

College of Liberal Arts: Sesquicentennial Statement

In the sesquicentennial year of SIUC, the College of Liberal Arts will be known for the strength of its contributions to undergraduate education. Majors programs will produce graduates prepared for a workplace that increasingly recognizes the need for the intellectual capacities fostered by a liberal arts education; for a civic life that requires a broadly informed, critically thoughtful citizenry; and for further study at highly competitive graduate schools

Increased funding for scholarships, many underwritten by alumni, will attract and support highly qualified students; increased attention to effective teaching will maintain a faculty engaged in the art and science of teaching; programs (such as undergraduate research efforts, peer mentoring, internships and externships) that augment students' success will exist in every department and in the college at large; a strong advisory board, an extensive online Alumni Network, and yearly Alumni Recognition and Liberal Arts Futures Events will have intensified the connection between the college's academic mission and students' professional aspirations and objectives. The simple ethos of intellectual striving and hard work will have been inculcated in all undergraduate courses and will have informed the freshman year academic induction program, which will be a model first year experience.

At the same time, the College will be increasingly well known for the high quality of its doctoral programs and its MFA, MM, MA and MS programs, and it will be an exemplar of the value of a strong research and graduate effort to undergraduate education.

The College will be distinguished for the comprehensiveness and rigor of its contributions to an intellectually vigorous Honors Program and to a vital Core Curriculum that rounds out the education of all SIUC students. With the College of Science, it will have been successful in its bid to shelter a Phi Beta Kappa chapter.

The College will be known for a faculty and a student body that reflects the human and ethnic diversity and intellectual pluralism of the nation. Its curricula in the study of race and gender, in ethnic and cultural studies, and its programs for Inclusiveness in the Arts and Diversity in Public Service will be mature and meaningful components of the life of the college. It will maintain contributions to the international context of education in the 21st century through offerings in the Foreign Languages; Foreign Language and International Trade, the Center for English as a second language; strong curricula and research in Political Science, Economics, and History, and its graduate program in Teaching English as a Second Language.

In addition to its generally sound reputation, CoLA will be known for particular excellences. Anthropology will be one of the well-known four-field programs for both graduates and undergraduates, and its graduate program in archaeology will be among the top five in the country, with at least two of its faculty inducted into the National Academy of Sciences. Psychology will continue to be highly respected for its accredited programs in clinical and counseling psychology; with its strength in other areas, particularly Brain and Cognitive Psychology, the department will continue to attract graduate students to its programs and NSF and NIH funding. The Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency, and Corrections will be reputed both for the efficacy of its preparation of large numbers of undergraduates for professional work and for the strength of its funded research and scholarly publication on issues of pressing social and political import. The Department of Geography will have reaped the benefits of jettisoning its separate PhD program to participate in the trans-college Environmental Resources and Policy doctoral program and will have enhanced its already strong international reputation in Water Resources. The Department of Economics, having built upon the renewed research and scholarly strengths of the past two years, will have improved its already strong ranking for the publications of its faculty and will have regained its former reputation as a strong program. The Project for Diversity in Public Service will enrich all of the participating social science departments and will equip many students to join the already significant numbers of alumni who have entered public and political life. Sociology, Political Science, Crime Studies, Speech Communication and BAS lead this effort.

Fine arts programs, enriched by the strong liberal arts context, will be among the best in the Midwest, with the visual arts and fine crafts maintaining the excellent reputations they already enjoy and the performing programs enhanced by new facilities for the School of Music and by the alliances among Music, Theater, and the Performance Studies program in Speech Communication.

Distinguished programs in the humanities will include American philosophy, creative writing, and history. The Department of Philosophy, maintaining essential grounding in classical, continental, Eastern, and analytical philosophy, will emphasize study and research in American Pragmatism and leverage ever more effectively its relationship with the distinguished Dewey Center, by 2019, an endowed, named center known throughout the world. Similarly, the Department of English will continue to provide a broad curriculum, but will foster the long successes it has had in the teaching and publishing of creative writing. The research and scholarship which has marked the renewal of the Department of History will be by 2019 a well-established tradition, bringing the department national prominence.

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Mission

In many ways the mission of the college is inextricable from the vision already set forth above. The mission statement in the College of Liberal Arts Operating Paper details three broad commitments:

a commitment to undergraduate instruction in the humanities, social sciences, and visual and performing arts that fosters life-long learning, effective communication, and the liberation of the mind from narrow and stereotypical thinking linked to a commitment to rigorous graduate training in the ten doctoral programs, the MFA, MM and MA and MS programs.

a commitment to scholarship, research, and creative work of the faculty that promotes opportunities for engaging students in such work;

a commitment to serve the university, the state of Illinois, and the academy by means of its participation in the Core Curriculum and the Honors Program; by means of its maintenance of an accredited museum; strong research centers; collaborative programs such as Foreign Language and International Trade; and special programs such as Center for English as a Second Language Black American Studies and Paralegal Studies; and by means of its support for faculty and student involvement in the disciplines and such disciplinary service as office holding, conferences, and journal editing.

Context and Challenges

The primary challenges--to maintain our strengths, to improve all programs, to recruit and retain stellar faculty--derive in large part from the fiscal context of the college. One major challenge, to improve the retention and persistence to degree of undergraduates is only partly tied to our budgetary situation (culture, location, social factors are involved.) Increasing research productivity is a challenge we intend to meet.

The college itself offers positive contextualization of its vision and a vigorous response to its challenges.

Of the 16 University Distinguished Scholars, 10 have come from the College of Liberal Arts; of the 11 University Distinguished Teachers, 7 have come from CoLA; of the 11 Dissertation Award winners, 9 have come from CoLA; of the 40 Kaplan Scientific Research Award winners, 11 have come from CoLA, even though only a few of its departments incorporate hard sciences. CoLA faculty and graduate assistants **regularly win the Core Curriculum teaching awards.** The college has produced an average of 45 doctoral and more than 150 master's degree yearly.

The Departments of Anthropology and Psychology have the highest NRC ratings of any doctoral programs on the campus, and *Lingua Franca*, a journal covering academic issues, recently listed the graduate program in archaeology among the top ten programs in the country.

Geography has been chosen as one of three universities (Johns Hopkins and Washington State University the other two) to offer a specialized MA in Geography with an emphasis in Water Resources Management for the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Center for Study of Crime mounts a very successful yearly career fair which connects students with employing agencies and has an external gift that links the fair to a research conference of growing importance. Economics has successfully filled the Vandever Chair. The Center for Second Language Study serves international students and recruits more than 150 students each year to full-time enrollment in SIUC programs. Sociology has recently hired 4 established or promising scholar/researchers and Political Science has hired 5 young scholars. Both units reflect that restitution of faculty strength in increased productivity and improved graduation rates and placements of doctoral students.

All fine arts programs and the University Museum are accredited; the School of Art and Design is rated among the top 35 of the 180 MFA programs in the United States; the new building for the School of Music will enhance every aspect of that program; Theater's collaborative PhD with Speech Communication has recently been accepted for inclusion in the NAST Directory of Accredited Doctoral Programs in Theater; the Performance Studies Program in Speech Communication is known for its early leadership in the field and for the venue of the Marion Klein Theater and has been cited as one of the strong programs by several disciplinary research reports. CoLA has had prestigious creative writers since the days of John Gardner, and the current MacArthur and Whiting fellows; prolific award winning writers, and the enduring stature of the Crab Orchard Review and the Crab Orchard Poetry Series confer national prominence on the program.

The college's program in Paralegal Studies is the only accredited, four-year degree program in the state, attracting students of high competence and producing graduates who are increasingly in demand.

The research centers allied with Geography, Philosophy, and Anthropology have national and international profiles and command attention for their research outcomes. **For the past six years the Department of Political Science has mounted a summer Fulbright American Studies Institute for up to twenty scholars from all over the world, has maintained federally supported research and training programs for the Russian Academy of Government Service, and has sent scholars out and received scholars from all over the world.**

The college has met the challenges of an eroding budget by strategic allocations of its funds and it continues to look for intra- and inter-college collaborations for effective research and program delivery.

Priorities

1. Recovery of needed faculty lines; funds to hire very fine scholars to bolster distinguished programs, to allow florescence to programs of recently demonstrated potential, and to strengthen essential programs weakened through loss of faculty.
2. Funds that would allow recruitment of outstanding mid-career faculty in targeted programs.
3. Enhanced funding for graduate stipends and undergraduate scholarships;
4. Increased funded research as well as increased publication, exhibition, and performance and increased possibilities for involving undergraduates in research.
5. Funds that allow strengthening of those programs critical to Phi Beta Kappa status.
6. A new facility for the School of Art and Design; renovations to Faner and Life Sciences; added space for Theater; replacement of the Center for Archaeological Investigation barracks.
7. Funds that allow both faculty and students appropriate technological hardware and software.
8. Funding (internal or extramural) that will promote the success of the Project for Diversity in Public Service and the Coalition for Inclusiveness in the Arts and the creation of BFA program in Musical Theater, a link to the coalition.
9. Funding for named professorships, named research chairs, named teaching chairs, and "folding chairs" for distinguished visiting scholars.
10. Joy in our every aspect of our work, communicated in multiple ways to our students, their parents, our alumni, and the citizens of this state.

Summary

The College of Liberal Arts takes pride and pleasure in its strengths, recognizes its weaknesses, works to be responsive to the changing needs of a changing society, and strives to fulfill ever more adequately all aspects of its mission.