

**A Strategic Plan for the  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

*University of Connecticut*

November 24, 2006

Ongoing Action Items Marked (\*)  
REVISED: April 30, 2007

## **Preface and Acknowledgments**

The current document is the result of merging two sets of initiatives—the first resulting from work in the CLAS Dean’s Office in the summer of 2005, the second from the deliberations of a faculty task force that met throughout the 2005-2006 academic year. Members of the Dean’s Office, Dean and Associate Deans, have worked on the final merger. Errors of omission and commission are our responsibility.

The final product involved thoughtful work by many individuals. The following people contributed a significant amount of their valuable time to express their ideas regarding goals and strategies for the betterment of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Richard Bass (Mathematics), Janine Caira (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology), Jack Dovidio (Psychology), Gerald Dunne (Physics), Robert Gross (History), Ron Growney (Associate Dean/Psychology), Anne Hiskes (Associate Dean/Philosophy), Michael Lynes (Molecular and Cell Biology), Brenda Murphy (English), Nalini Ravishanker (Statistics), Kathy Segerson (Economics), Deborah Shelby (Assistant Dean), and Michelle Williams (Psychology).

All plans are in reality works in progress and subject to revision. This plan is no exception. It should, however, provide the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Connecticut some guidance in the way it organizes itself and deploys resources to enhance its activities over the next several years.

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## **Mission Statement of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Connecticut: Unity of Education and Research**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the academic core of the University of Connecticut. CLAS faculty and students review and critically assess the foundations of human knowledge. They are dedicated to the traditional values of the liberal arts and sciences, which include both intellectual independence and the capacity to integrate insights from the humanities and the natural, physical, and social sciences.

By nurturing in its members a sense of curiosity and providing experiences in discovery and collaboration, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences prepares faculty and students to be leaders in their communities and work places, and to become lifelong learners. In terms of faculty members' research foci, CLAS values insights gained from traditional disciplinary studies and interdisciplinary inquiry. The College also recognizes the pedagogical value for students of study abroad, research experiences, pre-professional internships, and volunteer activities.

Approximately half of all full-time faculty members at the University of Connecticut are members of CLAS. They are involved primarily in basic research, but many are also engaged in applied research that is responsive to the needs of communities and businesses, consistent with the University of Connecticut's overarching land-grant mission.

The activities of research and teaching are inextricably linked within CLAS. Undergraduate and graduate students learn from professional researchers who are deeply involved in the creation of new knowledge. In the course of sharing their knowledge with students, our scholars revisit disciplinary issues and assumptions and sharpen their own understanding and formulations of academic puzzles and lines of reasoning.

In the liberal arts, knowledge arises from the ongoing questioning of conventional beliefs about society and nature, which leads to the never-ending development and refinement of arguments and to the novel syntheses of existing ideas via new perspectives and information. Pluralism lies at the heart of learning in the liberal arts and sciences. Therefore, CLAS faculty give voice to varied intellectual traditions, have members from diverse social backgrounds and with different personal experiences, and encourage all members of the college community to explore the rich variety of human cultures and ideas.

### **Historical Context**

In 1939, the trustees of the newly named University of Connecticut established the forerunner of CLAS which was known as the College of Arts and Sciences. At the time, the college contained 17 departments. (See Appendix 1 for a list of the current 23 academic departments.) In 1949, the College awarded the University's first doctorates to three students in the departments of biology and chemistry.

In 1997, a decision was made to increase undergraduate enrollments at the University of Connecticut. The initiative was expected to increase revenues so that our academic units could

be larger and more competitive nationally. CLAS undertook the lion's share of these enrollment increases. Not only did the number of students majoring in our programs expand dramatically, but CLAS also assumed the responsibility of teaching more general education and foundation courses for other colleges and schools in the University. For example, in 2005-2006, 240 of the University of Connecticut's 271 general education courses were offered by this one college. Meanwhile, 56 percent of the University's undergraduate population is currently enrolled in CLAS programs.

Since 1997, CLAS has received resources to accommodate the enhanced enrollment through an increased allocation of TAs, adjuncts, and professors-in-residence. Still, no resources have been made available either for increasing the complement of tenured and tenure-track faculty, or for increasing the number of staff to support the departments offering the courses. As a result, the CLAS student/faculty ratio has become very high (21:1 in fall 2005), which is several points above the norm for the University of Connecticut and starkly above the University's recently stated goal of 15:1.

The higher enrollment has diminished the ability of faculty to excel in the all three major activities that define the University of Connecticut: teaching, research, and service. Larger class sizes have made it more difficult for faculty to engage students. The assignment of papers and essay examinations has decreased as class sizes have increased, and the College has increased its reliance on non-tenured faculty and graduate students to teach undergraduates at all levels.

Despite having the lowest per faculty member level of staff support of any school or college in the University, CLAS faculty have steadily increased their per capita external research funding and have continued to enhance the University's reputation. In fact, the nearly ninety scholarly books published by CLAS faculty in 2005-2006 almost doubles the numbers of books published in either 2001-2002 or 2002-2003. Still, without additional staff support, it may not be possible to sustain this growth in productivity.

## **Strategic Goals**

The following goals are proposed to work toward improving all aspects of the mission of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Connecticut.

## **Goal 1: Enhancement of Scholarship and Scholarly Reputation**

### **Introduction**

The ongoing production and systematic dissemination of knowledge define a research university. A college of liberal arts and sciences, in addition, specializes in foundational ideas upon which applications to everyday life can be made. To increase the output, quality, and reputation of its distinctive scholarship, CLAS must (1) attract and retain top-flight faculty, and (2) create an environment that fosters academic enthusiasm and generates intellectual energy.

Already, the college has dramatically increased its scholarly output. Over the past five years, the annual output of peer-reviewed journal articles has increased by more than 25 percent. The further enhancement of scholarship and scholarly reputation will benefit from the following three-fold strategy:

1. Providing additional incentives to attract and retain productive scholars,
2. Adding resources necessary for strong scholarship by all faculty members, and
3. Increasing opportunities for the dissemination of faculty members' ideas and discoveries.

In addition to these strategies, it is important that the University (1) promote an interdisciplinary climate, (2) provide appropriate physical and administrative infrastructure, and (3) support talented graduate students and post-graduate scholars. These goals will be discussed later in this document.

### **Strategy 1: Providing Additional Incentives to Attract and Retain Productive Scholars**

- Endowed chairs: These are important for attracting and retaining outstanding scholars whose work is highly regarded nationally and internationally and who will, in turn, enhance the college's scholarly reputation. Every department in CLAS should have at least one endowed chair; larger departments should have more. \*The College should work with the University of Connecticut Foundation to ensure that this occurs over the next decade.
- Revise PTR standards and procedures: Standards need to be clarified and updated in light of UConn's aspirations to become a prominent research university. Clarifications of teaching and research expectations are needed at the Provost's level (for example, involving faculty at different university campuses), \*the Dean's level, and the department level. This should be coordinated with the Provost's policy for reviewing third year reappointments. Criteria for the transition from associate to full professor should be reviewed to bring them into alignment with practices at peer and aspirant institutions.

### **Strategy 2: Adding Resources Necessary for Strong Scholarship by All Faculty Members**

- \*Dean's Advisory Committee: An advisory committee should be formed to promote the timely exchange of information between the Dean and the faculty regarding strategic

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*\*Refers to action items soon-to-be or already being undertaken by the Dean's Office.*

academic issues and opportunities for enhancing scholarly activities and reputation. This advisory committee should meet with the Dean twice a semester, perhaps with subcommittees meeting more often.

- \*Codification of university policies concerning equipment money: Uncertainty in this policy area hinders research and impedes scholarly activity. Policies for matching grant funds, for example, are not clearly understood. This uncertainty threatens scholars' abilities to obtain external grants and has a detrimental effect on scholarly productivity and reputation.
- Increase professional support staff: Budgetary pressures have taken their toll on staff support for faculty research. The sciences, for example, lack sufficient staff to care for equipment, animals, etc. In the humanities and social sciences, faculty often spend time doing clerical chores that should be done by support staff.
- Additional library support: The battle to secure sufficient funds to obtain and house the journals and books necessary for a state-of-the-art research institute continues. The source of funding for these items must be increased and stabilized. More CLAS lobbying on behalf of the library should be done.
- Plans for mandatory charges of graduate tuition from grants: This idea must be abandoned. If implemented, it will hurt many of the University's most productive research programs.
- Improve departmental external review process: This process should be streamlined and more frequent. Instructions to reviewers should be made very clear. Currently, there is inadequate follow-up and infrequent reassessments.
- In addition, the Provost should be urged to set aside resources to meet departmental needs identified by reviewers.

### **Strategy 3: Increasing Opportunities for the Dissemination of Faculty Members' Ideas and Discoveries**

- \*Publicity via Internet: To educate outsiders about the high quality of existing CLAS faculty and departments, the CLAS and departmental websites should continue to improve and their appearance should be enhanced. Posted information should minimally include:
  - News of recent achievements and initiatives
  - Profiles of new faculty
  - Lists of faculty experts, especially on matters of current public debate
  - Announcements about upcoming faculty public talks
  - News about alumni achievements
- Enhanced support for sabbatical visitors and postdoctoral researchers: Currently, the University of Connecticut inadequately provides for visiting scholars. Problems include shortages of office space, low levels of funding, and inadequate housing. \*At a minimum, CLAS should be more welcoming to visitors; e.g., by holding events such as receptions. In addition, the College should continually urge the Provost's Office to make housing available for these individuals.
- \*Support for national and international conferences: Conferences are an ideal way to make outsiders familiar with the quality of work by faculty and graduate students. In

addition to supporting departmentally organized conferences, the College should coordinate interdisciplinary conferences and workshops.

- Supplement graduate school and AAUP travel funds.

### **Assessment and Metrics**

**To assess the college's scholarship and scholarly reputation, the Dean's Office will focus on the following indicators:**

- Results of national rankings of departments.
- Total external funding secured by CLAS faculty each year. An increase in research expenditures of 10 percent per year during the next ten years should be achieved.
- Total number of books published by CLAS faculty each year
- Total number of full-length referred articles published by CLAS faculty each year
- Faculty honors, including journal editorships and recognition for scholarly achievements.

## **Goal 2. Enhancing Graduate and Post-Graduate Education**

### **Introduction**

Graduate programs in CLAS are the keystones of our knowledge-producing structure. They contribute directly to the success of the College and to the reputation of the University. Graduate students, postdoctoral associates, and visiting scholars contribute to the scholarly environment of the University in a multitude of ways. They operate at the cutting edge of their disciplines and seek to hone their critical thinking skills and advance knowledge. Graduate students also participate in the delivery of many undergraduate courses, and therefore are looked upon by undergraduate students as figures of authority and mentors with the potential to shape careers. They are a highly economical labor force that performs many of the duties of faculty at a fraction of the cost. Many graduate students are also research associates in faculty laboratories and as such, are vital to garnering support in the form of grants and contracts from extramural sources. A strong investment in the graduate programs at the University of Connecticut will yield substantial returns now and in the future.

### **Strategy 1: Improve the Recruitment and Retention of Top Graduate Students**

- \*Because the primary source of information about our graduate programs is on the web, it is essential for the College and departments to construct and maintain high quality, professional grade websites.
- At least one multi-year fellowship not requiring a teaching assignment should be provided to each graduate program for its top incoming student. Priority should be given to applicants from under-represented groups. Tuition and fees should be covered for all graduate fellowship recipients.
- The level of graduate student summer support should be increased. Because many of our competitors offer 12-month awards, larger stipends will enhance the competitiveness of our recruiting packages.
- \*Departments, the College, and the University as a whole should clarify rules concerning multi-year support for graduate students to both faculty and current and prospective students.
- \*There should be more consultation among departments about best methods of recruiting and more coordination across CLAS of recruiting events.
- The College should provide assistance for faculty to develop training programs and to apply for training grants.
- The College and its departments should work more effectively with the UConn Foundation to raise funds for named graduate-student and postdoctoral fellowships.
- \*An annual allotment of funding should be given to each graduate program to use in the manner it considers most effective in recruiting. Each graduate program should be provided with funding for top-tier recruits to visit campus during the recruiting season.
- CLAS should develop a system of awarding TAs in which graduate programs can offer financial packages to their best applicants based on expected average acceptance rate rather than waiting for a turn-down before the next offer can be made. This provides a safety net for departments and allows for flexibility in TA allotments to support recruitment of top-tier applicants.

- Because teaching loads are perceived by our recruits as being too high compared with our peer institutions, CLAS should urge the Graduate School to reevaluate graduate student teaching loads and to reconsider the load appropriate for a degree-seeking student.
- \*The College should provide support for graduate students to travel to national and international conferences. In addition, support should be provided for graduate programs to host such conferences.

### **Strategy 2: Redesign Current Graduate Fields of Study**

- \*The Dean should convene annual meetings of all graduate program heads to discuss the organization of fields of study.
- The Dean should examine with each department its last external review, NRC ranking, and any other evaluation (e.g., for degree accreditation) and the steps taken subsequently to implement the recommendations and improve the ranking of graduate programs.
- Departments should consolidate, reorganize, and reconfigure current fields of graduate study in ways that: (1) enhance the fields' appearance among the public-at-large; (2) increase our programs' reputations during NRC evaluations, and; (3) promote interactions among faculty in different departments who might discover common interests.
- \*Interdisciplinary graduate programs that currently exist should be evaluated and updated to reflect faculty interests, resources, and the future direction of the fields involved. All newly created interdisciplinary graduate programs should be organized so as to support graduate-student education in fields not represented by existing fields of study.
- All fields of study should include some training of students on intellectual property rights, ethics issues, and responsible conduct in research.

### **Strategy 3: Enhance the Sense of Community and Well-being of Graduate Students, Post-doctoral Associates, and Visiting Scholars**

- The College should champion a University-wide initiative to build high quality, affordable, appropriate housing for graduate students, postdoctoral associates and visiting scholars on or near campus to create a community of scholars.
- \*The College should work with the University to improve its off-campus housing services to assist current and prospective graduate students, postdoctoral associates, and visiting scholars in finding suitable places to live.
- The College should sponsor more academic and social events for graduate students, postdoctoral associates, and visiting scholars and should encourage graduate-student participation in the planning of these events.
- The College should routinely recognize and reward graduate students', postdoctoral associates', and visiting scholars' successes; e.g., through webpage announcements.
- The Dean should create a staff position for overseeing services for graduate students, postdoctoral associates, and visiting scholars.
- The College should provide incentives for faculty to increase the number of externally funded postdoctoral fellows so as to meet standards at peer institutions.

- \*The College should provide financial support for sabbatical visitors in order to improve inter-institutional exchanges.

#### **Strategy 4: Follow Careers of Graduate Student Alumni**

- The College and its departments should be able to access the database of graduate student alumni for the purpose of maintaining contact with past students.
- The College should provide departments with support for tracking the careers of former graduate students and postdoctoral fellows after they leave campus. This will facilitate a more accurate assessment of program successes and will be useful in fund raising, training-grant creation, and recruitment.
- Departments should endeavor to inform former students about current events and when feasible include them in the activities.

#### **Assessment and Metrics**

- GRE scores of applicants and new students.
- Names of institutions with which we are competing for students.
- Placements of graduate students.
- Publication records of students.
- National and international awards.
- Number of postdoctoral associates and visiting scholars.

### **Goal 3. Enhancement of Undergraduate Education**

#### **Introduction**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences seeks to provide its students with an education that ranks among the best in the nation. Through courses and extracurricular learning opportunities, undergraduates will acquire the understanding and skills necessary for them to adapt to a changing local and global environment and participate in society as responsible citizens. An important component of this enterprise is the ability of the College to attract and retain a highly talented and diverse student population and to increase the number of faculty and staff responsible for their education.

As part of a research university that values creativity and the spirit of discovery, the College seeks to inspire its students with a lifelong desire for learning. It aims to provide each student with opportunities both inside and outside the classroom for engaging in active, independent inquiry. Faculty scholarship and research are expected to add value to undergraduate programs by providing opportunities for students to participate in research projects and by contributing to the vitality of course content and delivery. As part of a public, land-grant institution with special obligations to the people of the state and the nation, the College is committed to providing its students with the resources necessary for the successful, timely completion of their studies.

Although we are committed to the efficient use of our resources in the delivery of our undergraduate programs and will continue to undertake priority-driven reallocation of funds within the College, most of the goals described below cannot be reached without additional financial resources and faculty positions from the University.

#### **Strategy 1: Strengthen the Quality of Undergraduate Instruction and Reaffirm the Commitment to Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.**

- Acknowledge the importance of the student/faculty ratio in undergraduate education and strive to reduce it substantially.
- Ensure that all CLAS students have the opportunity to be taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty in a majority of their upper division courses in their chosen major.
- Improve the system for assessing, rewarding, and promoting the culture of excellence in teaching. This includes opportunities for professional development of adjunct faculty and in-residence faculty and possibilities for training in pedagogy of teaching assistants.
- \*Continue to explore, implement, and assess the use of innovative and interactive teaching methods including the appropriate use of instructional technologies, on-line courses, and distance learning.
- Continue to push for renovations and improvements to existing classrooms and instructional laboratories to take advantage of the educational technologies that are transforming teaching and learning. Work toward increasing the number, variety and quality of classroom space available for undergraduate education and recognize the importance of informal spaces that facilitate out-of-the-classroom learning opportunities.

- \*In conjunction with Undergraduate Education and Instruction (UEI) and other schools and colleges, review and assess tutoring needs and support programs in “gateway courses.”

### **Strategy 2: Develop Students’ Capacity for Lifelong Learning.**

- Identify primary student learning outcomes for a liberal arts and sciences education, including developing skills in oral and written communication, problem solving, quantitative reasoning, and an appreciation for the complexity of cultural and global issues.

### **Strategy 3: Improve Advising and Tracking of Students from Matriculation Through Graduation and Beyond.**

- Provide higher quality academic advising for our students. Work toward increasing the number of professional advisors at the department/program level and utilize the Academic Services Center (ASC) to provide coordination and oversight.
- Strengthen the ASC to provide a better resource for faculty and staff advisors.
- \*Partner with other units of the University to develop excellent advising services and developmental opportunities for pre-law and pre-medical/dental students. Develop programs such as mentoring opportunities to better prepare top undergraduate students for graduate schools.
- \*Identify resources and strategies for tracking alumni to assess career opportunities and program strengths, and cultivate alumni engagement with the College. Strengthen ways in which the College publicizes the achievements of its current undergraduate students and alumni.

### **Strategy 4: Enhance Effectiveness and Excellence in Areas of Concentration or Departments.**

- \*Each unit will identify its distinctive contributions to College-level goals of liberal education and the means for achieving them. This includes the linkage between its general education offerings, the goals of a liberal education, and courses specifically for the discipline.
- Each unit will look for opportunities to enhance its undergraduate offerings through academic programs such as first-year disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary seminars, senior capstone experiences, internships, and undergraduate research and scholarship. Programs should provide support for curricular innovations linking faculty scholarship and course content and delivery.

### **Strategy 5: Promote Cultural and Global Diversity and a More Interdisciplinary Curriculum**

- Cooperate with the Office of Study Abroad to increase participation by CLAS students in international programs.

- Encourage faculty to develop new courses and revise course materials to emphasize cultural and global diversity in our curriculum. Identify more resources for rewards and incentives for curriculum development.
- \*Review the College and University supports and constraints that affect interdisciplinary curricula. Consider issues such as faculty workload, department credit for faculty participation, opportunities for faculty from different disciplines to meet and discuss ideas, and support for interdisciplinary courses within the College and between CLAS faculty and faculty from other schools and colleges.

### **Assessment and Metrics**

- Percent of undergraduate involved in research internships or independent study.
- Placement record of graduates in graduate and professional schools and in the job market.
- Academic awards of faculty and students.
- Student : faculty ratio

## **Goal 4. Enhance Community at the University and Beyond: Increase Diversity, Foster Interactions, and Promote Outreach**

### **Introduction**

The diversity of the College community, the interactions among its members, and its outreach activities all contribute to realizing the potential of CLAS in scholarship, education, and service. A vibrant community should reflect and reinforce the diversity within the College's faculty, staff, and students and should be characterized by frequent and productive exchanges by members within and across disciplines. As part of a public, land-grant institution the College has a special responsibility to share its expertise and resources with the citizenry. Outreach activities should be a natural extension of the College's goals of the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

### **Strategy 1: Increase Diversity in the Populations of Students, Faculty, and Staff and Success in their Professional or Educational Experiences**

- Encourage faculty to develop new courses and augment existing ones to be responsive to diversity issues.
- Develop strategies for increasing the numbers of international students in the College.
- Develop and support the recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented populations.
- \*Develop approaches for enhancing achievement by underrepresented groups in the gateway courses.

### **Strategy 2: Identify Strategies to Improve Our Record of Recruiting and Retaining Faculty and Professional Staff from Underrepresented Populations**

- Collaborate with the Provost's Office and the Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Affairs to develop a cohesive approach for enhancing diversity in the College and the University.
- \*Explore strategies for improving recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty and professional staff; e.g., setting aside funds and positions that are likely to result in the appointment of such faculty, or flexibility in the way searches are undertaken and positions are defined. Standard searches for "generic" positions are not likely to generate a pool that is as diverse as special target-of-opportunity searches.

### **Strategy 3: Coordinate with the Office of Multicultural and International Affairs (OMIA) to Enhance Awareness and Appreciation of Diversity Issues in All College Units and Activities**

- Organize expert-led discussions among department heads to enhance faculty and staff awareness of diversity issues.
- Broaden the discussions on diversity so that they occur among the faculty within each department.
- Use OMIA to coordinate CLAS diversity initiatives with other University units.

#### **Strategy 4: Promote a Vibrant Intellectual Community**

- \*Design and construct new classrooms that facilitate interactions among students and faculty.
- Increase the construction of common spaces within the College for academic and social gatherings.
- Promote academic exchanges among faculty and students through colloquia, scholarly events, and receptions.
- Increase activities that enhance interactions among faculty and students from different nations.
- Increase the number of small classes that enhance the opportunities for faculty-student interactions.
- \*Enhance the CLAS website to highlight more students and faculty and their accomplishments. Make a concerted effort to include students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Strengthen communication among underrepresented minorities and help develop a sense of community and mutual support.

#### **Strategy 5: Establish an Explicit Outreach Function in the College**

- Encourage departments to articulate a philosophy of outreach activity along with criteria for rewarding excellence.
- Encourage collaboration and make information available to faculty and students. Publicize outreach activities.
- \*Coordinate with University outreach efforts.

#### **Strategy 6: Promote Outreach Programs that Support the K-12 Pipeline to the University**

- \*Increase awareness in CLAS of Teachers for a New Era objectives.
- \*Support faculty and undergraduate student collaborations with the Neag School of Education and other schools and colleges in K-12 outreach programs.
- Explore opportunities for the College to contribute to enhancing K-12 preparation in ways that will diversity the undergraduate population.

#### **Assessment and Metrics**

- Percent and number of students from underrepresented groups graduating with CLAS degrees.
- Retention rates of students from underrepresented groups.
- Percent and number of individuals from underrepresented groups in full-time faculty positions.
- Amount of interdisciplinary/interdepartmental activity.
- Extent of outreach.

## **Goal 5. Enhancement of Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching**

### **Introduction**

Research at the University of Connecticut continues to take place primarily within traditional professional disciplines that are linked to national and international associations, to specialized journals, and to distinctive styles of descriptive language and analyses. Nonetheless, many scholars wish to bridge existing disciplines and departments.

Two strategies will facilitate the natural evolution of interdisciplinary research and teaching:

1. Providing resources for collaborative research and teaching projects, and
2. Organizing interdisciplinary centers and degree programs.

### **Strategy 1: Providing Resources for Collaborative Research and Teaching Projects**

- \*Establish an interdisciplinary-studies support fund: Funds would be used to support interdisciplinary study groups and to host lectures, conferences, and other interdisciplinary projects.
- \*Encourage faculty initiatives: Encourage conversations within departments about their own perspective on interdisciplinary issues. Invite each department and graduate program director to identify opportunities for increasing collaborative research within the department and for interdisciplinary research with other units in the University. Involve faculty at the earliest stages of discussions of new initiatives.
- Promote teaching innovations: Invite proposals for the development of interdisciplinary graduate programs (e.g., involving team-taught courses) from CLAS departments as well as individual CLAS faculty. Invite proposals for interdisciplinary undergraduate minors. Develop policies for such recurrent implementation questions as faculty workload and departmental credit for faculty participation.

### **Strategy 2: Organizing Interdisciplinary Centers and Degree Programs**

- Creation of new research centers and degree programs:
  - Establish a faculty committee to advise the Dean on interdisciplinary opportunities.
  - Establish college-wide criteria for when and when not to create a research center.
  - Identify a subset of current and new interdisciplinary activities as a five-year focus for systematic development by the college.
- Improve physical infrastructure: Develop spaces for interdisciplinary activities. These can include meeting sites, seminar rooms, offices, and laboratories.
- Prioritize faculty recruitment: Make the hiring of faculty who can contribute to established interdisciplinary research programs and teaching a priority for CLAS. This emphasis must be balanced with the departments' discipline-specific teaching and research needs.

- \*Encourage projects that involve other schools/colleges: Invite departments, as well as smaller groups of faculty, from other schools and colleges to propose interdisciplinary research and/or instructional projects involving CLAS.

### **Assessment and Metrics**

**Progress in the promotion of interdisciplinary research and teaching will be measured by the following metrics:**

- Number of interdisciplinary courses offered annually by the College.
- Number of CLAS interdisciplinary programs and centers.
- Number of joint research proposals and publications.

## **Goal 6. Improve the Physical and Administrative Infrastructure to Support Our Research and Teaching Missions**

### **Introduction**

The quality of the physical and administrative infrastructure of the College profoundly affects the scholarly productivity of faculty and the learning experiences of the students. CLAS has been steadily working to improve the physical condition of our buildings, increase our staffing, and bolster our technical support. More needs to be done. The following strategies address these needs.

### **Strategy 1: Provide Additional Functional Space for Our Faculty and Students**

- The College will endeavor to secure at least two faculty representatives on every University committee that is involved in the planning and oversight of new academic buildings.
- The College will endeavor to secure at least one representative: (1) on every University committee dealing with graduate-student services and housing, and (2) on every University committee dealing with accommodations for visiting scholars.
- The Dean's Office, with the cooperation of departments, will take inventory, assess current needs, and project the next five years' requirements for laboratory space, classrooms, and offices for faculty, staff, and students. The College will regularly share this information with the CLAS community and with members of the central administration within the University, including the Building and Grounds Committee.
- Improve communication with the Office of Facilities Operations.

### **Strategy 2: Provide Support for Technical Aspects of Our Teaching and Research Missions**

- Provide additional funding for the delivery of technical services.
- Enhance technical support:
  - The College will reassign and relocate technical service staff to be more responsive to the needs of researchers and instructors.
  - Provide support for faculty involved with service centers.
  - The College, working with the Research Foundation and UConn Foundation, will seek additional funds for the procurement and maintenance of equipment for research and teaching.

### **Strategy 3: Improve Information Technology Services**

- Increase faculty involvement in the IT planning process.
- Provide support for faculty for software installations and upgrades and for troubleshooting research, teaching, and administrative computer equipment problems.
- \*Increase support for website design and maintenance.
- \*Construct a definite, well thought-out plan for high-quality, department-level support and orderly replacement of computer hardware and software.

- \*Involve users in decisions regarding IT purchasing priorities, especially of large enterprise packages.
- Work with UITS to establish an aggressive site license negotiations office.
- Work with UITS to accelerate the implementation of wiring and equipment upgrade plans.

#### **Strategy 4: Improve College Fund Raising**

- Double the number of donors from the recent *Campaign UConn* and build the College's endowment from the current \$18 million to \$50 million.
- Double the number of endowed faculty positions, graduate fellowships and awards, and undergraduate merit and need-based scholarships.
- The College will establish a standing fund-raising advisory committee, with members from alumni organizations and private industry, to help attract external funds and identify potential donors.

#### **Strategy 5: Expand Public Relations Capacity**

- \*Increase public recognition of the accomplishments of CLAS faculty and students
- \*Recognize and publicize the activities of alumni.
- \*Build recognition among University faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of CLAS of the mission of the College.
- \*Improve the presence of the College and its departments on the web so that the departments can easily use it in the promotion of their activities and accomplishments.

#### **Assessment and metrics**

- Staff-to-faculty ratio.
- Amount of donations received.

## **APPENDIX 1: CLAS Academic Departments**

Anthropology  
Chemistry  
Communication Sciences  
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology  
Economics  
English  
Geography  
History  
Human Development and Family Studies  
Journalism  
Linguistics  
Marine Sciences  
Mathematics  
Modern and Classical Languages  
Molecular and Cell Biology  
Philosophy  
Physics  
Physiology and Neurobiology  
Political Science  
Psychology  
Public Policy  
Sociology  
Statistics