2010 - 2013
Strategic Plan
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

DISCOVER. TEACH. ENGAGE.

UF | UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
The Foundation for The Gator Nation

Introduction

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida is the cornerstone of an elite university. Bringing together bright young minds with world-class researchers, we shape the world through our teaching, research, and service. We continue to reach higher. The quality of our students, measured by grades and test scores, is at an all time high — so is the quality of our faculty, who are garnering more grant dollars, prestigious awards, and publications than ever before.

Having achieved that success, we now face new challenges brought on by a new era of austerity. In the past, we and our peers competed primarily in spending: those who got ahead were those who were given more resources. In the coming decade, few will succeed by outspending the competition. The winners will be those who work best with limited resources, while those unwilling to adapt to new fiscal realities will fall behind. Success will require focus on core goals, attention to tradeoffs, and shrewd investments. We need not sacrifice our ideals, but we must be pragmatic about how we pursue them.

In August 2009, perceiving the need for a new strategy for these new and challenging times, I initiated a year-long strategic planning process. The process began with a questionnaire and meetings with every department in the college. An initial draft was subject to public comment, and honed through several drafts. We will not implement this plan all at once, or achieve all these goals quickly. Rather, in the coming months we will identify priority goals and specific targets to achieve. The result will be a College that pursues a time-honored mission in innovative ways.

Paul D'Anieri, Dean

Our Mission

The UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences seeks to produce path-breaking scholarly research, provide students with a high quality liberal arts education, and engage directly with society. Strategic planning ensures that we apply resources most effectively to pursue these goals, and that we strive to increase our resource base. This document identifies strategies to achieve our goals.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a threefold mission:

DISCOVER.

Conduct scholarly inquiry, produce creative works, and mentor students to become the next generation of intellectual and scientific pioneers.

TEACH.

Guide students as they embark on their own process of discovery, providing them the basic skills, knowledge, and critical habits of mind that enable them to excel in their chosen endeavors.

ENGAGE.

Reach out to the state of Florida, the nation, and the world to promote education, economic development, and civic participation.

The Plan

GENERAL STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

Focus on the goals.

- Dedicate resources to core missions.
- Avoid spreading resources too thinly.

Focus on quality.

- Recognize where more is better, and where it is not.
- Realize that some of our most valuable accomplishments are hard to quantify.

Employ sound principles in budgeting and spending.

- Prioritize: make opportunity costs clear.
- Identify funding sources prior to making spending commitments.
- Promote budget transparency, and actively educate faculty and staff.
- Recognize that increasing revenue or cutting costs provides resources for crucial missions.
- Reward innovation and entrepreneurship.

Use data to inform decisions.

- Establish targets for important goals.
- Measure progress: collect, analyze, and disseminate data.
- Use analysis to refine strategy and reallocate resources.

Make planning assumptions explicit. For each initiative, identify:

- What it will accomplish.
- Why it matters.
- How we will know it's working.
- How we will implement it.
- What the budgetary impact will be.
- Whether it will leverage external resources.

Be opportunistic.

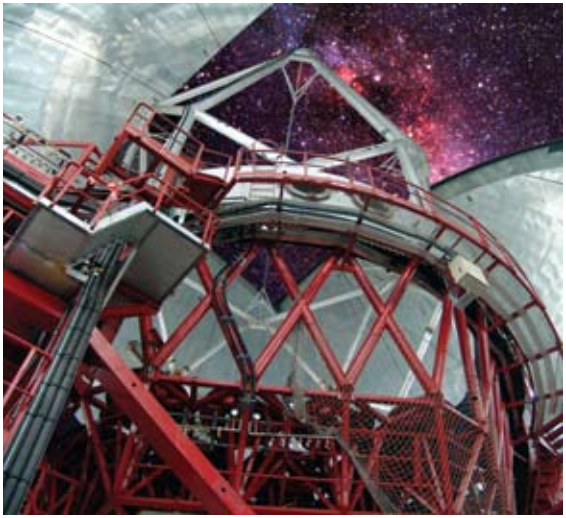
- Maintain flexibility to pursue unanticipated opportunities.
- Search actively for chances to hire great faculty away from top institutions.

Improve College administration.

- Provide more central services to reduce burden on departmental staff.
- Refine duties and processes in the new organizational structure.
- Help departments to see and utilize cross-disciplinary opportunities.
- Work effectively with the shared governance process.

Increase fundraising.

- Improve training for chairs and faculty.
- Change culture: development is everyone's concern.
- Improve use of data to target efforts for maximum results.



The Plan: Discover

Goals

Hire, develop, and retain the best faculty.

- Hire proven senior faculty.
- Hire in areas where cross-disciplinary strengths make UF attractive to the very best.
- Invest for the long term to develop and retain promising faculty.
- Provide an appreciative and collegial work environment.
- Retain our best faculty with a variety of strategies, including competitive salaries, research support, and recognition.

Develop a community of scholars within CLAS.

- Encourage interaction and collaboration across units.
- Support intra-collegial research and educational events.
- Hire in areas of established or emerging cross-disciplinary strength.

Increase grant and fellowship awards in all disciplines.

- Provide workshops for faculty to improve submissions.
- Stress that even where success rates are low and funding limited, submissions are valued.
- Provide flexibility to faculty and departments to facilitate pursuit of fellowships.
- Help faculty develop the skills needed to lead large projects.

Increase research productivity.

- Find ways to provide concentrated research time to faculty.
- Exercise CLAS leadership in cross-campus initiatives.

Improve research facilities.

- Complete new Chemistry building.
- Advance planning for a Life Sciences building.
- Keep IT hardware and software up-to-date. Budget for planned obsolescence.

The Plan: Teach

Goals

Improve and Expand Graduate Education.

Increase quality of graduate programs.

- Consider offering fewer assistantships with higher pay: strike the balance strategically.
- Emphasize increasing fellowship funds in external fundraising.

Increase number of PhD degrees.

- Concentrate funding where success rates are high and finishing times appropriate.
- Address suspended PhD programs: reform/restructure, then reopen.
- Focus on time to degree and retention.

Increase number of self-funded graduate students.

- Recruit quality international students with support from their governments.
- Provide leverage for students with external support (e.g., NSF Fellowships).
- Provide programs for UF undergraduates to complete master's degrees.
- Develop new programs in areas of strength that are likely to grow.

Improve Undergraduate Education.

Improve assessment and use the findings to improve teaching.

- Improve the evaluation process for better feedback on teaching and learning.
- Strengthen the role of peer evaluation and mentoring.
- Institute a CLAS-wide student exit survey process.
- Survey alumni on quality and content of CLAS education.

Use teaching resources more efficiently.

- Use enrollment data to match course offerings with student needs and curricular goals.
- Put our best teachers in introductory courses to draw students to under-enrolled majors.
- Create new curricular options in emerging areas of importance.
- Help individuals and departments explore the best uses of technology.

Improve student advising.

- Provide more information on career opportunities for CLAS majors.
- Restructure advising center to facilitate long term planning and staff development.
- Expand use of student volunteers to augment professional advisors.

Support activity of non-tenure track faculty.

- Improve the status of lecturers: focus more on professional development.
- Recognize quality contributions to teaching, advising, and service.
- Convert adjunct positions into lecturer positions where feasible.

Improve the teaching of core skills.

- Improve writing instruction at all levels.
- Use better diagnostics to increase success in entry-level math.
- Improve training of graduate teaching assistants.

Expand experiential learning.

- Collaborate with the Honors Program to provide increased research opportunities.
- Seek external support for experiential learning, and provide matching funds where needed.
- Increase international opportunities for students.
- Identify service learning opportunities and internships.

The Plan: Engage

Goals

Enhance outreach.

- Develop and implement an outreach plan for CLAS.
- Link outreach to departmental development plans.
- Provide programs around the state, using distance education if needed.
- Work with other colleges to make UF a leader in partnerships with K-12 education.

Contribute to economic development.

- Support innovations that have a commercial impact.
- Assist Florida businesses, schools, and governments.

Increase civic engagement.

- Provide forums for discussion of public issues.
- Demonstrate the connection between liberal education and a free society.
- Provide expertise to Florida governments and citizen groups.

Embrace international opportunities.

- Seek students, collaborators, and funding abroad.
- Leverage CLAS's vast strengths in international affairs.
- Help improve Floridians' engagement with the world.

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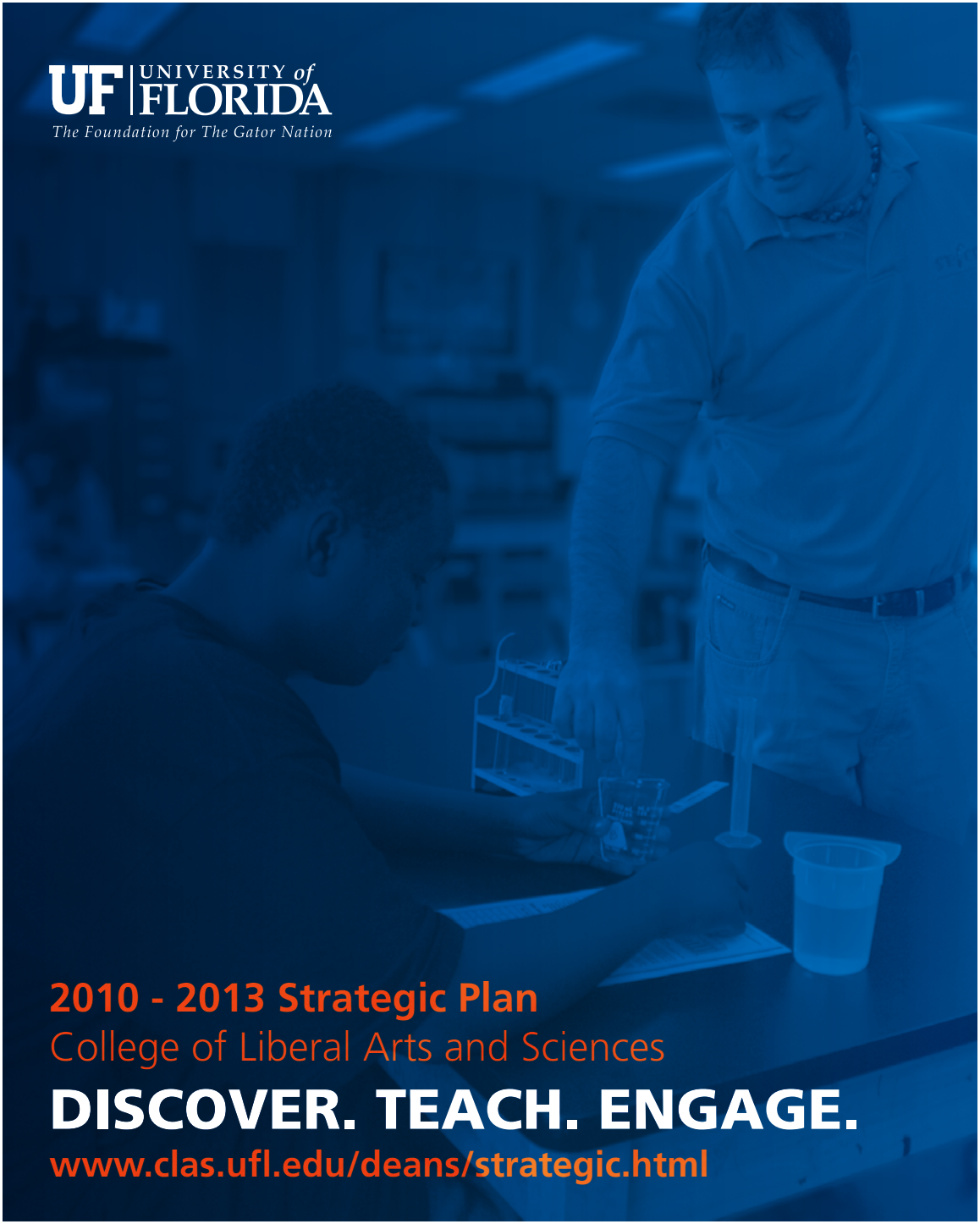

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www.clas.ufl.edu/deans/strategic.html