

College of Arts and Sciences

A Destination of Choice; A Choice of Destiny

Strategic Plan

2017-2022



College of Arts and Sciences

LAMAR UNIVERSITY

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™

Mission Statement

The College of Arts and Sciences is the vital nucleus of Lamar University. Our mission is to promote, advocate, and educate across the broad spectrum of the humanities, natural sciences, technologies, mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences. We dedicate ourselves to developing students that are knowledgeable, highly skilled and fully prepared for life and careers in an interconnected, 21st century, world. We encourage the quest for knowledge through research and creative endeavors, and participation in local, national, international, and multicultural activities. We strive to provide a cost-effective learning and working environment that stimulates individual growth and delivers career opportunities by strongly investing in personal interactions between faculty and student.

Who We Are

The College of Arts and Sciences includes some 220 faculty, 100 staff members and houses approximately 5,000 majors. The College is comprised of twelve academic departments, many of which offer multiple programs and disciplines that offer our students a combined thirty-four undergraduate and graduate degree choices. In addition, the College includes a variety of interdisciplinary, pre-professional, and teacher preparation programs that cross educational boundaries. In all, the College teaches more than 150,000 credit hours yearly. While providing a majority of the courses included within the university's Core Curriculum, the College likewise offers hundreds of specialized courses to support its baccalaureate and graduate degree programs. Despite its breadth and diversity, the College collectively involves students in an academic experience of the highest quality based on the following principles:

- To provide an outstanding learning environment wherein all students may refine the knowledge and skills essential to cultivate their ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and advance their appreciation of artistic and scientific inquiry.
- To provide a contemporary education through the integration of information technology into the study of disciplines traditionally associated with the arts and sciences.
- To stress the importance of lifelong learning through community outreach, service, industry collaborations, research and creative endeavors.

At the heart of the College lie faculty nationally recognized for their vibrant programs of research, scholarship and creative activities. Foremost, however, they are exemplary teachers who foster intellectual growth and maturity at all levels of instruction, ranging from incoming first-generation freshmen to highly talented and highly motivated graduate students. The College faculty ensure that Lamar graduates are fully prepared to be leaders in their communities and in their chosen careers.

Organization and Function

The College of Arts and Sciences provides most of the academic components fundamental to a traditional liberal arts college and contains humanities, social sciences, and the natural sciences. Programs in the humanities include English, History, Philosophy and modern languages such as Spanish, with graduate degrees in English, History and Spanish. Programs in the social sciences include, Criminal Justice, Political Science, and Sociology with graduate degrees in Public Administration, Applied Criminal Justice and Community/Counseling or Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Programs in the natural sciences include Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Forensic Chemistry, Geology, Earth Science, Physics, and Mathematics with graduate programs in Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and Mathematics. Health related science offerings include Nursing, Psychology, Social Work and pre-professional concentrations that prepare students for careers in fields such as law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry and veterinary medicine.

The College also houses successful programs that cross disciplines. Environmental science is one example in addition to two interdisciplinary degrees designed for the continuing education learner: the bachelor of applied arts and sciences and the bachelor of general studies.

Hands-on life learning activities are a fundamental component of the mission of the College of Arts and Sciences. Students have ample opportunities to engage in research under the guidance of faculty, to participate in internships designed to support their career goals, or to get involved in regional and national student competition and conferences.

The Liberal Arts and Sciences

Like other areas of study, the disciplines represented by the arts and sciences prepare students for advanced study and research; for a career in business, industry, government service or teaching; or for study in a professional field. In addition, however, the very

nature of the arts and sciences disciplines not only trains the mind and sharpens the intellect but also provides an experience designed to encourage life-long learning. It is a “liberating” experience that enables one to acquire the skills and knowledge to think critically, examine values and principles, broaden perspectives, and understand the individual and the relationships among the individual, our natural environment and our society. Thus, specialization in one or more of the arts and sciences disciplines provides the opportunity for this experience and is the prelude to a personally and professionally rewarding career.

Priorities

The College of Arts and Sciences has established the following priorities:

1. Grow and sustain initiatives to advance the College vision particularly as it pertains to the recruitment, development, and retention of an outstanding student body, faculty and staff.
2. Provide an environment that stimulates novel and interdisciplinary teaching, research and creative activities, and service to the Lamar community capable of maximizing the self-realization of students and faculty.
3. Provide the best and most intellectually stimulating opportunities for research, creative activity and instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
4. Offer an outstanding and innovative core course curriculum both in the content and mode of delivery.
5. Promote partnerships with the regional community as a life-learning experience.
6. Increase the visibility and understanding of the accomplishments of the College of Arts and Sciences students, faculty and staff.

Values

The College of Arts and Sciences is committed to a set of core values:

Quality and Excellence

We believe in offering the highest quality programs at undergraduate and graduate levels. We seek continuous improvement through quality enhancement plans, assessment and self-development. Our programs are reflections of innovations in teaching, research, and service to the community.

Liberal Education

We believe the foundation of personal and professional success lies within a broad cross-disciplinary education. We pursue writing effectiveness and excellence in analytical reasoning and problem solving to prepare our students for current and future demands.

Research and Creative Activities

We believe that research and creative activities are a core source of self-development. We offer advanced opportunities for students at all levels, from freshman to graduate, to participate and collaborate with nationally acclaimed faculty.

Collaboration/Connectivity

We believe in promoting opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage with the community and maintain partnerships with regional, national and international schools, government, business and industry. Through these activities, we foster intercultural understanding and knowledge to achieve a sustainable and prosperous future.

Innovation

We believe in the value of innovation in teaching, research, service and other enterprises. We encourage and promote the development of novel ideas and their implementation.

Strategic Goals and Action Steps

The College of Arts and Sciences actively pursues five core strategic goals each of which strives for innovation and quality in its respective area:

Education Goal

Thoughtful, planned growth, retention, and graduation through innovative undergraduate and graduate programmatic experiences and engagement.

1. Empower faculty staff and students to collaborate through partnerships within and without the college.
2. Invest in quality hiring, professional development and motivating faculty to excel to create outstanding and unique education experiences, while using a combination of classical and high tech delivery systems.
3. Evaluate and reward innovative and effective teaching activities.
4. Provide resources to maintain the College's status as a great place to work and develop through strategic evaluation plans and continuing education.
5. Enrich the students' educational experience by providing easy access to mentors, leadership development, and extracurricular activities.
6. Inspire students, faculty and staff to learn more about and become engaged in the community.

Research and Creative Activity Goal

Generate innovative and novel knowledge leading to a more complete understanding of culture, societies and sciences.

1. Develop a strategy to manage activities that capitalize on emerging opportunities which will enrich the region, the nation, and the world.
2. Provide opportunities for career development such as the development of a coherent research agenda.
3. Develop policies aimed at improving and sustaining a culture of research productivity and scholarly activities.
4. Provide incentives to develop and maintain strong relationship with major research agencies including NASA, the National Science Foundation, etc.
5. Promote and reward outstanding achievements of students, faculty and staff.

Connectivity Goal

Establish partnerships between all key stakeholders, especially students, alumni, faculty, and local and national enterprises, and promote multiculturalism and acceptance.

1. Promote activities that create an atmosphere of collaboration and cooperation between students with students, students with faculty, students with local enterprises, and faculty with faculty.
2. Leverage existing and developing partnerships with regional, and national businesses, industry, government and non-profit organizations for the betterment of the local and academic societal environments.
3. Provide a sense of community within career disciplines through participation in professional student organizations.
4. Cultivate intellectual and creative resources that contribute to society by developing integrated solutions to pressing needs.
5. Engage with past, present and future partners including friends and alumni to develop and implement plans to strengthen the educational goals of the college.

Global Engagement Goal

Engage in partnerships at national and international levels.

1. Establish partnerships between international universities.
2. Promote study abroad programs and the recognition of intercultural efforts.
3. Promote faculty/staff diversity and recognition.
4. Serve as an environment for open discussion of issues
5. Inspire students, faculty and staff to become engaged in the community by promoting and rewarding activities and events.

Marketing goal

Broadcast the identity, and opportunities of the College of Arts and Sciences at Lamar University.

1. Develop a marketable identity underlining the unique opportunities of each program.
2. Build strong and unified relationships with all stakeholders.
3. Promote the exceptional achievements of current and former students and of faculty.
4. Improve the social networking and online presence of the College.
6. Invest in the strategic marketing of liberal arts as an option for outstanding career growth by actively advocating for liberal learning.