

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES (CLAS)

November 2021

Introduction

The University of Iowa (UI) Operations Manual requires that reviews of programs be conducted regularly. In accordance with this operating procedure, Executive Vice President and Provost Kevin Kregel formed a committee to conduct a review (“the Review Committee”) of the UI College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) and charged it to carry out a focused review and to prepare this report.

The Review Committee consisted of the following members:

- Brandi Janssen, Clinical Associate Professor, UI College of Public Health—Co-Chair
- Sarah Vigmostad, Associate Professor, UI College of Engineering—Co-Chair
- Craig Ellermeier, Professor, UI Carver College of Medicine
- Erika Ernst, Associate Professor, UI College of Pharmacy
- Melissa Lehan Mackin, Associate Professor, UI College of Nursing
- Dawn Anderson, Professor of Instruction, UI College of Law
- Kevin Den Adel, Associate Professor of Instruction, UI Tippie College of Business
- Jonathan Templin, Professor and E.F. Lindquist Chair, UI College of Education
- Clarence Lang, Professor, Susan Welch Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, The Pennsylvania State University—External Reviewer
- Jane McLeod, Provost Professor and Associate Executive Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Indiana University—External Reviewer

Materials Consulted and Individuals/Groups Interviewed

Materials used to inform the Review Committee included the charge for the review, the 2021 CLAS self-study, the 2014 review report, and other materials requested by the Review Committee.

Individuals and groups interviewed were selected by the Provost’s Office and included individuals from CLAS and related programs, and UI leadership. The interview schedule appears in the Appendix. We refer to these individuals as “visitors” in this review document.

Charge for Focused Review

The Review Committee was asked to evaluate CLAS based on the following areas:

I. Student Success:

- a. Identification of Departments and areas of strength and excellence in the College
- b. Identification of Departments and areas that should be considered for growth and targeted for strategic investment, as well as opportunities for consolidation
- c. Assessment of educational offerings, including the best methods for the development of content to prepare students for future career paths

II. Faculty/Departmental Considerations:

- a. Assessment and development of robust, effective and developmentally based annual and post tenure review processes
- b. Expectations for teaching, including amount, timing, and delivery of content; consideration of activities of non-research active faculty

- c. Role clarifications for DEOs and other departmental leaders, including consolidation of roles in smaller units
- III. Building a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Community:
 - a. Development of strategies to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff
 - b. Address undergraduate retention and graduation rates, especially in first-generation and URM students
- IV. Fiscal Management:
 - a. Fiscal management that allows for both transparency and positioning for the next phase of College life
 - b. Identifying efficiencies and expanded innovations to promote cost containments.
- V. College Structure:
 - a. Review Dean’s level structure for service needs and impact on Departments and larger university.

Introduction

The Review Committee is grateful for the opportunity to provide this Review Report. We have done our best to address the items in the charge but were not provided enough information to offer informed recommendations on all of them. We note these limitations in the relevant sections of the report. Our report acknowledges strengths in CLAS but focuses special attention on current challenges and recommendations to address them.

I. Building a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive (DEI) Community

The Review Committee chose to reorder the items in the charge so that the topic of DEI appears first. We did this to emphasize what we observed to be CLAS’s most pressing issue, which is to cultivate a more supportive climate for faculty and students to succeed, while continuing to build a more inclusive community. We also intend this placement to highlight the relevance of DEI to all components of CLAS’s research, teaching, and service missions. While the items in the charge under this heading specifically pertain to diversity, we note that creating an atmosphere of equity and inclusion for all members of CLAS are prerequisites to achieving a diverse community. Therefore, themes of equity and inclusion run through all aspects of this report.

a. Development of strategies to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff

Some findings in the review call into question whether UI’s stated commitment to DEI is sincere. Despite the current Dean’s long-standing engagement in DEI, CLAS has struggled to recruit and retain faculty from historically underrepresented racial minority (URM) groups. One particularly visible example is the absence of any Native American faculty in the Native American and Indigenous Populations program. Additionally, the current promotion and tenure processes do not reward and support research, teaching, and service that advance DEI. One faculty visitor to the Review Committee succinctly captured the skepticism that others expressed by saying that “currently, faculty have zero accountability to be even mediocre in their support for DEI in order to advance [into institutional leadership].” Other faculty visitors described the CLAS climate as “toxic”, making some faculty reluctant to recruit students or other faculty of color into the current campus environment.

According to the Office of Institutional Equity, 224 faculty members left CLAS in 2016–2020. Of those, 10.7% identified as American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, or Hispanic/Latinx. This

raises concern because, according to the CLAS 2020 DEI Annual Report, only 9.2% of faculty in total have these identities. Any attrition of URM faculty is impactful. Thus, CLAS is encouraged to comprehensively examine what – if any – efforts are in place (and what resources exist) to support the retention of faculty of color. As noted above, current faculty promotion materials do not consider the ways that faculty members support and advance (or undermine) DEI efforts. This example highlights the discrepancy between statements of support for DEI and actions that appear not to see DEI as central to achieving institutional excellence. Faculty, not only in CLAS, but across the university may want to reconsider the role DEI efforts should play in career progression and promotion.

Unlike faculty reviews, staff performance reviews do consider DEI within their “Universal Competencies.” Staff had positive remarks about succession planning and staff advancement opportunities. However, they also noted that budget limitations have historically slowed staff advancement; at times advancement opportunities have not been commensurate with staff contributions to the college.

We encourage the use of exit interviews for faculty and staff departures, so that CLAS can better understand the degree to which departmental and collegiate climate, advancement opportunities, salary, and other factors contributed to a decision to leave. The needs and opportunities described above underscore the need for a designated DEI officer within CLAS.

While salary concerns were noted in the self-study, two other factors play a significant role in faculty and staff retention: the overall departmental and collegiate climate and lack of structured support for mentorship. Addressing salary concerns is important, but CLAS must also develop a more comprehensive retention strategy that critically examines the environment, responds with changes, and visibly supports and promotes DEI. To this end, DEOs can proactively address faculty retention by: considering how they can support each of their faculty to be successful; recognizing that their department’s climate is a major factor impacting faculty retention; advocating for sufficient resources to advance each faculty members’ careers; and creating a supportive environment that recognizes the impact and contributions made by their faculty. We note that current levels of structured mentorship for underrepresented and early-career faculty are insufficient. We return to this issue below in IIIa.

With respect to staff retention, we offer similar recommendations to staff supervisors: there are many ways to proactively support staff retention, through attention to departmental (or unit-level) climate, mutual respect, and advancement opportunities that align with staff contributions and experience.

Attention to climate

The Review Committee encourages CLAS leadership and UI administration to make DEI central to all decisions and processes and recognize and embrace DEI as essential to achieving excellence in all aspects of its mission. This transitional moment offers CLAS the opportunity to assess all programs, majors, and activities with a new vision for how they might contribute to strengthening DEI initiatives. For example, the Review Committee heard the claim that the world languages requirement inhibits efforts to recruit students to CLAS programs. (We note that several faculty visitors questioned the evidentiary basis for this claim.) However, the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures has faculty with the knowledge and background to contribute to DEI efforts. By reframing the discussion and making DEI considerations central to all decisions, there is additional opportunity for

faculty and departments to become active partners who can help support new initiatives. In the example of the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, CLAS leadership can engage the Division, contribute to the DEI mission, offer an excellent opportunity to engage, value, and retain faculty from diverse backgrounds, and improve student engagement in DEI. We encourage CLAS to examine all programs for additional opportunities to enhance curricular and programmatic DEI work so as to better align action with expressed commitments to DEI.

To ensure that DEI remains central to CLAS's mission, the Review Committee strongly recommends that CLAS appoint a dedicated Director of DEI (a position currently held by the Dean). Individuals within CLAS need to be able to voice DEI concerns to someone other than the Dean, whose workload and position of influence limit the ways she can address concerns or offer DEI the focus it deserves. It is possible, through some restructuring, that this could become a core responsibility of one of the Associate Deans. Alternatively, UI administration can demonstrate its support for DEI by helping CLAS identify funding for this crucial position. We also recommend the continuation of an active networking approach that links DEI efforts in CLAS to the work of the university's recently restructured Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. It is especially important that CLAS works with this division to make sure that University policies, practices, and procedures regarding employee complaints and grievances are clear and transparent to Dean's Office personnel, DEOs, and CLAS faculty and staff more generally.

b. Address undergraduate retention and graduation rates, especially in first-generation and URM students

Graduation rates for CLAS undergraduate students are slightly higher than peer institutions, but first-year retention rates are lower. According to the CLAS self-study, 52.6% of undergraduates graduate in four years and 69.1% in six years. In comparison to rates reported by the National Center of Education Statistics (latest enrollment year was 2012), UI CLAS has higher graduation rates than other public institutions across the country, which are reported as 38.8% (four years) and 59.7% (six years). The first-year retention rate is 86.8%; this is lower than other Big 10 schools such as Northwestern (98%), University of Michigan (97%), University of Wisconsin (95%), Ohio State University (94%), Rutgers University (93%), and the University of Illinois (93%) (US News and World Report: Freshman Retention Rate at National Universities, <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/freshmen-least-most-likely-return>).

The CLAS self-study itself acknowledges that the drop/withdraw/fail (DFW) rates in introductory STEM courses are double for students who identify as underrepresented or first-generation. More information is needed to fully understand this phenomenon but, in particular, the traditional "weed-out" approach (i.e., using performance in gateway STEM courses to determine fit for a particular program or major) is an outmoded mentality that disproportionately affects underrepresented and first-generation students. While the high DFW rates require sustained focus, we are encouraged to learn that P3 funding has been awarded to help address some disparities in student success and persistence.

Visitors to the Review Committee noted a lack of funding and support to recruit students of color at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Supporting recruitment and retention as well as attention to reducing the high DFW rates may have positive budgetary implications in the long run. For example, if

students can be welcomed rather than discouraged from STEM-related majors, there is the potential for program and college growth via increased STEM majors.

II. Student Success

During our interviews and in review of the CLAS self-study, the Review Committee learned that the college is committed to enhancing student success. We were disappointed, however, that the elements of the charge, in many cases, do not align with what might commonly be considered “student success” (i.e., the charge focused more on budgetary issues of growth and/or consolidation). We have made a good faith effort to respond to each section based on review materials and visitor reports.

a. Identification of Departments and areas of strength and excellence in College

There are numerous examples of excellence across CLAS, particularly in the areas of writing/communication, physics, neuroscience, social work, and cross-disciplinary, boundary-pushing scholarship. The Review Committee recognizes that the excellence of CLAS programs depends, to some extent, on support from the larger University and administration. The success of several high-visibility programs contributes to the elevation of the larger university’s identity and reputation and this benefit seems incongruent with the level of institutional investment in these successful programs. For example, the Department of Physics is touted as a key UI area of excellence, yet Van Allen Hall, where Physics resides, has significant deferred maintenance issues (\$52 M projected by 2029), and the current physical state of the building is having a negative impact on completing research, faculty recruitment and retention, and the ability to secure new research funding. Specifically, the Review Committee heard reports that such maintenance issues were affecting the ability of faculty to pursue and obtain grant funding, a core mission of this university. In this instance, deferred maintenance has a direct impact on the financial bottom line of the university, as the financial benefits of receiving grant funding provide a direct, tangible boost to the university budget as well as an indirect set of benefits based on the prestige and international recognition of the research conducted here.

b. Identification of Departments and areas that should be considered for growth and targeted for strategic investment, as well as opportunities for consolidation

The Review Committee was not able to undertake a systematic review of all CLAS programs and cannot offer specific recommendations regarding what programs should be targeted for growth or consolidation. In general, new interdisciplinary and cross-departmental programs show strong potential for revenue growth and deserve careful consideration. Notably, deans from other UI colleges (particularly Medicine and Law) expressed enthusiasm for collaborating with CLAS on new and existing programs opportunities for more collaborations between their colleges.

Even as it targets areas for strategic investment, CLAS will have to align its size and scope with available resources. This will require defining what it means for programs to be excellent, determining how excellence will be measured, and collecting the data to support and guide future initiatives.

As it considers consolidation, it is incumbent upon CLAS to involve its shared governance bodies to develop decision-making processes that instill trust in faculty and staff. CLAS needs to engage in processes that best promote its ongoing sustainability. Departmental executive officers (DEOs)

understand that difficult decisions must be made, and they expressed clear and eager willingness to engage in the decision process. Faculty also expressed a desire to be active participants in developing principles for decision-making and setting priorities. It should be considered a strength and opportunity that individuals at all levels understand the difficulty of the situation, are committed to CLAS's success, and are willing to participate in determining the future of the college.

It is worth highlighting the current good will for CLAS deans that was expressed by the majority of faculty visitors. CLAS leadership has an opportunity to capitalize on current energy and enthusiasm to collaboratively engage in discussions to effect change. However, perceptions by faculty and staff regarding lack of transparency behind crucial decisions, or failure to collaboratively engage in decision-making, will erode the current good will. This caution is expressed by the Review Committee due to some of the concerns expressed by faculty visitors who questioned how shared decisions are made by the Dean's Office. In particular, the Review Committee heard questions about the Faculty Assembly and Executive Committee, how these entities operate in the decision-making process of CLAS, and who is eligible to participate. Even members of the Executive Committee disagreed about the extent to which they are intended to represent the interests of the faculty. Clarifying these basic governance matters will facilitate more engagement in discussions of CLAS priorities.

c. Assessment of educational offerings, including the best methods for the development of content to prepare students for future career paths

CLAS is developing well-rounded citizens with strong reasoning, writing, and critical thinking skills. Other liberal arts ideals CLAS has emphasized include ethical judgment, perspective-taking, the ability to understand and appreciate the diversity and complexity of human experience, and problem solving. An important strength is the robust core of general education classes from which students can choose. Across the university, it was recognized that liberal arts skills are critical in the workplace and for career development (e.g., the American Academy of Colleges of Nursing acknowledges that nursing is built on the basis of a strong liberal arts foundation).

CLAS has been strategic about developing new majors that align with students' interests (e.g., majors in Enterprise Leadership, Neuroscience, Criminology, Law and Justice, etc.). CLAS has begun to intentionally position itself to increase enrollment, and it should continue collaborating with the Office of Admissions to identify opportunities for growth. The strong link between the budget and the number of student majors was reiterated in numerous conversations with the Review Committee. There may be more opportunities for faculty and DEOs to consider the majors they offer, strategically tailor and promote them to students, while continuing to address the drop/fail/withdraw rates in gateway courses (referenced above). These activities should be done with an eye towards improving inclusion and retention, and right-sizing the number of collegiate majors offered, all of which will be vital for long-term financial stability. In addition, visitors to the Review Committee reported that CLAS's online programs have been successful. Whether there is an opportunity to expand online programs to generate new revenue is unclear, but worth further consideration with consultation from experts who understand this evolving market.

The Review Committee supports proposed plans for CLAS to develop and formalize discipline-specific courses on writing and communication, and the nascent collaborations with the Colleges of Nursing and Public Health (e.g., P3 application submitted Spring 2021). It appears that there are additional

opportunities to collaborate among CLAS entities, particularly by better supporting and leveraging the considerable expertise in the department of Rhetoric and at the Writing Center. These resources make critical contributions to developing the writing skills of all UI students, and there may be more opportunity to strengthen the sustainability and impact of offerings by engaging more effectively with the Magid Center. Current initiatives are on the right track, and CLAS should continue to identify funding to support them, potentially by working with the Center for Advancement.

Conversations with CLAS leadership indicate that career readiness has been included as an indicator for student success, such that the Office of Academic Programs and Student Development continues to seek and consider ways to further support career readiness and professional development. The CLAS Self-Study identifies a series of courses within CLAS that emphasize professional skills and career-focused opportunities. These approaches are promising and should continue to expand. It is unclear if these opportunities are available for all collegiate majors, nor is it clear whether or how these new courses are being assessed for effectiveness in preparing students. While we lack information about access to, and assessment of, these opportunities, it is clear that CLAS leaders are thoughtfully considering how they are preparing undergraduates for today's fluid career marketplace.

Finally, CLAS should conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its advising program. The advising ratio—which ranges from 380:1 to 480:1 students:advisor—is much higher in CLAS compared to recommended advising ratios (300:1). The staff working in Academic Advising are dedicated and knowledgeable, despite many being new to their roles. Nevertheless, advising across the college appears to be very inconsistent, and we believe that CLAS needs more advisors, more coordination, and a comprehensive evaluation of the role of staff and faculty advisors. There may be opportunities to employ computing resources to help the Advising team track students' progress and automate standard tasks so that student interactions can focus on more meaningful guidance and support. The advising office needs a more streamlined structure, and students across CLAS would benefit from additional standardization of advising practices, including specific best practices for advising and mentoring students of color and first-generation students.

III. Faculty/Departmental Considerations

CLAS faculty are productive and creative scholars and educators whose work is foundational to the reputation of the UI. The Review Committee met with faculty in all ranks and tracks to learn about their experiences and gain their insights. We recognize, however, that we may not have captured all faculty concerns, as noted in section IIIa, under Instructional Track Faculty.

a. Assessment and development of robust, effective and developmentally based annual and post tenure review processes

The Review Committee met with faculty from all tracks and ranks, the majority of whom expressed positive views about the Dean's overall performance. In addition, faculty overwhelmingly reported that the relationships between tracks and ranks are positive at the departmental level. Although a hierarchy does exist, with Tenured faculty enjoying the most benefits and protections, there is generally an effort in departments to reduce this hierarchy and engage all types of faculty in meaningful decision making. However, faculty across all tracks and ranks noted the need for a better sense of how to advance via clear and obtainable promotion guidelines and indicated a need for a better mentorship structure. Some

newer faculty feel unmoored and undervalued due to a lack of mentorship and guidance. For example, one faculty visitor to the Review Committee shared that during the first two years of their faculty appointment, they met with their department chair only once to discuss their progress towards tenure. That meeting lasted less than five minutes, and the message communicated was “You are doing fine.”

As further described below, and as evidenced by reported challenges in the promotion process for all faculty tracks, there is a need for more consistency across departments and programs across CLAS about how to advance, and more structured, organized mentoring offered at the collegiate level, in part to allow faculty to benefit from peer interactions and support outside their home departments. Reports about mentoring at the department level ranged from non-existent to formal mentoring, and this inconsistency may be better addressed at the collegiate level.

Instructional Track Faculty (ITF)

The Review Committee commends the UI for creating the ITF track, which allows non-tenure-track faculty to be engaged, offers more job stability, and provides a clearer career trajectory. It is a positive innovation, but there are challenges associated with it which we outline below. While the Review Committee remains confident that the challenges identified here are real, it recognizes that it may not have heard from a representative group of ITF during the review process. ITF requested the ability to provide anonymous comments to the Review Committee via a Qualtrics form; however, that request was denied by the Provost's office. The Review Committee wishes to be clear that CLAS leadership in no way inhibited or denied access to any CLAS stakeholder during the course of the review.

Visitors to the Review Committee consistently articulated challenges with clarity in promotion and service expectations for ITF:

- The expectations related to the current ITF load of 80%-10%-10% (teaching—service—professional development) vary among departments within CLAS. In particular, the 10% service, a small proportion of the effort allocation, was reported to be weighed too heavily during promotion decisions, with an especially problematic concentration on the allocation of service performed to the college, university, or at the national level.
- There is a disconnect between collegiate and departmental reviews for advancement with respect to what qualifies as scholarship, professional development, and service—there is a need for better alignment. Additionally, the website and the accompanying PDF describing the CLAS Instructional Track Faculty Promotion use different language regarding some expectations (for example, the use of “and” vs. “and/or” when describing service expectations, which has become a sticking point in promotion decisions).
- The expectation that ITF faculty engage in service at *all* levels is problematic: one of the policy documents says “department, college, *and* university service.” Requiring service at all three levels is unreasonable, when standard service load is specified as 10% of the position. Visitors to the Review Committee presented additional specific examples of problems with the service expectations:
 - Some ITF provided extensive service at the departmental level but were not promoted because they did not engage in service at the institutional level.
 - Visitors indicated a desire for ITF to be recognized for meaningful departmental-level service, such as directing an undergraduate program. This work is critical to departmental

- and collegiate missions but does not always appear to be considered appropriate service that contributes to ITF promotion.
- Service contributions outside the department are limited by the number of available service opportunities for ITF at the collegiate or university level. The large number of ITF and the limited number of available collegiate service opportunities are further compounded by the fact that many committees either require members to be tenure-track faculty or otherwise limit the number of ITF permitted on the committee.
 - The Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (further described below) with ITF seem to convolute the promotion process even more. The ITF Policy published in PDF form indicates that the MOUs will help inform the decision of promotion as well.
 - ITF have an expectation to pursue faculty development, but there is no funding available for it to support travel or conference attendance.

Of note, there are still no professor-level ITF in CLAS. Other colleges (Tippie, Engineering, Law, and Nursing) that adopted the ITF in 2017 have advanced faculty to Professor of Instruction, commensurate to their experience. Visitors to the Review Committee offered examples of individuals who have been teaching in CLAS for 20 to 30 years but were appointed to the lowest rank of Lecturer when the new ITF position was created. CLAS should undertake a systematic review of ITF experiences with the goal of rectifying these awkward and potentially inequitable situations. In sum, CLAS should establish a better overarching set of expectations—clarifying them and making sure they are obtainable—especially regarding ITF service requirements.

Tenure Track Faculty

Many Tenure Track faculty are doing cutting-edge work, pushing the boundaries of public-facing scholarship, community engagement, and scientific discovery. However, despite CLAS's stated value of and desire for publicly engaged scholarship, some scholars who do novel work may not be rewarded for it during promotion and tenure because they have fewer publications in conventional forums.

CLAS needs to establish how to evaluate scholarship in new and emerging areas. Traditional artifacts of scholarly productivity are changing. Remaining committed only to narrow ideas of appropriate scholarly output does not promote inclusion and may inhibit innovation. One specific concern is the incorporation of the digital humanities. A number of digital humanities scholars have been hired, but the Review Committee's findings suggest their work has not been fully supported or rewarded, at least not without additional expectations of traditional output. For instance, one visitor to the Review Committee noted, "I just went ahead and wrote the book," despite their deep body of digital work, because that was the advice provided by their mentor. Other examples of areas of scholarship whose status requires clarification include ethics, artificial intelligence, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Modes of scholarly communication are also changing. While the peer review process is still very important, emerging means of sharing research results should be part of a broader discussion among faculty in CLAS as to "what counts." Examples include digital publications and podcasts, which are expanding the range of where and in what form scholars across Liberal Arts disciplines can disseminate their work. CLAS has an opportunity to take the lead in forward-thinking by ensuring that these intellectual products and strategies, which could bring significant recognition to CLAS, are appropriately rewarded.

The Review Committee wishes to underscore the point that scholarship continues and will continue to change. CLAS needs to be responsive in rewarding faculty for work in emerging forums. That said, how CLAS evaluates these forms of scholarship should be embedded in a university-wide discussion with broad faculty input. Tenure and promotion standards appropriately reside with the faculty. And, if CLAS considers something promotion-worthy that is subsequently not judged acceptable at the university level, problems will ensue.

Finally, the pandemic significantly disrupted research, especially for early-career faculty. It is unclear what accommodations CLAS has made for the pandemic in the annual review process, or how any accommodations will realistically be evaluated during promotion, as the impacts of the pandemic are expected to have lasting effects on scholarly productivity. Early career faculty articulated the reality that expectations for productivity and the contexts of work have been permanently changed. They need reassurance and enhanced interaction with their mentors and leaders.

Clinical Track Faculty

Clinical Track Faculty (CTF) are the smallest group of faculty in CLAS, but they make critical contributions, particularly in the School of Social Work and the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. As with ITF, CTF visitors to the Review Committee indicated that better clarity is needed in defining “Professional Productivity,” which constitutes 10% of their effort allocation but is often a key part of their promotion criteria. For example, if a CTF member develops a new educational program, it is unclear whether the effort for the program development is considered teaching or professional productivity. Promotion review committees would benefit from more education about the nature of the work of clinical faculty so that they recognize that program development may not be achievable by individual faculty members in a single year. In addition, in many cases, CTF teaching involves one-on-one clinical instruction for students, rather than (or in addition to) more traditional “classroom” teaching activities. This model makes course sizes appear small and, more significantly, it disallows ACE evaluations for students (because of a lack of anonymity on the part of students). CLAS should work with its clinical faculty to develop new mechanisms to engage students in the evaluation of clinical teaching.

CTF appreciate the open communication with the Dean’s Office. They also articulated a need for better mechanisms to reward CTF for their work. For example, the CLAS Career Development award is technically open to CTF but is “functionally not available” to them because the work they do is not recognized as research. This critique is related to previous comments regarding a need to clarify role expectations, but making these awards more accessible to CTF could be hugely impactful and motivating for CTF.

Summary

Across all faculty tracks, there is room for CLAS to regularize its annual review and promotion processes. Most notably, we point to the ITF policies on promotion. The lack of clarity and seemingly

unrealistic expectations appear to be preventing many IT faculty from appropriately advancing. Mentoring of early- and mid-career faculty is very inconsistent across CLAS, which is reflected in annual review and promotion experiences. Faculty who report receiving less effective mentorship indicate they experience challenges during the promotion processes. Faculty throughout CLAS would benefit from CLAS leadership facilitating/organizing mentoring and peer-support opportunities across the college. This type of mentorship would be especially valuable for creating broader support networks for faculty in smaller departments, and for supporting mid-career faculty in departments that have few full professors.

b. Expectations for teaching, including amount, timing, and delivery of content; consideration of activities of non-research active faculty

There appears to be broad variation in teaching effort and responsibility, which is not always comprehensible to faculty. CLAS needs to establish more parameters around expectations for teaching, which should be consistent across departments. Further, there are many examples of “one-off” arrangements for teaching or other responsibilities that are outside the established constructs. In fact, the CLAS Instructional Track Faculty Policy seems to require memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to be completed with each ITF, creating challenges with transparency and reducing consistency in expectations, especially when these arrangements are not reviewed and approved centrally. We recommend that CLAS deans, with input from DEOs and shared governance, examine whether MOUs are necessary for this purpose, and if so, that a process for reviewing/approving these MOUs be established that ensures equity, consistency, and transparency throughout CLAS.

As expressed by the Dean and some faculty, “what counts as a course” can be confusing and inconsistent. We recommend that CLAS work through shared governance structures to establish clear indicators to more consistently define teaching load expectations. These indicators might, for instance, take into account the number of students in the class, the number of contact hours, and the rigor of assessment. Any such effort will require sensitivity to variation across disciplines as to the nature of research and teaching and to national norms.

c. Role clarifications for DEOs and other departmental leaders, including consolidation of roles in smaller units

Challenges

Visitors to the committee indicated that filling leadership roles and balancing those with service requirements for faculty of different tracks can be challenging. For example, the Review Committee heard from some smaller departments that not all departmental roles could be filled by all types (tracks and ranks) of faculty currently in the department, which causes an overwhelming amount of service for certain individuals. In one small department, the director of graduate studies position had to be filled by a tenured faculty member, which was problematic because the tenured faculty were already overburdened by other service requirements. Further complicating these problems is the wide range across departments in the distribution of the faculty who are tenure/tenure track versus instructional track. For example, Biology’s distribution (based on FTE) is 88% Tenure/Tenure-Track faculty, 12% Instructional Track/Lecturers, while Health and Human Physiology has only 34% Tenure/Tenure-Track faculty, with 66% Instructional Track/Lecturers. In the English department, Tenure/Tenure-Track

faculty comprise 99% by FTE, while in Rhetoric, Tenure/Tenure-Track faculty represent only 12% of the faculty by FTE. Regardless of the history behind these decisions, CLAS should consider the anticipated longer-term impact that these shifting faculty distributions will have on these departments, especially the implications for research productivity, national rankings, graduate student enrollment, and the aforementioned challenges related to departmental leadership and service loads. The Review Committee also points out the increased risk of instability and low morale among faculty, given the unclear expectations regarding promotion and the lack of job security that was reported by ITF. Regular monitoring of TT:ITF ratios across departments will facilitate ongoing review of the distribution of faculty across the ranks.

In CLAS, DEOs rotate positions regularly, which has important implications for early-career faculty. Assistant professors and Lecturers often have a different DEO when they submit their promotion materials than they had when they began at the university (or when they submitted their 3-year review). This can lead to the articulation of different expectations (or different interpretations of expectations) when they begin in their role, when they have their 3-year review, and leading up to promotion. This is further complicated by the fact that in departments that have few to no full professors, a DEO is sometimes appointed from outside the department—e.g., currently, Rhetoric has as its DEO a faculty member from Religious Studies; and Biology is chaired by a faculty member from Psychology. This frequent turnover of departmental leadership again underscores the need for more coordinated and consistent mentoring and support offered to early- and mid-career faculty, likely facilitated at the college level by the Associate Deans for Faculty.

Opportunities

Many DEOs have a high level of administrative expertise and can assist the college by identifying promising areas of specialization and contributing to strategic planning to grow those areas. As noted by one DEO, *“I would love some frank conversations with the college [discussing] where we fit in areas of strength... If we could sit together and say ‘this is what we are looking at over the next five years—here are some options... what feels right?’ There are so many directions we could take as a college, but conversations are [always reactive] to solve immediate problems—there is no larger conversation at the level of intellectual value for the things we’re doing.”* This desire for longer-term planning for faculty hires that align with strategic goals was echoed in numerous other conversations with faculty and DEOs.

However, in the face of resource constraints, DEOs will have to reorient their hiring requests, recognizing that faculty lines that become vacant will not automatically be replaced. Instead, DEOs can help guide CLAS’s future intellectual direction by being more forward-thinking about their vision for their department’s specialty or portfolio, and aligning future recruiting efforts with those areas. The goal should not simply be to accumulate faculty, but to advise the Dean’s Office on which strategic direction is likely to be most beneficial (e.g., a DEO might focus resources on retaining someone as opposed to finding someone new, or might think about hiring someone into a new area instead of simply replacing a vacancy in an area that already exists).

The Review Committee recommends that the CLAS Dean—with input from collegiate leadership and DEOs—develop (and publicize) a provisional five-year hiring plan that identifies priority departments, describes timelines, and outlines plans for tenure-track, instructional-track, and clinical-track lines. From CLAS policy documents, it appears that departments are expected to maintain five-year hiring strategies,

but it is unclear how these strategies are used to guide collegiate hiring, or whether DEOs receive input or hiring commitments beyond a one-year timeline. This longer-term planning will offer more transparency to hiring decisions, enable departments to better anticipate and plan for future searches, and will shift decision-making to a more proactive and strategic process. This approach should also help address the growing budget deficit, by ensuring oversight in hiring practices and reducing the risk of hiring beyond the budget's capacity. For example, the committee learned that last year, 24 faculty lines were authorized, but 67 new faculty were hired. It is unclear to the Review Committee how these additional lines were approved, but this practice is problematic from a budgetary and strategic planning perspective and may also lead to other inequities.

As part of this recommended longer-term faculty hiring plan, there may also be an opportunity to address another frequently voiced concern related to transparency in faculty retention practices. By establishing a consistent and transparent policy regarding how—and to what extent—CLAS decides to support faculty retention “packages,” CLAS could address current perceptions that these decisions are unclear, arbitrary, or inequitable. This all speaks to how important it is that DEOs are highly engaged in collegiate-level strategic thinking about how to hire, support, and retain faculty, a sentiment that was frequently reiterated during the review period. There is a need for departments to prioritize upcoming faculty recruitment in areas that are aligned with their long-term vision, and with that of CLAS as a whole. Part of the role of the DEOs is to help the Dean's Office with these prioritizations and these decisions. Conversely, to help the dean understand these priorities, DEOs must understand and effectively communicate the ways that their disciplines contribute to CLAS's mission.

IV. Fiscal Management

a. Fiscal management that allows for both transparency and positioning for the next phase of College life

The budget deficit in CLAS is dire; this was reflected repeatedly in the Review Committee's interactions with CLAS stakeholders. Further, this is an area where the support and investment by central administration is critical. The basis for budgetary allocations from central administration needs to be more transparent to the deans of UI colleges. While it is clear that financial officers at the institutional level have devoted significant time to working with CLAS, there remains a great deal of uncertainty within CLAS about how the CLAS budget is determined, and what levers CLAS can pull to increase their budget. Two parts of the budget stood out as particularly confusing or complex: F&A recovery (i.e., indirect cost recovery) and tuition dollars. The Review Committee believes that part of the misunderstanding lies in the way these calculations depend on the growth (or reduction) from a baseline year (2017). This baseline year is especially problematic for CLAS's budget since CLAS enrollment peaked around 2017 and has been declining ever since. Based on the Review Committee's understanding, the overall decline in enrollment is compounded by a decline in non-resident enrollment, including international students. As noted in several conversations, at the time that the University transitioned to the modified Responsibility Centered Management model, CLAS was led by an outgoing Dean who did not effectively represent CLAS interests in meetings in which CLAS needed an advocate for its interests or knew its unique challenges. This history was acknowledged by numerous leaders during Review Committee meetings, but it is unclear whether/when CLAS will have an opportunity to better represent itself in University budget decisions or make any meaningful impact on this budget model.

The budget misunderstandings and complexities were evident in meetings with the Council of Deans as well as with the Associate Deans in CLAS, and throughout the interview process, the Review Committee heard numerous different (incorrect) explanations for how the budget allocations worked. Unfortunately, no representative for the VP for External Relations was present when the Review Committee met with central leadership, so the Review Committee was unable to better understand how central administration is developing strategies to better communicate the budget model across campus. It is worth noting that budget transparency was raised in the previous review, and the situation does not seem to have improved in the time since. Because of its current tenuous financial status, the lack of transparency about how this situation will be resolved is particularly harmful to CLAS and faculty morale.

The CLAS Dean is navigating a complex budgetary situation without any straightforward pathway to address shortfalls and challenges. Without a clear explanation of what is valued (i.e., what levers will have a positive impact on the budget), it is impossible to make strategic investments. The lack of clarity about where dollars are flowing from and into make it difficult to determine what efforts will likely yield the largest returns. Similarly, DEOs need to have a clearer picture of their return on investment and what they can expect from indirect cost recoveries. CLAS has a growing portfolio of funding to support interdisciplinary research, yet this is undermined by problems of deferred maintenance. In sum, despite CLAS's size, its position at the center of two of the UI major strategic goals, and the fact that it plays a central role in staffing the general education requirements for undergraduates, CLAS remains at risk because of the lack of budgetary transparency.

The Review Committee views CLAS as a pillar for the UI, and as CLAS goes, so goes the UI as a whole. There is a compelling, mission-critical university need to support CLAS in this difficult moment. We draw special attention to the need to address CLAS's \$160 M in deferred maintenance. The Review Committee heard from some visitors that it is common for universities to have large deferred maintenance expenditures; however, we do not find this to be a satisfactory response to the needs of CLAS. Regardless of how the UI compares with other institutions, the Review Committee heard repeatedly that deferred maintenance endangers faculty recruitment, retention and grant competitiveness in CLAS, a problem that could put the UI's largest grant to date at risk because of poor facilities (as noted previously, deferred maintenance in Van Allen Hall alone is currently \$18 M, and projected to be \$52 M by 2029 if left unaddressed). This is not a problem that CLAS can solve on its own.

b. Identifying efficiencies and expanded innovations to promote cost containments.

The budget deficit leaves no doubt that there is a clear imperative for CLAS to shrink its overall financial footprint. The Review Committee recommends that CLAS leadership—with the support and commitment of university leaders—develop and articulate a 3–5 year broad plan for addressing budget shortfalls and deferred maintenance. The plan we envision would identify major steps to be taken in each year. These might include, for example, a one-year pause in faculty hiring. (At the very least, as noted earlier, faculty hiring processes warrant deeper examination. In addition to aforementioned hiring beyond authorized faculty lines, we note that CLAS faculty FTE has increased by 8% since 2013—with a significant shift toward instructional track faculty with higher teaching loads—while total student credit hours have fallen by 3.7% in the same period). We also recommend that the 3-5 year plan incorporate a comprehensive evaluation of course offerings; CLAS should continue nascent efforts to

recalibrate and operationalize course release practices, and should—with departments’ input—re-examine the frequency of offerings of chronically under-enrolled courses.

Many liberal arts colleges find that they cannot address budgetary challenges without increasing donor funds. We see fundraising as a key opportunity area and recommend that CLAS’s needs (including “Campus Revitalization” for deferred maintenance) be a major focus of the upcoming capital campaign. Ongoing efforts that focus on broader donor participation could generate a significant number of smaller donations from CLAS’s very large alumni population. The Magid Center for Undergraduate Writing was mentioned as an example of successful donor support. We believe there are many other opportunities for targeted fundraising to address critical needs such as deferred maintenance, and wonder if there are alums from related departments who are in a position to help finance urgent needs (both short-term and long-term).

V. College Structure

a. Review Dean’s-level structure for service needs and impact on Departments and larger university.

Senior CLAS leadership has undergone a restructuring since the last review period: the position of executive associate dean was divided into an associate dean for sciences and an associate dean for arts & humanities. Visitors to the Review Committee expressed differing viewpoints regarding the restructuring: some have said it led to clarity, while others have said it muddied the waters. While some have reported that it has brought DEOs closer to deans, others perceive a lack of consistency in messaging and policies with the introduction of two associate deans with similar responsibilities yet different constituents. The Review Committee learned of the steep learning curve among newer arrivals to the Dean’s Office and of the stretching of administrative capacities (with some DEOs regarding themselves, and others, as more “administratively experienced” and knowledgeable than the associate deans). There may be more opportunity for partnership and collaboration between DEOs and associate deans—as noted previously, many DEOs expressed interest in being more involved in strategic conversations and collegiate initiatives.

It was reported that faculty are not always clear where to go for various issues. For example, it is potentially problematic to have more than one associate dean with responsibility for faculty affairs; this could lead to inconsistent practices, which is already a significant problem within CLAS. Another example where additional clarity could help is in the role of Associate Dean for Graduate Education, Outreach and Engagement (within CLAS), vs the Associate Dean for Administrative Affairs within the Graduate College. There may be opportunities to more clearly define—perhaps with input from departments’ directors of graduate studies—how CLAS’s Associate Dean for Graduate Education can best support graduate programs, clarify procedures for TA allocation, and help ensure that grad programs can once again thrive. This last statement is made based on the observation that overall *graduate* enrollment in CLAS has dropped by 12.5% from 2013 to 2020, and *doctoral* enrollment has dropped far more significantly. This decline holds even in departments that rely on external grants to support the majority of their doctoral students. In departments that primarily rely on teaching assistantships (TAs) to support graduate students, there seemed to be significant confusion among faculty regarding who is making decisions regarding TA allocations, and what factors impact those decisions.

Reported problems with the restructuring also include “change fatigue”: tensions involving high turnover in long-time staff, loss of institutional memory and operational knowledge, and lost opportunities for better communication and engagement between the Dean’s Office and the college’s constituencies. This shows a general malaise about a broader erosion of shared governance, as reflected in expressed displeasure with the means through which the current Dean was appointed by the Provost (which we understand to have been a transition from interim dean to dean without following practices outlined in the operations manual). The CLAS reorganization compounds concerns we heard about communicativeness and transparency from CLAS leadership.

To this point, it is vital that CLAS resolve questions about the workings of its shared governance structure involving the Faculty Assembly and Executive Committee, and the respective relationships of these entities to decision-making in the Dean’s Office. Concerns were raised to the Review Committee about representation, particularly in relation to the Executive Committee, which does not reflect the composition of CLAS. The Executive Committee members are all tenured faculty or clinical professors, which raises concerns that instructional track and non-tenured faculty’s needs may not be adequately represented on the committee. To the Review Committee, it appeared that the Executive Committee contributes to decisions that are felt college-wide. The committee recommends that each governing body, but in particular the Executive Committee, consist of all of the faculty tracks they purport to represent. Moreover, aligning the purpose of the Executive Committee with its name is paramount to achieving transparency and inclusion – currently, the Executive Committee appears to serve mostly in an advisory role. Without more clarity and better communication between the Executive Committee, other CLAS governing bodies, and the faculty at large, the existing structure will continue to raise concerns about transparency in decision making in a context of scarce resources, which, as one visitor to the committee noted, “may warp decision making.”

Since the last review, CLAS has established a new CLAS Staff Council. Staff had positive comments about the new staff council structure and the potential for staff to engage in shared governance. However, staff also pointed out that while students and staff have clear leadership structures and mechanisms to submit grievances (i.e., Student Service and Associate Deans for Faculty), the staff lack an equivalent body (noting that HR has too many other responsibilities to also serve this role). Staff would benefit from a clearer mechanism, in addition to Human Resources, through which they may raise concerns. Staff Council is well positioned to advise on how to address this structural deficiency, and may even be the appropriate body to serve this missing leadership role. The council has only recently been established, and we recommend that CLAS leadership and other governing structures take advantage of this new, more formalized opportunity to include staff input in various discussions and decisions.

Despite the aforementioned “growing pains,” the Review Committee notes that the restructuring has had positive effects as well: it has brought opportunities to consolidate staffing, where fewer staff now operate more efficiently and at higher levels; it has led to a review of existing policies and the development of more formally articulated policies; and it has enhanced opportunities for administrative transparency and equitable practices across the college to rebuild trust. CLAS should take this opportunity to revisit the governance structure to ensure all voices are heard.

Summary

Strengths and Opportunities

- A general spirit of good will toward the Dean among DEOs and faculty who are seeking meaningful engagement in collegiate decision making
- Most faculty at different ranks and tracks report positive relationships within their department
- New resources for grant support
- The strong Gen Ed Core which provides opportunities to attract more collegiate majors, particularly if current Gateway courses can better support students and invite them into majors

Challenges

- Need for institutional support
 - CLAS has a pressing need for greater institutional support, and for institutional leadership to “put its money where its mouth is.” The UI has branded itself as a destination university for targeted programs, yet there is not the concomitant investment in these programs from the university. The Review Committee is concerned that CLAS has many areas of strength that the university touts, but does not adequately support. Many in CLAS perceive that the UI is “taking advantage” of CLAS’s strengths without providing the financial resources to adequately support those programs or ensure that they continue to thrive.
 - Everything that happens at CLAS happens within the environment of the greater university. The UI administration should be responsive and willing to invest in the needs identified by CLAS (e.g., DEI concerns, fiscal matters and deferred maintenance of the built environment).
- Low morale among faculty and skepticism about the intentions of CLAS and UI leadership
- Continued concerns about transparency in leadership
- Need for clarity and consistency in structured faculty mentoring and promotion procedures
- Concerns about policies and practices of DEI, and their effects on the recruitment, retention, and success of faculty, staff, and students from underrepresented groups

Recommendations for CLAS

- Make diversity, equity, and inclusion central to all aspects of CLAS decision-making, including decisions about program restructuring, curricular changes, and faculty hiring and promotion.
- Appoint a CLAS Director of DEI. It may be possible to restructure the CLAS administration to provide funding. Alternatively, the Provost could provide funding for the position as a sign of the campus’s commitment.
- Explore new curricular collaborations with the other UI colleges, especially Medicine and Law.
- Reduce advising ratios and standardize advising practices.
- Systematically evaluate the experiences of instructional track faculty to determine how their experiences can be improved and their value to CLAS made more visible.
- Regularize promotion (and tenure) criteria, with special attention to service expectations for ITF.
- Initiate a CLAS (or campus)-wide discussion of the evaluation of emerging forms of scholarship.
- Consider new approaches to assessing the teaching of clinical faculty.
- Establish regular monitoring of TT:ITF ratios across programs
- Clarify the role of the Faculty Assembly and the Executive Committee in decision-making, and, as appropriate, ensure that the newly-formed CLAS Staff Council is included in shared governance

- Develop clear criteria for establishing, merging, or closing programs. To the extent possible, engage faculty in this process.
- Develop a public, five-year hiring plan. Here, too, faculty input will be critical to the plan's success.
- Develop a 3–5-year plan to address the budgetary shortfall.
- Take active steps to increase donor support to CLAS.

Recommendations for UI

- Clarify the basis for budgetary allocations so that CLAS leadership knows what steps it can take to increase revenue
- Prioritize deferred maintenance for CLAS buildings

Appendix

October 11th	Group
8:00am	
8:30am	Dean
9:00am	Dean
9:30am	
10:00am	Faculty Assembly
10:30am	Senior Leadership
11:00am	Institutional Leadership
11:30am	Institutional Leadership
12:00pm	CLAS Executive Committee
12:30pm	Council of Deans

Yellow – Full Committee
Orange – Committee Group A
Green – Committee Group B

October 12th	Group	October 12th	Group
8:00am	DEO Group 1	8:00am	DEO Group 3
8:30am	DEO Group 1	8:30am	DEO Group 3
9:00am	DEO Group 2	9:00am	DEO Group 4
9:30am	DEO Group 2	9:30am	DEO Group 4
10:00am		10:00am	
10:30am	Clinical Track Faculty	10:30am	
11:00am	Senior Administration	11:00am	
11:30am	Senior Administration	11:30am	
12:00pm	Debrief	12:00pm	

October 13th	Group	October 13th	Group
8:00am	Tenure Track Assistant Professors	8:00am	Tenure Track Assistant Professors
8:30am	Tenure Track Associate Professors	8:30am	Tenure Track Associate Professors
9:00am	Tenure Track Full Professors	9:00am	Tenure Track Full Professors
9:30am		9:30am	
10:00am	Instructional Track Faculty	10:00am	Instructional Track Faculty
10:30am	Debrief	10:30am	
11:00am	Dean	11:00am	
11:30am	Debrief	11:30am	
12:00pm	Debrief	12:00pm	

October 15th	Group
8:00am	Full Committee Meeting
8:30am	Full Committee Meeting
9:00am	
9:30am	Writing 1st Draft
10:00am	Writing 1st Draft

10:30am	Writing 1st Draft
11:00am	Writing 1st Draft
11:30am	Writing 1st Draft
12:00pm	Writing 1st Draft