



COLA Strategic Plan 2.0

2024-2030

The College of Liberal Arts (COLA) is the home of humanities, social sciences, and interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching. We work to understand and improve the human condition and create and nurture social systems that enable people to collaborate and thrive. COLA addresses issues of fundamental importance to our world and is critical to the educational and scholarly mission of UNLV.

Mission:

As a diverse college, COLA works to enrich our students and our respective communities by developing and disseminating fundamental ideas, knowledge, skills and creative works related to communication, reasoning, and the understanding of social, cultural, personal, and interpersonal perspectives and contexts.

Vision:

COLA strives to be a place where faculty provide enriching educational and developmental experiences in support of students' future career pathways and social mobility, conduct high-impact scholarship and creative activity, and constructively engage the community.

Values:

The diversity of our student body and our community shapes our identity, and we value that diversity as one of our unique strengths. We understand inclusion as creating an environment of involvement, respect, and connection for everyone. We recognize that both diversity and inclusion are essential elements of our pursuit of excellence and help us to better reflect our student population and local community. This means that we must bring together the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives of our faculty, staff, students, and community to enhance our intellectual and workplace environment and the educational experience we offer to students.

Current Status:

COLA offers a broad array of undergraduate and graduate degrees that promote intellectual growth, career and workforce development, and social mobility; we have an engaged and productive faculty; and we enrich the local and broader communities in significant ways. We will continue to ensure that all students receive consistently enriching educational experiences inside and outside the classroom. Current challenges include: increasing the percentage of our students who earn their desired degrees in pursuit of career goals; finding additional resources to support our faculty, staff and students; diversifying and retaining our faculty to more closely mirror our student body and surrounding community; increasing the impact and visibility of our faculty's research and creative activity; and sustaining momentum to add new degree programs online and face-to-face that are of value to students, the community, and are aligned with UNLV's Top Tier goals.

Student Achievement

COLA recruits, retains, and graduates a diverse body of students in all our undergraduate and graduate degree programs through innovative learning experiences, access to mentoring, research opportunities, and our vibrant college community. The college views student achievement and success as a shared responsibility among each member of the college, including academic and administrative faculty, classified staff, the college's standing committees, and key units such as the Wilson Advising Center and the Student Success Council.

Strategic Objectives, Tasks, and Metrics

Undergraduate Goals

1. Increase student success and improve all aspects of the student experience for undergraduate and graduate liberal arts majors.

- Improve student outcomes and maintain and strengthen our access mission.
- Improve undergraduate retention rates.
- Improve four-year and six-year graduation rates and close graduation gaps.

Metrics: first-year retention, retention and completion rates, graduation rates, student engagement in high-impact practices, co-curricular participation, including COLA-sponsored events, number of online programs and courses offered

2. Improve retention, progression, and completion rates of undergraduate students.

- Increase students involved in peer mentoring.
- Increase students involved in experiential learning, such as internships, service learning, etc.
- Increase scholarship opportunities for Liberal Arts majors.

Metrics: Number of students involved in peer mentor programs, number of students completing internships, service learning, etc., number of scholarships offered within the college

3. Increase recruitment efforts for humanities and social sciences.

- Increase dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities and engage recruiters in those courses.
- Provide college-specific recruitment activities throughout the academic year.
- Sustain staffing to support recruitment of diverse students into humanities and social sciences.

Metrics: Number of prospective student applicants for Liberal Arts, number of programs offered in relation to recruitment, number of students accepting, admitting and enrolling (including dual and concurrent enrollments) in Liberal Arts majors

Graduate Goals

1. Engage in strategic domestic and international recruitment, retention, progression, and completion to grow and diversify our graduate student body and promote equitable outcomes.

- Improve strategic recruitment in line with Graduate Enrollment Management goals. Key parties are: the Dean’s Office in partnership with faculty in graduate programs, the Graduate College and the Office of Admissions.
- Collaborate with faculty in graduate programs to identify barriers to timely completion in doctoral and other graduate programs, and create strategies and secure resources to improve time to completion.
- Design, implement and deliver innovative graduate programs to attract competitive students and support diverse student populations and interests, including, but not limited to, interdisciplinary programs, certificates, and badges.

Metrics: Number of prospective student applicants for graduate programs in Liberal Arts, number of graduate programs offered in relation to recruitment, number of students accepting, admitting and enrolling in Liberal Arts graduate programs, retention and graduation numbers from graduate programs

Career Development and Progression Goals

1. Integrate workforce development as part of undergraduate college culture and curricula.

- Further integrate career development into curriculum at all levels of undergraduate education.
- Increase incentives for students to engage with career development.
- Promote active student participation in career planning through a lifecycle approach to workforce readiness.

Metrics: Number of students involved in internships, amount of scholarship dollars in support of internships and career development, institutional data on career outcomes

2. Identify multiple pathways for successful career paths for doctoral students, and ensure equitable access to successful pathways for diverse graduate students.

- Integrate workforce readiness into all graduate programs.
- Offer certificate programs for the 21st century economy that are valued by employers and associated with high-demand occupations in the region.
- Facilitate the placement of Community Graduate Assistants (CGAs) for research

Metrics: Number of certificate programs at the graduate level, completion rates of certificate programs at the graduate level, number of placed community GAs

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

COLA seeks to promote a climate of innovation in which faculty and students produce high-quality, widely disseminated and influential research, scholarship, and creative activities.

Strategic Objectives, Tasks, and Metrics

1. Maintain and increase the impact and visibility of scholarship and creative activities and foster a college culture in which faculty and students can maximize their research productivity.

- Partner and collaborate with the Research Division and departments to identify and develop areas of research excellence and potential in the college.
- Partner with faculty and department leadership to identify barriers to increased research collaboration and research within the college and across the University.
- Support research centers and research infrastructure that make collaboration natural, sustainable, and seamless.

Metrics: Rates of publication in high-impact journals and venues, citation rates, contributions to public discourse, grant proposals and research expenditures, start-up packages for recruitment of new faculty, faculty reassignment time for research activities, number of collaborative projects

2. Foster a positive faculty culture for success, inclusion, collaboration, trust, respect, empathy, camaraderie, and the valuing of diversity.

- Partner with the Office of Faculty Affairs, the Women's Research Institute of Nevada, the UNLV Women's Council and the College Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee to monitor data and information to support retention of faculty and staff.
- Partner with the Office of Diversity Initiatives to provide information for faculty, staff, and instructors on how to support students, including diverse, underrepresented, and undocumented students.
- Create a visible presence within the Liberal Arts website on diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Review institutional data and recent departmental program reviews for organization-level information about department climate and culture.

Metrics: UNLV institutional data, partnerships and DEI-related initiatives, website improvements and updates

3. Promote and expand opportunities for student research, scholarly, creative, and professional development, and increase student engagement and align program experiences with strategic career pathways.

- In collaboration with the Graduate College, establish creative and robust faculty and research mentorship programs to support and expand student research, scholarly,

creative, and professional engagement, and do so in ways that promote DEI on campus and in student outcomes.

- Support graduate and professional student research as integral to our access and R1 mission by providing nationally competitive GA stipends and benefits.
- Increase the number of research opportunities for undergraduate students through grants and private donations.
- Provide co-curricular professional, career, and leadership development opportunities for graduate students to enhance transferable skills and successful career outcomes.

Metrics: undergraduate presentations, graduate presentations and posters, graduate exhibitions, doctoral degrees, performances and public readings, undergraduate and graduate publications

Community Partnerships, Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement

Create an engaged network of Liberal Arts alumni and community partners that support the strategic vision and needs of the college through philanthropy and stewardship. Success is achieved in this area by partnering across the college, including faculty and staff at all levels, in the identification and engagement of alumni and community partners.

Strategic Objectives, Tasks, and Metrics

1. Communicate the impact and importance of direct philanthropic support to strengthen and promote the link between COLA and the associated benefit to the community, region, and state.

- Promote engagement opportunities such as internships to the community, highlighting mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Partner with faculty on the promotion of academic programs and current research to the community.
- Engage community members and alumni in a reciprocal relationship supporting the needs of the college and the community at large.

Metrics: Development-related collateral for internal and external stakeholders, engagement opportunities promoted in existing communications outlets, community and alumni participation in engagement activities

2. Leverage COLA's strengths to develop collaborative networks and address community needs and challenges, including workforce development.

- Educate current partners and identify new partnerships for community-based research internships.
- Position the UNLV PRACTICE to further collaborate with organizations within the Las Vegas valley.
- Formalize hiring pipelines from COLA to community partners.
- Engage COLA centers and institutes to conduct research identifying gaps in services and other needs within the Las Vegas valley and how we can partner on solutions.

Metrics: Number of funded mentorship programs, community partnerships, hiring pipelines, funded place-based research opportunities

3. Create targeted, intentional engagement efforts to identify, establish, and steward mutually beneficial partnerships with aligned stakeholders centered on distinct and strategic intersections.

- Promote engagement through COLA Board participation and volunteer opportunities.
- Increase guest speaking and classroom participation of volunteers.
- Provide community and student networking opportunities.

- Collaborate with the campus community to increase funding opportunities.

Metrics: Number of volunteer opportunities, number of volunteers/board members, number of community partners, dollars raised through direct relationships, number of alumni (undergrad and grad), number of events/engagement opportunities

4. Ensure financial sustainability through the growth of endowed funds and ongoing support.

- Increase financial incentives for students to engage with career development
- Increase the number of funded research opportunities for undergraduate students through grants and private donations.
- Involve alumni and donors to advance development and fundraising.
- Leverage existing relationships to translate them into philanthropic partnerships.

Metrics: Amount of scholarship dollars, endowed funds, grants, annual giving commitments, and funds for research, faculty and student support