

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2027



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH DAKOTA

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES VISION AND VALUES

As stakeholders of the College of Arts & Sciences, we envision the following for 2027:

CONTEXT

Preface: Throughout the 2021-2022 academic year, the USD College of Arts & Sciences (A&S) engaged in a collaborative strategic planning process. This process was facilitated by college leadership and led by a taskforce composed of twenty members of the A&S faculty and staff. The collaborative planning process engaged more than 500 internal and external stakeholders to gain a collective understanding of the current state of and hopes for the future of the college. Through the planning effort, five strategic themes were agreed upon which will focus the time, attention and resources of the college over the next five years.

MISSION

The College of Arts & Sciences strives to offer a world-class education in the liberal arts and sciences, to create and disseminate knowledge, and to serve the people of South Dakota, the nation, and the world. Through outstanding teaching and mentorship, cutting-edge research, creative scholarship, and committed service and engagement, the College of Arts & Sciences educates and graduates the leaders who will solve the future's most pressing challenges.

The college actively articulates and pursues its liberal arts mission. The college promotes a robust environment for scientific exploration, critical inquiry, creative expression, and the discovery of new knowledge. Our faculty, staff, and students are free to explore new ideas, engage in respectful dialogue, and contribute to public service. Our students recognize the benefits of seeking deeper understanding and acknowledging new perspectives in order to become globally informed citizens who are also locally aware and engaged. Through these activities, faculty, staff, and students feel a sense of agency in creating the future and demonstrate the relevance of the liberal arts to future careers, relationships, citizenship, and life fulfillment.

High quality and responsive education and scholarship are recognized strengths of the college. The educational experience inside and outside of the classroom prepares students for a complex, globally interconnected world. Students and faculty recognize the impact of effective advising and mentoring. These efforts are a valued part of the educational experience and are supported and reflected in workload assignments. The teaching, research, and scholarship that occurs within the college elevates our institutional reputation and impact.

We are a welcoming community that cultivates a sense of belonging in our faculty, staff, and students. We invest in the people who constitute the college

and foster an environment in which they feel agency in creating their path. People from differing backgrounds and all walks of life are active in the college and feel respected, included, and valued by the college and its priorities. We live the values of the college and devote the energy and resources required to support and strengthen our community.

We foster clear, consistent, and transparent communication with our internal and external stakeholders. We are vigilant in implementing and evolving strategies for effective multi-directional communication that simplifies the sharing of information and reflects our stakeholders' preferred means of communication. We recognize the importance of maintaining and building relationships among our stakeholders and endeavor to uphold this responsibility.

We are adaptive and responsive to the changing needs of our students, departments, faculty, staff, and society. We seek to increase the tangible resources of the college, invest in the existing strengths of the college, operate efficiently and effectively, and uphold the high standards of the institution. We have distributed our resources and administrative structure to align with and meet the needs of the college. We are accountable in developing and carrying out processes that reflect the priorities of the college, operating with the highest integrity, and maintaining trusting relationships with one another.

In 2027, the College of A&S embraces the future and its prospects for continued success.





COLLEGE OF ARTS OF SCIENCES

2022-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC THEME ONE

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Pursuing Excellence in Teaching and Learning

- **Goal 1:** Create a culture of effective student mentorship across the college community.
- **Goal 2:** Encourage and reward innovative and effective pedagogy inside and outside of the classroom.

STRATEGIC THEME TWO

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Recruiting and Retaining Students, Faculty, and Staff

- **Goal 1:** Prioritize undergraduate and graduate recruitment and retention activities that are most effective, as identified through acknowledged best practices and assembled evidence.
- **Goal 2:** Make A&S a desirable and fulfilling place to work for faculty and staff.

STRATEGIC THEME THREE

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Developing and Deploying Resources Effectively

- **Goal 1:** Increase engagement and impact of external funding including donations and research funding.
- **Goal 2:** Seek opportunities to streamline work through evaluation of existing practices and prioritization of efforts that can be directly linked to the mission and strategic plan of the college.

STRATEGIC THEME FOUR

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Cultivating an Open, Welcoming, and Responsive Community

- **Goal 1:** Implement curricula that reflect our students' needs and the expectations of the contemporary workplace and society.
- **Goal 2:** Increase the sense of belonging and community within the college.

STRATEGIC THEME FIVE

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Refining Our Message and Communication Strategy

- **Goal 1:** Articulate the definition of a liberal arts education and the content of our programs to demonstrate the benefits to internal and external stakeholders.
- **Goal 2:** Utilize up-to-date communication and marketing channels to engage external stakeholders.

Strategic Plan Champions

John Dudley

Jessica J. Messersmith

Katherine Price

STRATEGIC THEME ONE:
PURSUING EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Provide superior teaching and mentoring, rooted in the values of liberal arts, that prepares our students to solve the world’s most pressing challenges.

GOAL 1: Create a culture of effective student mentorship across the college community.

BIG STEPS

- Evaluate the USD Workload Policy, the unit-level Criteria for Evaluation of Faculty, as well as assigned faculty workload to establish an expectation of effective advising and mentorship
- Define effective mentorship, communicate its value to faculty and students, and encourage its implementation
- Develop a plan to create an environment where mentorship thrives
- Provide resources and faculty support to promote effective mentorship
- Facilitate collaborative relationships among department advisors, mentors, and the Academic and Career Planning Center throughout a student’s academic career
- Acknowledge beacons of success in mentoring

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Faculty and staff time
- Funding to support faculty in professional development activities targeted at mentoring practices
- Access to relevant data
- Stipends and awards to recognize excellence in mentoring

CHAMPION

- Associate Dean for Academics

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Academic and Career Planning Center
- Faculty advisors and mentors
- Academic Affairs
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- College workload and department expectations incorporate effective advising and mentorship
- Improved student retention and persistence
- Increased value, quality, and impact of mentoring efforts across the college as reported by faculty and students
- Established award for excellence in mentoring

GOAL 2: Encourage and reward innovative and effective pedagogy inside and outside of the classroom.

BIG STEPS

- Review unit-level Criteria for Evaluation of Faculty documents to ensure that high-impact teaching is recognized for annual evaluations and promotion and tenure

- Implement high-impact, evidence-based teaching practices throughout the curriculum
- Establish incentives for implementing high-quality teaching
- Increase the number of experiential, high-impact learning opportunities (e.g., internship and research) for students, as well as the degree of student engagement in these activities
- Prepare students for career readiness and success beyond graduation

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Faculty and staff time
- Faculty time to engage in pedagogy development activities and implement improvement actions
- Access to relevant data
- Funding to support faculty travel and development activities
- Money or awards to celebrate innovative, high-impact teaching

CHAMPION

- Associate Dean for Academics

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Center for Teaching and Learning
- Academic and Career Planning Center
- Academic Affairs
- Human Resources
- Instructors
- Research mentors

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- College workload and department expectations recognize high-impact teaching
- Department-level processes for assessing teaching and student outcomes that are meaningful and effective for program and faculty development
- Established mechanism for recognizing excellence in teaching
- Increased number of students who complete a course that implements high-impact teaching during their degree program
- Students understand how their A&S degree prepares them for life and employment after graduation and into their future



STRATEGIC THEME TWO:

RECRUITING AND RETAINING STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF

Employ effective strategies to attract, engage, and graduate students at the undergraduate and graduate levels and to attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff.

GOAL 1: Prioritize undergraduate and graduate recruitment and retention activities that are most effective, as identified through acknowledged best practices and assembled evidence.

BIG STEPS

- Engage internal and external consultants to identify best practices for student recruitment and retention
- Develop mechanism for identifying and tracking effectiveness of recruiting and retention activities
- Prioritize recruitment and retention activities demonstrated as effective and reflect the nuances of individual departments
- Strategically assign faculty to recruitment and retention activities

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Financial support to engage consultants and implement effective recruitment and retention initiatives
- Technology for resource and tracking repositories
- Access to relevant data
- Time from numerous faculty and staff

CHAMPION

- Enrollment Advisor

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Academic Affairs
- Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment
- Office of Human Resources
- Admissions
- Student Services
- Marketing Communications & University Relations
- Faculty who contribute to recruiting activities

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Repository of effective recruiting materials and activities
- Alignment between graduate assistant stipends and peer institutions
- Faculty workload assignments that capture time spent on recruitment activities
- Improved enrollment numbers in multiple departments across the college
- Improved retention and resistance rates averaged across the college

GOAL 2: Make A&S a desirable and fulfilling place to work for faculty and staff.

BIG STEPS

- Identify compensation discrepancies across the college

- Implement cohesive efforts to improve workplace climate
- Develop and implement strategies to foster a sense of agency and engagement among faculty and staff
- Implement processes to improve transparency of college decision making and progress on strategic initiatives
- Develop estimates of the personnel level and time requirements to implement practices identified in previous steps

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Financial resources
- Time
- Access to relevant data
- Physical space for holding various activities

CHAMPION

- Assistant Dean for Administration

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Office of Human Resources
- Academic Affairs
- Ombudsperson

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- The majority of A&S faculty and staff report satisfaction with working within the college
- The majority of A&S faculty and staff report ownership of their assigned responsibilities
- Established mechanism for addressing salary discrepancies within limitations of college finances and BOR policy
- Transparent decision processes are in place



STRATEGIC THEME THREE: DEVELOPING AND DEPLOYING RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY

Allocate the financial and human resources of the college to reflect the strategic needs of the college.

GOAL 1: Increase engagement and impact of external funding including donations and research funding.

BIG STEPS

- Build new and strengthen existing relationships between the College of A&S and the USD Foundation, donors, potential donors, and friends of the college that enables robust engagement with these groups and encourages donor visits to campus
- Develop repository of department initiatives/needs, allowing the USD Foundation to target donor giving levels to directly support those initiatives/needs
- Increase the total value of external funding (e.g., donations, grant funding, and other research support) to the college
- Increase the number of individual donors and external awards to the college

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Dean, department, faculty, and staff time
- USD Foundation time and resources
- Access to relevant data
- Financial support for research and development

CHAMPION

- Dean

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- USD Foundation
- USD Alumni Association
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Established repository of department initiatives/needs at various giving levels
- Alumni, donors, and friends are engaged with the A&S community and campus
- Maintained or increased externally awarded funding of research opportunities on an annual basis
- Increased the total value of donations to the college by 10% by 2027
- Increased the number of individual donors to the college by 10% by 2027

GOAL 2: Seek opportunities to streamline work through evaluation of existing practices and prioritization of efforts that can be directly linked to the mission and strategic plan of the college.

BIG STEPS

- Review and evaluate faculty service responsibilities/assignments and college committees (including structure, charges, and composition) with the goal of eliminating those assignments/committees that are less effective or do not contribute to the mission and priorities of the college

- Review and evaluate college-controlled administrative tasks with the goal of restructuring tasks to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, eliminating tasks that do not contribute or improve upon the effective functioning of the college
- Regularly evaluate the USD Workload Policy, the unit-level Criteria for Evaluation of Faculty, and assigned faculty workload to ensure workload expectations align with priorities and assigned responsibilities
- Realign workload expectations to reflect priorities and assigned responsibilities

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Time from faculty, staff, and Dean's office
- Access to relevant data
- Open-mindedness and flexibility

CHAMPION

- Assistant Dean for Administration

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Academic Affairs
- Office of Human Resources

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- A&S college committees/faculty assignments are regularly reviewed to ensure they contribute toward the mission and priorities of the college
- The administrative structure of the college effectively supports the work of A&S faculty and staff
- Department expectations and college workload are consistently reviewed to ensure alignment with the mission and strategic efforts of the college



STRATEGIC THEME FOUR:
CULTIVATING AN OPEN, WELCOMING, AND RESPONSIVE COMMUNITY

Create and maintain an environment that fosters a sense of belonging and welcomes a wide range of faculty, staff, and students to participate and contribute.

GOAL 1: Implement curricula that reflect our students’ needs and the expectations of the contemporary workplace and society.

BIG STEPS

- Identify and promote best practices for motivating faculty to engage in curriculum re-design
- Increase the number of faculty who utilize Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offerings
- Increase the number of courses that meet or exceed accessibility goals set forth by the institution
- Adopt modern curricula and innovative teaching practices to support students of differing backgrounds and life experiences

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Financial support for curriculum design and training
- Faculty time to engage in teaching and curriculum revision
- Access to relevant data

CHAMPION

- Associate Dean for Academics

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Center for Teaching and Learning
- Academic Affairs

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Increased number of A&S faculty who utilize CTL offerings
- At least 95% of A&S courses meet or exceed accessibility goals set forth by the institution by 2027
- Established best practices for teaching are implemented in courses across the college

GOAL 2: Increase the sense of belonging and community within the college.

BIG STEPS

- Identify and implement tools to measure sense of belonging among A&S faculty, staff, and students
- Identify primary needs and develop implementation plan for improving sense of belonging among A&S faculty, staff, and students
- Annual review of efforts to determine impact and potential revisions

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Expertise in appropriate assessment tools
- A&S faculty, staff, and student support and engagement
- Institutional support

- Access to relevant data
- Financial resources to gather information and implement recommended steps
- Time from faculty, staff, and administration

CHAMPION

- Dean

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Academic Affairs
- Office of Human Resources

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Implemented tools to evaluate sense of belonging
- Increased the self-reported sense of belonging by the members of our community
- Increased attendance and engagement at events held within the college



STRATEGIC THEME FIVE:
REFINING OUR MESSAGE AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Tellingly and effectively communicate the mission and values of the College of Arts & Sciences to our stakeholders.

GOAL 1: Articulate the definition of a liberal arts education and the content of our programs to demonstrate the benefits to internal and external stakeholders.

BIG STEPS

- Identify what to communicate about the arts and sciences and a liberal arts education
- Identify indicators for workplace success and personal fulfilment
- Support faculty in implementing class projects, service learning, and co-curricular activities that demonstrate the values of liberal arts
- Identify narratives for communicating the benefit and impact of research and scholarly activity to the community, businesses, and state

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Access to relevant data
- Faculty and staff time

CHAMPION

- Dean

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Academic Affairs
- Marketing Communications & University Relations
- Gallagher Center
- Institutional Research
- Honors Program
- Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Well-articulated messaging demonstrating the benefit of a liberal arts education to external stakeholders
- Increased number of class projects and service-learning activities that demonstrate the values of liberal arts by 10% by 2027
- Increased number of external stakeholders who understand and positively view the impact of research and scholarly work in South Dakota

GOAL 2: Utilize up-to-date communication and marketing channels to engage external stakeholders.

BIG STEPS

- Identify the key messages and strengths of a liberal arts education to convey through multiple media
- Determine media platforms that best foster engagement with external stakeholders, including potential students
- Develop long-term and short-term strategy for communication that maximizes engagement with audience and aligns with the mission and values of A&S

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Financial investment from the college
- Faculty and staff time
- Feedback from current and potential students
- Access to relevant data

CHAMPION

- Dean

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

- Enrollment Advisor/A&S Student Ambassadors
- Academic Affairs
- Marketing Communications & University Relations
- Admissions office
- ITS

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Increased engagement with prospective students through popular media platforms by 25% by 2027
- Increased engagement with other external stakeholders by 10% by 2027
- Established intentional plan for engaging external audiences through popular media
- Student successes communicated to internal and external stakeholders

The time and effort of the 2022 Strategic Plan Leaders and Task Force Members are acknowledged and appreciated; thank you!





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