

***Charge to the Task Force on College Design: College of Liberal Arts***

***Mission:***

*To prepare a strategy to position the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) as one of the premier colleges of liberal arts in the nation, consistent with the University's goal to become one of the top three public research universities in the world.*

***Deliverables:***

- *Recommendations regarding the optimal design, structure, and organization of CLA, including whether the University has the appropriate grouping of disciplines under the CLA umbrella or whether a different collegiate structure would better promote the University's goal to become one of the top three public research universities in the world.*
- *Recommendations regarding a vision for the future of the College of Liberal Arts in a dynamic urban environment.*
- *Recommendations regarding how CLA can leverage its current strengths and comparative advantages and chart a course for the future, consistent with the University's goal to become one of the top three public research universities in the world.*
- *Recommendations regarding promotion of interdisciplinary work both across departments within CLA and across collegiate lines.*
- *Recommendations regarding creation of an environment in which excellence is expected and supported, with special attention to: (1) faculty research and creative work; (2) undergraduate and graduate education; (3) student outcomes, including retention and timely graduation; and (4) public engagement.*
- *Recommendations regarding: (1) cultivating intellectual and analytical inquiry skills across the liberal arts curriculum; (2) fostering public engagement; and (3) advancing integrative learning.*
- *Recommendations regarding the strengthening of relationships between CLA and community resources.*

**Key Recommendations of the Task Force**

The excellence of faculty research and creative activity is the key to enhancing rankings of the College of Liberal Arts. Four themes are interwoven throughout our recommendations for achieving that excellence: interdisciplinarity, interconnectedness, effectiveness, and identity. We advocate that the College of Liberal Arts continue to develop its intellectual and artistic engagement with the Twin Cities. Connections between the local and the global should become a hallmark of the education that the college provides. Diversity must be a central part of the intellectual project of CLA, as well as an important goal for the recruitment of faculty and students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. We recommend a substantial infusion of resources to provide scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students; to increase the size of the CLA faculty by 44 positions, and to increase the compensation of faculty and staff.

**Improve the quality of undergraduate education and retention and graduation rates by the following measures:**

- Invest heavily in high-demand entry level courses, to assure that the courses are pedagogically imaginative and effective.
- Increase scholarship funding for freshmen and for upper-division and transfer students.

- Implement a week-long pedagogy workshop for new assistant professors.
- Implement a program of Junior Seminars, some of which would be interdisciplinary and others of which would be departmental courses.
- Increase the number of research opportunities and community engagement opportunities for undergraduates.
- Make closer connections with the two-year institutions which are source-schools for large numbers of transfer students.
- CLA must provide leadership in developing ways of assessing outcomes of liberal education for all students.

**Improve the excellence of the graduate program with the following measures:**

- Create a Distinguished Teaching Fellows program for outstanding PhD candidates and make more teaching resources available to all graduate students.
- Increase the level of graduate student support.
- Provide more systematic mentoring to graduate students.

**Foster faculty excellence using the following measures:**

- Increase the size of CLA by 44 faculty members in order to provide additional intellectual synergy in selected areas and to make possible new undergraduate initiatives, including a new program of Junior Seminars.
- Increase the amount of time faculty have available to do research and teach by reducing the amount of time spent in routine administrative tasks through increased efficiency and by increased staff support.
- Assure rigorous promotion and tenure standards and assure that probationary faculty receive systematic mentoring.
- Develop strategies to develop interdisciplinary research and teaching.

**Increase the visibility of CLA within the university, the local community, the state, and nationally.**

**Members of Task Force**

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