that in several other colleges and comparable universities was seen as a major weakness. It was felt that there should be more emphasis on writing across and within the disciplines and that meeting the needs of distance students required more resources and direction. Assistance for faculty in the applications of technology in the teaching requires more efficient methods of delivery including the identification of resource personnel who are immediately accessible. It was felt that inadequate resources made it difficult to recruit good students (both undergraduate and graduate) and that the web design and the web presence of the college left much to be desired. More mentoring of

faculty and better advising of students were also seen as critical issues which the College needs to attend to.

Opportunities

In terms of opportunities, we reflected on the fact that the College of Arts and Letters grew much faster than the university as a whole. For instance from 2003/4 to 2007/8 the university grew by 11.4% in terms of FTEs. The College of Arts and Letters grew by 18.4% during the same period. This is not simply because of General Education offerings. The number of majors in the College rose by 29.1% between Fall 2003 and Fall 2007 from 3780 to 4884. In Fall 2008, the major headcount rose to 5347 which was a 9.5% rise in one year. These statistics demonstrate the increasing demand for programs and opportunities but they can also become a threat to the integrity of those programs and the college's ability to meet its commitments if resources are inadequate to meet the demand.

Despite this, we see some targeted opportunities for growth. The FTEs of doctoral students have risen sharply during this period but the numbers in the Master's programs which were steady 2003 to 2007, fell in 2008 (There was an overall decline of enrollments at this level in the university during the entire period). This represents an opportunity to recruit more students in selected areas at the Master's level. At the undergraduate level there appear to be opportunities for collaboration across programs including joint appointments across department boundaries. Establishing partnerships with institutions outside the university and with other colleges, seeking more external funding and exploring new opportunities in distance learning were also seen as desirable. The enhancement and systematization of mentoring programs to encourage student persistence and to enhance faculty retention were also suggested.

Threats

The major threats that were identified included the development of a presence in Hampton Roads of regional and national universities, distance programs offered by other universities, and increased and better funded competition, particularly at the graduate level, from other major state funded universities in Virginia. The loss of good faculty (due to salaries and teach-load), challenges to the quality of instruction due to continued growth in the use of part time faculty and the lack of office, laboratory, mediated classroom and storage space were also seen as threats. There was some concern that a continuing focus of the University's limited resources on areas that attract external research funds undermines the fundamental commitment to education and collaboration across the disciplines.

Major Goals (2009-2014)

The college has the following goals:

- 1) To enhance our capacity for scholarly and creative research
- 2) To enhance undergraduate education, to encourage interdisciplinary linkages and to enable sharing of resources across programs and colleges
- 3) To enhance graduate education
- 4) To find productive ways to engage faculty, staff, and students with local, national, and global communities

College Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: To enhance our capacity for scholarly and creative research

Objective a. Provide infrastructural support for research and scholarly creativity

Strategy 1a.1: Establishment of a China Center

The college, working with the College of Health Sciences, the College of Education and the College of Business and Public Administration will initiate the establishment of a university-wide China Center to ensure the optimum utilization of Old Dominion University's resources in realizing China-related opportunities. This center will enhance, support and coordinate existing China-related programs in the colleges and at the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center. Utilizing the collective expertise developed through the center, it will also cultivate new opportunities at minimal cost in areas including cultural understanding, education, health, and economic and business cooperation. (Fundraising will begin locally in 2009. At the same time, Arts and Letters and Education will seek funding from China to establish a Confucius Institute. The target date for setting up Confucius Institute is 2010. Matching funding from university up to \$35,000 for salary and benefits of a Lecturer in Chinese requested by 2011; A full fledged China Center will require \$10 million in endowment; Target date for China Center 2012.)

Strategy 1a.2: Collaboration through the Consortium for Maritime Research

The College of Arts and Letters will continue to foster ties with the Colleges of Sciences and College of Business and Public Administration in the Consortium for Maritime Research, an intercollegiate initiative that seeks to facilitate research and teaching in all areas related to marine and maritime studies at ODU and in the Hampton Roads Region. Over the next five years, the College will expand interdisciplinary academic programs with specific emphasis on the GEOIDS initiative linking the Geography and History programs with Oceanography in the area of geo-spatial relations. The College will also support interdisciplinary work on grants and seek to increase collaborative work through the co-sponsorship of transdisciplinary conferences, beginning with the North Atlantic Fisheries History Association Conference in August 2009. (Timeline- Intercollegiate collaboration already in place; Grant writing will commence in 2010; By 2012 funding will be needed for release time for Director of CMR and one position in Arts and Letters.)

Strategy 1a.3: Provide new leadership to the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) by placing it under the direction of a scholar with a record of success in winning grants.

It is anticipated that this would strengthen the links between the SSRC and the faculty in the college, stimulate the building of research teams, facilitate more grant writing and strengthen the Center's collaboration with other institutes and colleges. (Timeline: mid 2009, Cost: Annual Release from two courses – Funding for this has been secured from the Office of Research. No other funding is requested.)

Strategy 1a.4: Continue collaboration with VMASC and entities such as the Civil-Military Fusion Centre located in the University Research Building

The College of Arts and Letters currently has one faculty member funded by soft money from VMASC and has assigned to VMASC for a limited period of time. In the next few years the college will expand its collaboration with VMASC and seek to build connections with the Civil-Military Fusion Center that has moved into the main campus in 2009. (Timeline- doubling of grant proposals with VMASC by 2011 and establishment of graduate internships with the Center by 2010.)

Objective b. Ensure continuing faculty development

Strategy 1b.1: Revision of Faculty Teachload Policies

The College of Arts and Letters celebrates teaching excellence. Faculty members are proud of their pedagogical skills. On the other hand, tenure track and tenured faculty have a 3-3 teachload (with extra courses off for supervision of theses and dissertations) and this has implications on both teaching quality and research productivity (those teaching in doctoral programs have a 3-2 teachload). While it is not possible to change workload policy immediately due to economic factors, it is recommended that a) teachload should be specifically recognized in university evaluation of research/creativity for tenure, promotion and awards and b) the college should be provided the resources to move to a 2-2 teachload for those teaching in doctoral programs (after removing reductions for theses and dissertation supervision) and a 3-2 teachload for others. Lecturers will remain on a 4-4 teachload (with exceptions for those on 12 month contracts). Timeline-specific recognition of teachload in university evaluation of research and creativity 2010; change of teachload policy for doctoral programs 2011-12 Cost \$70,000 in base funds; Change for other faculty 2012-13- Cost \$200,000.)

Strategy 1b.2: Increase the number of named professorships

The College will concentrate in 2009-10 on raising funds for an endowed Chair in Jewish Studies (about 65% of required funds have been secured). Enhanced funding for the Mina Hohenberg Chair in English and the Dragas Chair in International Studies as well as other positions will be pursued 2011-2014. (Timeline: Jewish Studies Endowed Chair to be filled by 2011.)

Strategy 1b.3: Increase the travel assistance available to faculty presenting papers at conferences and national/international meetings.

The current level of funding provides less than \$300 per year for a full time faculty member. This amount will be increased by 50% by 2010-2011 in two stages and increased further as resources permit 2011-2014. (Cost: Met through internal reallocation of funds and increased IDC from grants and reallocation of university resources.)

Strategy 1b.4: Continue and enhance college summer fellowships.

The College has awarded four to five summer scholarships a year (each worth \$5000) to support faculty research. This activity (funded through soft money) will be continued and expanded as resources permit.

Strategy 1b.5: Bring national and international conferences and symposia to campus. Conferences on campus provide an opportunity for faculty and students to interact with scholars in the field, bring prestige to the institution and promote connections. In the next year the college will host the North Atlantic Fisheries History Conference and the 7th International Symposium of the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures. The College will take the lead in organizing the annual ACT-ODU Conference held annually in spring. The Spring Graduate Student Conference at ODU completed its seventh year in spring 2009.

Goal 2: To enhance undergraduate education, to encourage interdisciplinary linkages and to enable sharing of resources across programs and colleges

Objective a. Expand and refine the undergraduate curriculum

Strategy 2a.1: Increase opportunities for undergraduate research through participating in undergraduate research presentations and encouragement of partnering with faculty in research. The college currently rewards faculty who co-present or co-publish with students by giving both students and faculty extra travel funds. (This will be continued through the use of soft money. No extra funds requested immediately but it is recommended that the university should inquire into the availability and enhancement of travel support in 2010-2011.)

Strategy 2a.2: New Undergraduate Programs

Having investigated the demand for new programs of study that are in demand and do not require extensive new faculty resources the college will implement (pending final approval) the following programs:

- a. *Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies-Teacher Preparation with Licensure in Special Education with Highly Qualified Designation in Elementary Education and*
 - b. *Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies-Teacher Preparation with Licensure in Special Education with Highly Qualified Designation in Secondary English.*
- These two BS degrees with licensure programs in special education pose unique opportunities to market the program to both external and internal constituencies and to increase special education enrollments to meet the dire need for well-trained special education teachers in the Commonwealth of Virginia and elsewhere. The first of these programs will be offered through distance education and have the potential to increase enrollments dramatically during the period of the Strategic Plan (Timeline-implementation of programs in 2009-10; extra faculty needed when the enrollments rise.)
- c. *Major in Music Technology*

This is an area of increasing demand and Old Dominion University has the potential to be a leader in the field but it needs another faculty position and continued funding for equipment and software. (Target date 2012; Needs one additional full-time tenure track position.)

- d. *Expand Geographic Information System Certificate Programs & collaborate with Remote Sensing Certificate Programs in other Colleges*

These are programs that have revenue potential but need the provision of adequate GIS labs. Collaboration across colleges could reduce costs. (Target date 2010)

Strategy 2a.3: Improved Advising

The College of Arts and Letters will create a culture of advising that emphasizes advising excellence. Improved advising could yield benefits that are more than commensurate with costs. In the next few years the college will work with the university to

- a) provide direction to faculty and professional advisers to make optimum use of DegreeWorks, the new degree audit system
- b) develop rewards for good advising
- c) provide a stipend for ten month contract faculty who are Chief Department Advisors or are doing summer advising (Cost approx. \$30,000)

Strategy 2a.4: Work with the Office of Distance Learning and the Center for Learning Technology (CLT) to explore, implement, and assess new ways of teaching and learning

The College of Arts and Letters has collaborated with Distance Learning to provide distance learning programs including a successful undergraduate program in Criminal Justice and doctoral program in English.

It will collaborate with the other colleges in seeking appropriate technologies to serve distance students better and to provide incentives for faculty who work in this area.

The College will work with CLT to provide resources and support for faculty developing on-line and hybrid courses. (Timeline 2009-14)

Strategy 2a.5: Encourage students to take advantage of BA/MA accelerated programs

The College of Arts and Letters has a number of programs that enable students to complete a BA and an MA or a BA and an MBA in five years. In 2010 we will begin to publicize these opportunities in cooperation with the Office of Admissions and University College.

Strategy 2a.6: Writing within and across disciplines

A collective effort is needed to teach our students to write well. The College proposes that academic departments identify specific writing skills needed in the major and integrate such skills in specific courses. (Timeline for implementation 2009-2011)

Strategy 2a.7: Encouragement of collaboration across departments and units in the college including the further development of cross-listed courses and having more joint appointments

The College Curriculum committee and college units will be charged with examining existing or potential curricular offerings to identify interdisciplinary connections. This information could be used in maximizing resources and in developing faculty lines for joint appointments. (Timeline 2009-2010)

Objective b. Provide the students with a richer and more challenging experience

Strategy 2b.1: Secure additional tenure track positions commensurate with the growth of the college.

Despite the phenomenal growth in student enrolments (18.4%) and of majors (29.1%) in the College of Arts and Letters between 2003 and 2007, the number of tenure track faculty has risen only by 5% (from 121 to 127) during this period. This imbalance in the allocation of resources needs to be rectified when funding becomes available. (Target date 2013-14)

Strategy 2b.2: Increase Study Abroad, Service Learning, and Honors opportunities.

Continue funding support from the college for study abroad scholarships, encourage development of service learning courses (such as the annual service learning study-abroad experience in South Africa) and promote departmental honors, honors and capstone courses in majors, and senior theses. (The College will seek to raise funds to endow study abroad and service learning scholarships so that it has two additional awards each year 2011-2014.)

Strategy 2b.3: Encourage alumni connections with students

The College already has programs using funding from the Alumni Association in the Departments of English, Communication and Theatre Arts, History and the Filipino American Center. We expect to continue and enhance such efforts under the leadership of the Dean's External Advisory Council. (Timeline 2009-14)

Goal 3. To enhance graduate education

Objective a: To gain national recognition and increased visibility for existing graduate programs.

Strategy 3a.1: Ensuring adequate support of students in competitive programs through assistantships and travel funds for graduate students.

Currently the College is underfunded in terms of numbers and the monetary value of graduate assistantships. It needs to move towards a minimum of \$15,000 for assistantships in terminal degree programs and a minimum of \$10,000 in Master's programs to attract students of quality. At least one new research assistantship will be funded through grants by 2010. The College proposes a periodic review of university funding for graduate assistantships to ensure equitable distribution of funds. Within the college, the Dean will review the allocation of such funding to ensure optimum use. Existing travel support from the Dean's Office will be continued and increased by 2012, if resources permit.

Strategy 3a.2: Provide support from the Dean's Office and other units of the university to revise web pages and support publication of brochures and other material to support recruitment

Publicity is crucial for recruitment of good quality graduate students, helps in their placement and enhances the reputation of the university. The College will work to

enhance its efficiency in using resources and work with other units in the university in this area. (Action to begin in 2009 and continue until 2014)

Strategy 3a.3: Develop viable and creative graduate student organizations

The creation of a cohesive sense of community among graduate students in College is crucial to making it attractive to potential students. In 2009-10 the College will work towards establishing a society for all graduate students in the college. Students in International Studies publish a graduate student journal (called *International Topics*). Other students will be encouraged to produce or collaborate in graduate research publications.

Objective b. Develop new graduate programs

Strategy 3b.1: Develop selected new Master's Degree programs which are in high demand.

First in the priority list for the college is a new Master's Degree in Communication for which a proposal has been submitted. With a large undergraduate enrollment (over 600 majors) and a productive faculty this program could be launched in Fall 2010 if approved by SCHEV. (Additional cost in first year approx. \$45,000; Revenue with 15 students in the first year approx. \$95,000) Other proposals that are under consideration include a Master's Degree in Political Science (Implementation in 2011-12). By 2014, the College will explore the viability of Master's Programs in Music Performance and in Fine Arts.

Strategy 3b.2: Continue working on proposals for doctoral programs that are viable but are deferred due to financial constraints

These include the inter-collegiate proposal for a doctorate in Digital Media and a proposal for a PhD in History. Timeline -It is suggested that the Office of Graduate Studies should provide feedback on the proposed programs and that their viability should be reassessed annually

Goal 4: To find productive ways to engage faculty, staff, and students with local, national, and global communities

Objective a: Ensure a high quality diverse community in the college

Strategy 4a.1: Promote diversity-oriented approaches in searches at all levels, including representation of minorities on search committees

The College views securing diversity as an integral part of ensuring the highest quality of recruitment of faculty and staff and will thus ensure maximum inclusiveness in drafting position descriptions, encouraging applications and the representation of women and minorities on search committees. (Timeline- Immediate Action)

Strategy 4a.2: Sustain a supportive work-life environment and family-friendly policies within the context of university regulations

In consultation with Human Resources, the College will continue to support partner hires and adjust working conditions where appropriate to facilitate care of the elderly and the sick and child rearing by college employees. (No extra funding requested by the College.)

Strategy 4a.3: Continue to support departments and programs that foster knowledge of the diversity of human experience

The College of Arts and Letters will continue to support departments and programs such as Women's Studies, Asian Studies, African and African American Studies, Latin American Studies and European Studies. It will continue to sponsor the Filipino American Center, the Institute for Jewish Studies and Interfaith Understanding, and play a major role in initiatives such as Africa@ODU and Tidewater Voices. (No extra costs anticipated)

Objective b: Promote the arts and links with the community

Strategy 4b.1: Promote Aesthetic and Cultural Engagement

Promoting the arts and an intellectual life is an integral part of the function of the College of Arts and Letters. ODU's Diehn Concert Series and the Baron and Ellin Gordon Galleries maintain strong bonds with music and art departments. The student performances by theatre and dance programs and the ensemble performances in music, the art exhibited by students and the films produced by undergraduates reflect a high level of aesthetic engagement by a large number of students. The annual Literary Festival and the ONFilm Festival provide excellent opportunities to the campus community. Our aim in the next five years is to sustain the level of excellence and enhance the level of participation. This will be done through fundraising to enhance the endowments connected with arts activities by \$2 million 2009-2014, by developing a more dynamic web presence by 2010, by more interdisciplinary activity between music, dance and theater (2010-2011) and by integrating images of art in the Gordon collection into the image database of the art department (2010).

Strategy 4b.2: Develop Links with the community

The following new activities are envisaged:

- a) The development of a docent program for the Gordon Galleries (2010 if endowment revenues permit)
- b) Evolution of new programs based on the example of 'Writers in Community' and the extension programs in Jewish Studies

Existing connections such as those built by Institute of Ethics & Public Affairs with business organizations, the Institute of Community Justice's connections with community groups and international organizations and Women's Studies links with community groups working with women and girls will be fostered. The college will also work with organizations such as NATO to develop links with the military.

Strategy 4b.3: Forge Links with Local Schools

The College will further develop the Model UN Conference that links Old Dominion University with schools in Virginia. An educational program in the Gordon Galleries for children in the community will be implemented in stages 2010-2012. This will build on

work done in collaboration with the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center. The Theatre program will explore possible links with schools in 2010.

Periodic Assessment of Progress

Every year Department Chairs and Program Directors of the College of Arts and Letters will produce a brief report to the Dean highlighting contributions to the strategic plan and other significant achievements. The Dean will in turn produce a written report that summarizes these achievements annually to be distributed to the College.

March 6, 2009