Strategic Plan 2018-2023

Statement of College Values and Overarching Action Items

As the College of Arts and Sciences works toward its strategic goals identified in the plan that follows, we will be guided by several values and overarching action items that recognize the ultimate source of the college's strengths: the excellence and dedication of our students, faculty, and staff. The college can best work toward its goals by preserving and increasing the strengths of the people who comprise the college.

The college will *dare to be excellent* in teaching, research and scholarship, and service. We will:

Hire for excellence and ensure an inclusive environment.

- *Hire strategically*. The college will seek, hire, and retain highly qualified faculty and staff, based upon their ability to contribute to the college's strategic goals and the university's mission.
- *Hire for diversity*. Increasing the diversity of the faculty and staff will increase innovation in thinking, research, and teaching. The college will develop hiring practices aimed at building a diverse faculty and staff that reflect the heterogeneity of our urban campus and our students, and will add depth to our intellectual community.
- *Cultivate diversity and inclusivity.* The college will celebrate and expand the diversity of ideas emerging from the college's varied disciplines. We will foster a climate of inclusivity for all faculty, staff, and students.

Encourage excellence through mentoring.

- *Create and invest in mentoring and development*. The college will prepare our faculty and staff to advance professionally and assume leadership roles within departments, schools, and institutes; at the college and university levels; within academic and professional disciplines; and within society at large.
- *Value and encourage multidisciplinarity as well as disciplinary excellence*. Twenty-first century research and scholarship and social challenges continue to increase in complexity. The college's response to increasing complexity must include multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches. The college will recognize and reward multidisciplinary efforts and will encourage extraordinary research within the disciplines.

Hold ourselves to the highest standards, seek out resources needed, and tell our story.

- *Standards*. The college's faculty and staff will adhere to the highest standards of academic rigor and professional integrity in teaching, research and scholarship, and service.

- *Cultivate transparency.* The college will make informed decisions by setting and monitoring progress indicators, publicizing our progress, and consulting broadly with faculty and staff. The college will allocate existing resources strategically and fairly based upon measurable achievement, demonstrated need, and significance for the college's core mission.
- *Allocate resources*. The college will allocate resources to increase faculty and staff productivity in serving the needs of the college and furthering its mission.
- *Obtain new resources.* The college will seek new sources of financial support for college and departmental priorities through external fundraising and internal opportunities.
- *Communicate effectively*. Internally and externally, the college will publicize our efforts and accomplishments as we pursue our educational, social, research, and scholarly missions.

Strategic Plan: Executive Summary

The College of Arts and Sciences seeks to fulfill the mission of Georgia State University as it relates to disciplines in the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and natural and computational sciences. The college and its faculty, staff, and students educate leaders in these broad fields, and make discoveries and create new knowledge that advances our understanding of the world we inhabit and the grand challenges that we face. The goals listed below support the goals of the university strategic plan.

GOAL 1	Create curricula, academic experiences, and pedagogies that maximize academic and career success for undergraduate students

Initiative 1.1: Prepare students for current and future workforce needs through focused career advisement at each academic stage. Embed career awareness training within and across each major. Formalize and highlight career competencies (e.g., critical thinking and problem solving, oral and written communication, digital technology, teamwork and collaboration, leadership, and global and intercultural fluency) within each degree program, and infuse career competencies within degree programs where they do not exist. Pursue partnerships with local and regional employers. Engage with employers to communicate the value of a liberal arts and sciences education and the breadth of competencies and strengths our graduates add to the workforce.

Initiative 1.2: Expand active learning opportunities through signature experiences and engagement with extra- and co-curricular programs within or beyond the university.

Initiative 1.3: Improve graduation rates while maintaining academic rigor.

GOAL 2	Strengthen and grow distinctive graduate and professional programs that assure development of the next generation of researchers and societal leaders

Initiative 2.1: Enhance the quality of our graduate programs through recruitment of high quality students, improved mentoring, time to completion, and job placement, informed by nationally recognized best practices.

Initiative 2.2: Prepare graduate students for the full breadth of careers they will pursue, and establish a culture that embraces career diversity in Arts and Sciences graduate programs. Develop innovative, flexible master's and graduate certificate programs that have clear ties to academia, business, government, industry, healthcare, and non-profit sectors, and are designed to meet market needs.

Initiative 2.3: Assess current graduate student funding models across the college in order to optimize use of funds for graduate students and develop a comprehensive graduate funding policy.

GOAL 3	Increase impactful research

Initiative 3.1: Provide an environment that stimulates research productivity, including discipline-based, multidisciplinary, and collaborative research in the areas of university research strengths.

Initiative 3.2: Increase external grant and fellowship funding, meeting the university's annual target for the college, subject to ongoing external funding constraints.

Initiative 3.3: Strengthen research administration and infrastructure to support the research needs of the faculty.

Initiative 3.4: Raise the profile of our research and scholarship through enhanced communication and recognition of excellence.

GOAL 4	Address the complex challenges of cities

Initiative 4.1: Support multidisciplinary research on cities and the quality of urban life.

Initiative 4.2: Increase opportunities for students to engage in urban-related learning experiences.

Initiative 4.3: Be a trusted and sought-after partner in Atlanta and other cities in the U.S. and internationally.

GOAL 5	Increase global and international research, learning experiences, and outreach

Initiative 5.1: Encourage and support global and globally-focused multidisciplinary research.

Initiative 5.2: Increase opportunities for students to engage in globally-oriented learning experiences, including study abroad and international exchanges.

Initiative 5.3: Increase global engagement and outreach to bring Georgia State to the world and the world to Georgia State.

From Plan to Action

By themselves, these five goals are *aspirations*. Achieving our goals requires translating aspirations into action. The remainder of this document outlines the specific action steps that will implement each initiative within each goal.

GOAL 1	**Create curricula, academic experiences, and pedagogies that maximize academic and career success for undergraduate students**

A major strength of the college is the diversity of its student body. Students are heterogeneous with respect to race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, first-generation status, disabilities, age, and more. The national recognition Georgia State has earned for closing achievement gaps inspires us to focus on making continued gains in academic success: increasing graduation rates and decreasing the time to complete a bachelor's degree. The college's strategic plan adds a critical dimension of career planning and technological competency that is necessary to prepare students for the current and future workforce. We will develop the initiatives below in partnership with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), Career Services, and advisement, as well as with corporate partners and potential employers in the Atlanta region.

Initiative 1.1: Prepare students for current and future workforce needs through focused career advisement at each academic stage. Embed career awareness training within and across each major. Formalize and highlight career competencies (e.g., critical thinking and problem solving, oral and written communication, digital technology, teamwork and collaboration, leadership, and global and intercultural fluency) within each degree program, and infuse career competencies within degree programs where they do not exist. Pursue partnerships with local and regional employers. Engage with employers to communicate the value of a liberal arts and sciences education and the breadth of competencies and strengths our graduates add to the workforce.

> Action 1.1.1: Dedicate a senior leadership position in the college focused on cultivating external relationships and integrating workforce needs with individual degree programs and curricula to prepare students for successful careers. Form a Career Advisory Council of employers in the region to advise college departments and leadership on desired workforce career and technological skills.

> Action 1.1.2: Assess the current state of career preparation in each major and develop a comprehensive plan to highlight existing opportunities to develop career readiness competencies and infuse career preparation into each curriculum, consistent with the university's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Develop and offer discipline-specific career-related training and education opportunities; identify faculty and staff liaisons throughout the college to serve as leaders and resources for career-readiness initiatives.

> Action 1.1.3: Ensure that advisement includes career planning and graduate education preparation for all undergraduate students in the college. Increase efforts to recruit and train

faculty and other role models to provide career mentoring, particularly for first-generation and underrepresented minority students.

Action 1.1.4: Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for building minors, certificates, and/or degree concentrations designed to meet career competencies, as identified through consultation with the Career Advisory Council.

Initiative 1.2: Expand active learning opportunities through signature experiences and engagement with extra- and co-curricular programs within or beyond the university.

Action 1.2.1: Ensure that all students have the opportunity to engage in research, internships, service learning, international exchanges, domestic field schools, and other signature experiences.

Action 1.2.2: Develop and disseminate training and support materials to advisors on the breadth of academic opportunities available to students across the college. Encourage advisors to guide students to appropriate signature experience and extra/co-curricular options through deliberate, major-specific, career-related opportunities as they progress in the major.

Initiative 1.3: Improve graduation rates while maintaining academic rigor.

Action 1.3.1: Encourage and incentivize pedagogical innovation through training and collaboration, taking into account workload demands of innovation and professional review policies.

Action 1.3.2: Target courses with high DFW rates, particularly those in high enrollment and gateway courses, for course redesign and transformation.

Action 1.3.3: Partner with CETL to provide faculty with the skills and training needed to develop high quality and accessible online and hybrid courses, including the design and implementation of well-validated rubrics for evaluating online and hybrid courses.

Measuring Progress

M 1.A: Career competencies identified and integrated within and across each major.

M 1.B: Increase percentage of students using online portfolios and other means to convey career readiness.

M 1.C: Increase number of students in signature experiences.

M 1.D: Decrease DFW rates in high enrollment, gateway, and language courses.

M 1.E: Increase graduation rates

GOAL 2	**Strengthen and grow distinctive graduate and professional programs that assure development of the next generation of researchers and societal leaders**

Graduate education is a hallmark of an R1 (Doctoral University: Highest Research Activity) institution. Discipline rankings and healthy research funding depend upon high-quality graduate programs and graduate training at both the masters and doctoral levels. Our ability to meet the graduate and professional needs of the Atlanta region and beyond depends upon understanding and meeting the graduate training needs of academia, but also regional business, industry, healthcare, government agencies, and non-profits.

Initiative 2.1: Enhance the quality of our graduate programs through recruitment of high quality students, improved mentoring, time to completion, and job placement, informed by nationally recognized best practices.

> Action 2.1.1: Create program profiles and dashboard data summarizing indicators of program quality; publish them on each program's website. The college will monitor program quality indicators and use them in strategic resourcing and Academic Program Reviews. Meet national discipline standards for time to degree and other indicators.

> Action 2.1.2: In collaboration with the college Graduate Student Services office, task departments with generating graduate program plans and projections for graduate student recruitment, progression, completion, and outcomes. The Graduate Student Services office will implement an electronic system for monitoring degree progression milestones for all graduate programs in the college.

> Action 2.1.3: Develop program-level plans for advising and mentoring graduate students, using nationally-accepted best practices in advising and mentoring. Implement the use of individual development plans (IDPs) to help students plan their graduate careers and reach their professional and career goals. Create college-level training opportunities and resource materials that include training on multicultural competence and mentoring diverse student populations.

Initiative 2.2: Prepare graduate students for the full breadth of careers they will pursue, and establish a culture that embraces career diversity in Arts and Sciences graduate programs. Develop innovative, flexible master's and graduate certificate programs that have clear ties to academia, business, government, industry, healthcare, and non-profit sectors, and are designed to meet market needs.

> Action 2.2.1: Dedicate a senior leadership position in the college focused on cultivating external relationships and integrating workforce needs with individual degree programs and curricula to prepare students for successful careers within and outside of academia. Form a Career Advisory Council of employers in the region to advise college departments and leadership on desired workforce career and technological skills.

Action 2.2.2: Use analysis of academic and other workforce needs to determine viable opportunities for innovative graduate program development.

Action 2.2.3: Encourage and incentivize programmatic and pedagogical innovation through training and collaboration, taking into account workload demands and professional review policies.

Action 2.2.4: In collaboration with Associate Provost for Graduate Programs, CETL, Career Services, and newly-formed Career Advisory Council (as defined above), assess market trends and define career competencies that will provide essential professional skills and create new career opportunities for graduate students.

Initiative 2.3: Assess current graduate student funding models across the college in order to optimize use of funds for graduate students and develop a comprehensive graduate funding policy.

Action 2.3.1: Create and charge a college-level task force to assess graduate student funding in every unit in order to capture uniform, reproducible data at the student, program, and college levels. Develop annual budget worksheets on a common template that track graduate student funding.

Action 2.3.2: Develop and implement best practices and policy recommendations on workload, stipend amounts, time limits on funding, possible GTA and GRA compensation minima, and targets for increasing external funding for graduate students.

Measuring Progress

M 2.A: Create and publish Program Profiles in every department; every department and institute has specific targets for recruitment, progress to degree, time to degree, and placement of graduates.

M 2.B: Increase number of faculty trained on best practices in graduate student mentoring.

M 2.C: Increase number of professionally-oriented master's and certificate programs.

M 2.D: Graduate funding model created and policies for funding implemented.

GOAL 3	**Increase impactful research**

The university's strategic plan calls for Georgia State to become a leading research university addressing the most challenging issues of the 21st Century. The college recognizes and embraces its responsibility in helping the university meet its research goal. The college seeks to build an inclusive and collaborative environment that expands research productivity and promotes faculty and student research that will achieve global distinction and recognition for success in addressing fundamental and societal issues. Research and scholarship in the college spans the fields of humanities, social and behavioral sciences, computational and natural sciences. We will value and support research and scholarly contributions across all fields of inquiry. The college's goal: to make discoveries that will expand knowledge and will positively impact our global and local societies.

Initiative 3.1: Provide an environment that stimulates research productivity, including discipline-based, multidisciplinary, and collaborative research in the areas of university research strengths.

> Action 3.1.1: Strive for a healthy balance of research faculty at all ranks of tenure and promotion.

> Action 3.1.2: Establish research productivity metrics at the unit level that reflect discipline-specific standards and current and future funding opportunities.

> Action 3.1.3: Launch pilot research mentoring program at the college level and support departments in establishing unit-level mentoring programs that will guide new investigators and other faculty in setting and meeting their research productivity and funding goals as well as the standards of tenure and promotion.

> Action 3.1.4: Create a college development plan that prioritizes the establishment of endowed professorships and chairs and will raise funds that support faculty research initiatives.

Initiative 3.2: Increase external grant and fellowship funding, meeting the university's annual target for the college, subject to ongoing external funding constraints.

> Action 3.2.1: Incentivize grant applications through seed funding or course releases. Assess the return-on-investment of seed research programs.

> Action 3.2.2: Develop college-wide strategy to enable faculty to take advantage of the diversity of available funding streams, including individual PI grants, multi-investigator grants, program projects, team awards, center grants, instrumentation grants, research fellowships, external contracts, corporate funding, and commercialization of translational research.

> Action 3.2.3: Develop a strategy to provide grant-writing support. Connect faculty and students with internal and external experts to help review and focus grant applications; assemble mock review panels at various levels.

> Action 3.2.4: Pursue systematic approach for successful nomination of faculty for national honorific awards and recognitions.

Initiative 3.3: Strengthen research administration and infrastructure to support the research needs of the faculty.

> Action 3.3.1: Hire a College Grants Officer to enhance and professionalize research administration; assess the number of grants and contracts staff that are needed.

> Action 3.3.2: Develop and maintain databases that archive and track external grant and fellowship applications, successful grant and fellowship awards including multi-investigator team grants, and names of faculty who have served as grant or fellowship reviewers.

> Action 3.3.3: Optimize use of available research space on a per-need basis; facilitate the use of shared research space within and across departments and the college.

Initiative 3.4: Raise the profile of our research and scholarship through enhanced communication and recognition of excellence.

> Action 3.4.1: Leverage university-wide initiatives (e.g., Next Generation) in order to enhance and expand current college strengths and specific areas of research focus. Coordinate submission of multidisciplinary applications. Develop new research themes that take advantage of our strengths and prepare us for future growth.

> Action 3.4.2: Create a Humanities Research Center at the college level that will showcase the college's best humanities research and scholarship, build a cohesive research community in the humanities, encourage growth in humanistic research, encourage growth in grant applications in the humanities, and attract foundation support.

> Action 3.4.3: Develop and disseminate effective internal and external communication about faculty and student scholarship via social media, dean's newsletter, collaborative seminars, visiting scholars, public scholarship, and other means.

Measuring our Progress

> M 3.A: Set, track, and meet research productivity metrics within each department.

> M 3.B: Continue to track timeliness of grant and fellowship submissions to maintain 100% on-time submission rate.

> M 3.C: Increase external funding.

> M 3.D: Benchmark and set targets to ensure proper ratio of post-award grant dollars managed per grants and contracts officer.

> M 3.E: Increase faculty award nominations.

GOAL 4	Address the complex challenges of cities

The College of Arts and Sciences is an active partner in the university's goal to be a leader in addressing the challenges of our urban environments. As of the writing of this strategic plan, more than 60 college faculty members across a diverse range of disciplines are actively engaged in research and scholarship on cities, the health of urban communities, urban sustainability, and more. As a partner with Atlanta and other cities around the globe, the college conducts high-quality research on urban life and urban environments. In partnership with Georgia State's Urban Studies Institute and other units across the university, we seek to expand our leadership in tackling the complex challenges of our cities; we seek to become the university and college that Atlanta turns to for research to solve its problems as Atlanta realizes its goal to be a vibrant modern city, and to fulfill its workforce needs through excellent training and education.

Initiative 4.1: Support multidisciplinary research on cities and the quality of urban life.

> Action 4.1.1: Support research through seed grants and pilot projects on urban research based in disciplines of the college, as well as symposia and faculty exchanges aimed at growing research related to cities locally and globally.

> Action 4.1.2: Working with departments and faculty research teams, create partnerships and collaborations across the university and with community organizations and neighboring universities in order to identify and address the needs of the Atlanta region.

Initiative 4.2: Increase the opportunities for students to engage in urban-related learning experiences.

> Action 4.2.1: Enhance existing curricula to increase opportunities for students at all levels to learn about and engage in urban topics through city-based signature experiences, including summer learning experiences; perspectives (PERS) courses focused on urban transportation, urban water, community development, etc.; and research projects.

> Action 4.2.2: Facilitate student acquisition of the university City Scholar designation by promoting the program through advisement and other means, and by identifying additional urban-focused courses that can be used to gain the honor.

> Action 4.2.3: Further develop graduate programs focused on applying and creating new knowledge on urban challenges.

> Action 4.2.4: In partnership with Career Services and in consultation with Career Advisory Council (as defined in Goals 1 and 2), determine the career advantages of city-based educational experiences and integrate them into major-level experiences.

Initiative 4.3: Be a trusted and sought-after partner in Atlanta and other cities in the U.S. and internationally.

> Action 4.3.1: Identify, track, and strengthen our network of community stakeholders.

Action 4.3.2: Leverage community partnerships and relationships with alumni and other supporters to fund research on the challenges of cities as well as city-based educational and outreach programs that benefit our students, partners, and the citizens of Atlanta.

Action 4.3.3: Develop community-facing continuing education opportunities to share our expertise on Atlanta.

Action 4.3.4: Develop broadcast media programming around cross-disciplinary urban themes that educates the community and publicizes the wealth of research and learning opportunities in the college focused on cities.

Measuring our Progress

M 4.A: Increase grants, publications, conference attendance that focuses on urban issues.

M 4.B: Increase courses and course enrollments focused on urban issues.

M 4.C: Increase the number of students earning the City Scholar designation.

M 4.D: Increase number of students carrying out urban-focused research projects, internships, co-ops, and community-based service learning projects.

M 4.E: Increase number of public symposia, lectures, and other forums on or about cities or Atlanta.

GOAL 5	**Increase global and international research, learning experiences, and outreach**

The College of Arts and Sciences is a leader in providing global education and research opportunities. In partnership with the Global Studies Institute (GSI) and other units across the college and university, we seek to expand understanding of the nature and problems of global societies, and we seek to partner with private, public, government entities to develop solutions to these global problems.

Initiative 5.1: Encourage and support global and globally-focused multidisciplinary research.

Action 5.1.1: Create capacity and appropriate incentives for faculty to engage in globally-focused research, global faculty networks, and faculty exchanges.

Action 5.1.2: Grow and diversify funding sources in support of globally-focused research.

Initiative 5.2: Increase opportunities for students to engage in globally-oriented learning experiences, including study abroad and international exchanges.

Action 5.2.1: Expand global offerings through degree and certificate programs, perspectives (PERS) courses, other courses with significant global content.

Action 5.2.2: Facilitate student acquisition of the university Global Scholar designation by promoting the program through advisement and other means, and by identifying additional globally-focused courses that can be used to gain the honor.

Action 5.2.3: Promote the study of world languages through the Certificate of Language Ability and other language credentialing.

Action 5.2.4: Increase and promote signature experiences that have a global focus, including study abroad, virtual and real exchanges, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). Coordinate programming with the Office of International Initiatives in order to facilitate these.

Action 5.2.5: In partnership with Career Services and in consultation with Career Advisory Council (as defined in Goals 1 and 2), determine the career advantages of global experiences and integrate them into major-level experiences.

Initiative 5.3: Increase global engagement and outreach to bring Georgia State to the world and the world to Georgia State.

Action 5.3.1: Sponsor conferences and symposia that focus on global topics, trends, and issues.

Action 5.3.2: Identify and establish long-term relationships with donors. Leverage donor relationships to fund research on global problems as well as global experiential education and outreach programs that benefit our students, local international communities, and our partners in Atlanta and abroad.

Action 5.3.3: Develop and implement an integrated communication strategy to disseminate research and global experiences broadly.

Action 5.3.4: Engage externally by lending scholarly expertise on critical global issues to policy-makers, domestic and foreign government entities, non-profit organizations, media outlets, multinational corporations, funding agencies, and other educational institutions.

Measuring our Progress

M 5.A: Increase international exchanges, agreements, and partnerships with educational institutions.

M 5.B: Increase research grants, publications, participation in conferences that focus on global issues.

M 5.C: Increase the number of students earning the Global Scholar designation.

M 5.D: Increase number of students with global and globally-oriented local signature experiences.

M 5.E: Increase number of students earning Certificate of Language Ability.

M 5.F: Increase foundation funds in support of faculty and student global engagement.