

College of Liberal Arts: Strategic Priorities

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INTRODUCTION

The College of Liberal Arts is committed to actualizing the principles of inquiry, interdisciplinarity, innovation, internationalization, and inclusion

The College of Liberal Arts is critical to the success of UNH

- A Liberal Arts education is core to the idea of a university and specifically to the UNH mission, curriculum, experience, and public relevance

The value of a B.A is well documented

- *New York Times*, Sept. 2019: “In the Salary Race, Engineers Sprint but English Majors Endure,” *Harvard Business Review*, Sept. 2019: “Yes, Employers do Value Liberal Arts Degrees;” *Forbes*: “A Liberal Arts Degree is More Important than Ever.”
- COLA grads employed or pursuing further education within six months of graduation (*UNH First Destination Survey*):
 - 2021 grads: 95%
 - 2020 grads: 88%
 - 2019 grads: 96%
- UNH COLA alumni are highly successful across a broad array of professional and career sectors. The members of the COLA Development Board provide one glimpse of this long-term success: <https://cola.unh.edu/about/cola-deans-development-board>

As the largest College at UNH, the College of Liberal Arts is core to achieving President Dean’s four strategic priorities

- 1) Student academic success and well-being, 2) academic and research excellence, 3) embrace NH, and 4) financial stability

COLA is critical to UNH’s Top 25 discrete goals (e.g., retention, time to graduation)

COLA is critical to UNH maintaining its R1 status

COLA is central to everything UNH does

Honors College – Athletics – Entrepreneurship – Sustainability - Alumni engagement -
New Hampshire quality of life and workforce development

COLA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

COLA's priorities align with and support President Dean's four strategic priority areas with prioritization of (1) **student academic success and career preparedness**, and (2) **faculty and research excellence**. These two priorities intertwine with our core commitments to (3) **advancing diversity, equity and inclusion**, and (4) **embracing New Hampshire**, while also attending to our (5) **financial stability**.

PRIORITY 1

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND CAREER PREPAREDNESS

COLA has 18 departments and 36 majors with a great deal of disciplinary and sub-specialization variation in content and skills taught. COLA majors/minors allow for and actively encourage principles of discovery, inter-disciplinarity, and experiential learning.

GOAL: Provide a high-quality, rigorous, and innovative curriculum

STRATEGIES:

- New majors developed:
 - 4-year B.A., Education (teacher prep); plus 4-year certification pathways for other majors
 - Global Languages dual major for B.S. students
 - English: Text, Business Writing and Digital Studies
 - Philosophy: Business, Innovation and Technology
 - 3+3 programs in English/Law and History/Law
 - Accelerated B.A./M.A.s in Psychology and History
- New minors launched: e.g., Design; Native American & Indigenous Studies; Medical Humanities, Ethics & Society; Survey Research; Arabic Studies; Survey Methods
- Revitalization of existing minors through streamlined coordination, administration and advertising
- Recently developed cognates: Intercultural Communication; Digital Writing & Literature; Technical Writing & Public Speaking; Skills & Perspectives for the Digital World; Philosophy of Business Innovation & Technology; Political and Legal Philosophy; Art History, Design & Computer Science; Studies in the Design of Interior Space; Studies in Fashion and Design; Medical Sociology

GOAL: Provide an array of high-impact experiential learning opportunities and make them highly accessible to students

STRATEGIES:

- Expand and support research opportunities for students, starting in first year
- Provide financial support for psychology, classics and anthropology labs
- Formalize lab-based models for undergraduate research and engagement: e.g., Global Racial and Social Inequality Lab (GRSIL); Civil Discourse Lab (CDL); Global Humanities Undergraduate Research Lab (GHURL); Race, Ethnicity, Migration and Identity (REMI)
- Provide small grants for faculty-student collaborative research (GRSIL)
- Provide J-term funded exploratory research opportunities through JROP (inaugurated J-term 2022)
- Support COLA Community Fellowships (GRSIL) (inaugurated summer 2022)
- Expand opportunities for students to do research and/or gain work and internship experience within the College – e.g., Crimes Against Children Research Center (CCRC); Survey Research Center; Anthropology field projects; NH Literacy Institutes; Community Literacy Center; theater ushers and technical assistants; Museum of Art proctors
- Provide stipends to incentivize students to participate in The Washington Center internship program
- Encourage and incentivize off-campus co-curricular field experiences; local/regional opportunities
- Provide strong support for study abroad programs/opportunities. Faculty-led spring semester programs in London, Budapest, Dijon, and Granada; J-term in Belize, London, Cuba, and Rome; and summer programs in Berlin, Costa Rica, Dijon, Greece, and effective 2022, Bologna and Dublin.
- Support Model UN
- Support Mock Trial
- Support the Civil Discourse Lab
- Storytell/social media posting about high-impact student experiences to increase student awareness of opportunities

GOAL: Commitment to student advising and retention

STRATEGIES:

- Focus on undeclared students who are at increased risk of leaving UNH
 - Work with Undeclared students to help them choose interesting substantive courses/identify a major
 - Closer communication between COLA and University Advising Center (UAC)
 - COLA 401: course for undeclared students to explore interests and learn tools and tips for academic success at UNH
- Created Committee of Academic Advisors comprised of faculty and staff from across the College
- Developed First-year Advising seminars for declared students
- Developed Peer Navigator Program for transfer students
- Launched COLA 402 “Cool COLA Research,” which showcases the range of liberal arts research/majors/career paths (now in Year 4)
- Outreach and retention initiatives
 - Individualized outreach to students with academic challenges; deploying Wildcat Success
 - Alexander Hall – COLA Undeclared and Major Floor (n=50); various activities (now in Year 4)
 - COLA CONNECT: dean’s office lunch to follow up with CONNECT students whom the dean meets at the beginning of the AY

GOAL: Expand career preparedness

STRATEGIES:

- Greater integration of career prep in regular courses (plus CaPS courses/meetings); dept. alumni panels, etc.
- Intentional outreach to students in first year and successively
- Increase # of career advisors
- Increase number of career orientation off-campus trips
- Increase student participation in internships:
 - 63% of COLA 2021, 73% of COLA 2020, and 68% of COLA 2019 grads had one or more internships while at UNH

- Establishment of EMPOWER, an annual career mentoring event featuring COLA alumnae and female students (April 2022)
- Appoint a COLA Internship Coordinator who will liaise with Dean's office, Departments, CaPS, Advancement & External partners/employers

**PRIORITY 2:
ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE**

GOAL: Support graduate programs/students

5 Ph.D. Programs: Education, English, History, Psychology, Sociology; and 4 additional departments with M.A. Programs – Justice Studies, Music, Political Science, Spanish.

Graduate Program Rankings:

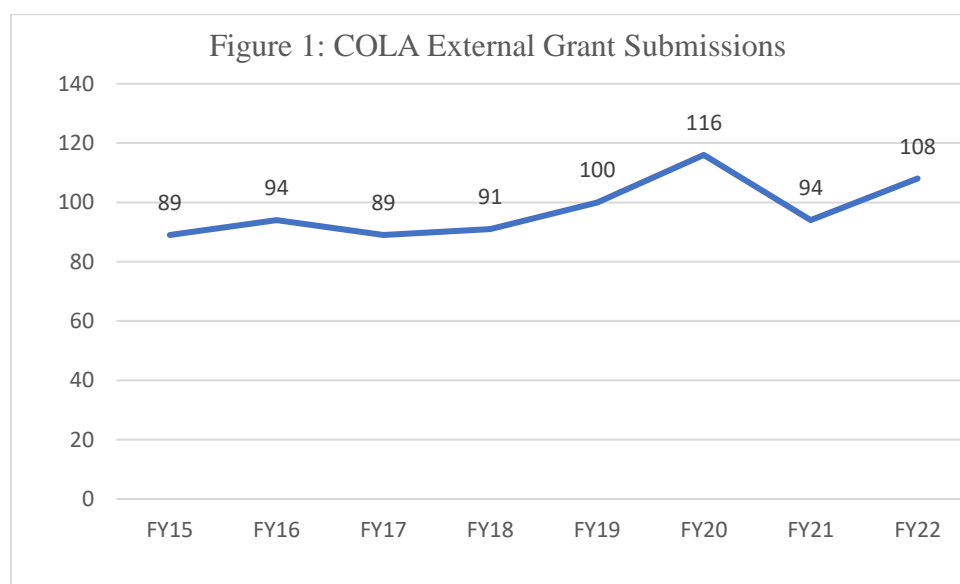
- The M.F.A. in Writing Program ranked in the Top 10 for the Budget Conscious, by the national magazine *Electric Literature*
- The Sociology Ph.D. program ranked in the top 25 nationally for scholarly research activity (Academic Analytics)
- The history and sociology graduate programs ranked nationally within Top 100 by *U.S. News and World Report*
- The Online M. Ed ranked #1 in NH and tied for #1 in New England by *U.S. News and World Report*

STRATEGIES:

- Shorten years taken to complete Ph.D.
- Provide dissertation acceleration stipends (COLA gift fund; summer 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)
- Provide financial support for Summer TA Fellowships
- Integrate Professional Master's into grad school marketing efforts: Justice Studies, Education, Museum Studies, MFA (Writing)
- Maintain current number of Graduate Assistants (GAs) while exploring the shared use of GAs across pertinent departments
- Support guaranteed 5 years of funding to top applicants

GOAL: Support faculty excellence

Faculty scholarship activity including external grants (see Figure 1), fellowships and awards, and the productivity and caliber demonstrated in published books, journal articles, essays, and exhibits and performances is highly impressive. The excellence of our faculty is further reflected in the high national and regional rankings garnered by several of our undergraduate and graduate programs. Further demonstrating faculty productivity and impact, 7 COLA faculty were named among 41 current and emeritus UNH researchers as being among the world's leading 100,000 researchers, in the top 2 percent, according to a study published in *PLOS Biology Journal*. The robust totality of faculty activity underscores the strategic significance of the College's top-notch faculty in advancing UNH's commitment to student academic success in curriculum and co-curricular venues, generating revenue, advancing UNH's national reputation for scholarly and research excellence, and bolstering its R1 status.



STRATEGIES:

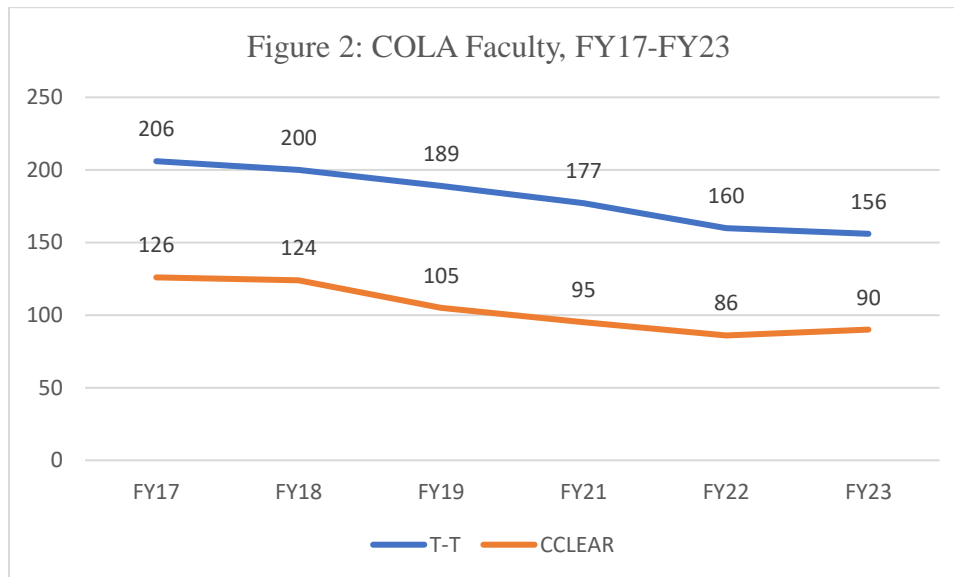
- Support sabbaticals
- Support faculty research/artistry activities and conference travel
- Support research fellowships/leaves
- Provide faculty start-up costs
- Provide faculty summer research stipends
- Support professional development opportunities

GOAL: Stabilize faculty numbers

Amid faculty transitions over the past few years and ebb and flow in major enrollments, the College's student-faculty ratio has increased from 12 to 14 (FY22). Although the ratio is lower than for UNH-Durham (17), it is fitting given the writing-intensive teaching and individualized learning focus that characterizes a large swath of COLA courses, in addition to contributing Honors courses (capped at 20), and the array of upper-division seminars required for major subjects. The current number of faculty positions and the balance between tenure-track and CCLEAR faculty are stabilizing (see Figure 2).

STRATEGIES:

- Maintain current faculty levels in the next three to four years as UNH navigates the enrollment and financial challenges facing higher education.



**PRIORITY 3:
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

GOAL: Forge a dynamically inclusive campus community and society through college culture and everyday institutional practices.

STRATEGIES:

- Provide curriculum across all COLA majors that includes significant attention to varied dimensions of inequality
- Offer 8 interdisciplinary minors focused on inequality
- Support faculty scholarship and artistry that dynamically engages with themes of inequality.
- Establishment of the Global Racial and Social Inequality Lab (GRSIL), a hub that brings together undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff around shared commitments to curriculum, research, and community partnerships focused on the understanding and transformation of inequality
- Commitment to the diversification of faculty, staff and students
- Submitted 4 opportunity hire tenure-track proposals to the Provost for review
- Committed to 3 Postdoctoral Diversity and Innovation Scholars (PDIS)
- Engagement with CONNECT
- Sponsoring and co-sponsoring of significant DEI lectures/external speakers
- Providing additional professional/research support to historically minoritized faculty

**PRIORITY 4:
EMBRACE NEW HAMPSHIRE**

A great deal of COLA faculty and graduate student research and scholarship has implications for New Hampshire life (e.g., state/regional demographic trends; environmental and social policy attitudes; electoral process and political issues)

GOAL: Support the workforce, cultural and educational needs of New Hampshire

STRATEGIES (selective):

- Provide undergraduate and graduate education programs; all are central to NH workforce development; specialized training of teachers, principals and superintendents; program in the North Country training teachers in STEM fields
- Provide NH Teacher Scholarships
- The department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (LLC) and the department of Classics, Humanities, and Italian Studies (CHI) engage in robust outreach to, and have strong language-focused partnerships with, NH high schools
- Research by faculty and students in Psychology, Sociology, and Women's and Gender Studies is at the forefront of interventions to prevent child victimization, sex abuse, and sexual violence
- The department of Philosophy hosts HYPE, an annual event one-day event which brings high school students from across the state and region to campus for facilitated small-group discussions of ethical issues
- Offer a range of youth enrichment programs in the arts to New Hampshire K-12 students
- Sponsor GRSIL Community Fellows as interns at local New Hampshire non-profit organizations
- Support the Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective
- Support music and theater performances and Master Classes accessible to the public in venues across the state of NH
- Collaborative partnership with NH Community Colleges' faculty and staff through our Mellon funded NH Humanities Collaborative
- The department of English partners with NH schools on college writing and readiness skills for students

**PRIORITY 5:
FINANCIAL STABILITY**

Student tuition is the College's main source of revenue.

GOAL: Increase revenue, and manage resource use and expenses

STRATEGIES:

- Increase the student-faculty ratio from 12 to 14
- Increase revenue from external grants
- Expand the number of COLA donors, the alumni donor participation rate, and the aggregate amount yielded by gifts