

Edwards College Vision and Strategic Plan

This document is in three parts: The Edwards College Identity and Mission Statement, the goals based on this mission pertaining to students, faculty, and community, and the actions tied to these goals.

This document was voted on by voting faculty -- and a consultative vote was made by non-voting faculty and staff -- in January 2021.

It was adopted in January 2021.

Edwards College Identity and Mission Statement

Founded in 2001, the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts is one of six colleges at Coastal Carolina University. We offer a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs that promote intellectual rigor, artistic appreciation, and responsible citizenship. We strive to build an inclusive community – one that values diverse viewpoints and identities, that eliminates arbitrary barriers¹, and that engages in critical inquiry, analysis, and creative expression. Here we prepare students to learn locally, in order to impact globally.

The Edwards College offers innovative curricula and a broad spectrum of experiential learning opportunities. Our interdisciplinary, liberal arts² focus enables students to choose courses, majors, and minors that capitalize on their interests, talents, and aspirations. We also cultivate external relationships with individuals and organizations who share our vision and who embody the ideals and goals we cherish. The Edwards College remains committed to social justice and to the development of programs and projects that eliminate obstacles facing minorities and under-represented groups.

We endeavor to enrich our academic programs, optimize our facilities and foster an atmosphere that embraces and enhances our mission. In so doing, we advance our collective inquiry into what it means to be human, and we find ways to better ourselves, our institution, and the world beyond.

Students: The Edwards College is committed to providing students with skills that transcend disciplinary boundaries and that promote success in the arts, business, government, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. Among these skills are critical thinking, informed persuasive argumentation, creative problem solving, careful reading, close observation, effective writing, and cultural and technical literacy. In addition, the Edwards College seeks to promote among its students the social practices and knowledge vital to personal and professional achievement.

To these ends, the Edwards College commits to:

- Provide outstanding instruction and campus programming that fosters both technical expertise and foundational philosophical inquiry in the Liberal Arts.
- Promote fact-based inquiry, analysis and argumentation as well as critical evaluation of information sources.

¹ The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at CCU articulates what these terms mean at: <https://www.coastal.edu/dei/diversityequityandinclusionatccu/>. In addition, the Edwards College will maintain its own Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan that will work in concert with this strategic plan.

² All references to “Liberal Arts” in this document include the humanities, fine arts, and social sciences as practiced in the Edwards College.

- Advocate for and secure resources to support creative, intellectual, and social development for students.
- Protect the rights and freedoms of students to explore open and innovative critical inquiry across disciplines.
- Ensure equity and accessibility through diverse and inclusive pedagogies and educational experiences across the College's programs and courses.
- Enhance diversity and intercultural understanding by promoting area studies, international experiences, world citizenship, and global institutional cooperation.

Faculty: The Edwards College supports the Teacher-Scholar Model³ for the professional development of its faculty. The intellectual vitality of the Edwards College and the success of its students requires investment in faculty resources and opportunities.

To this end, the Edwards College commits to:

- Provide the tools and resources necessary to effectively engage and instruct a diverse student body in the Liberal Arts in the 21st century.
- Advocate for and secure resources for pedagogical initiatives outside the traditional classroom, including funding for faculty, students, and visitors.
- Support interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty for both pedagogical and research ends.
- Support and promote faculty research and artistic productivity by providing and strengthening equitable access to scholarly resources including adequate time to meet expectations.
- Promote and increase the diversity among the College's faculty to better represent the University's student body and the local community.

Community: The Edwards College embraces its mission to provide high-quality intellectual, cultural, and artistic programming for the broader university and regional community.

To this end, the Edwards College commits to:

- Engage the broader community through events and programs that promote cultural empathy, social literacy, and inspire intellectual vitality. We value creative and critical engagement, aesthetic appreciation, autonomy, moral agency, and responsible citizenship.
- Inspire the community to embrace a humane, compassionate, ethical, interculturally aware, and well-rounded perspective.

³ The institutional definition of the Teacher-Scholar Model can be found in the latest version of the Faculty Manual, found on the [Faculty Senate Faculty Manuals](#) webpage. Edwards College and Departmental Elaborations are in the [Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation](#) section of the Edwards College webpage.

- Promote and disseminate the accomplishments of students and faculty in the Edwards College.
- Promote relationships between college constituencies and the broader community to develop social awareness and action with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Student-Focused Goals and Actions:

Mission Statement Goals for Students:

- Provide outstanding instruction and campus programming that fosters both technical expertise and foundational philosophical inquiry in the Liberal Arts.
- Promote fact-based inquiry, analysis and argumentation as well as critical evaluation of information sources.
- Advocate for and secure resources to support creative, intellectual, and social development for students.
- Protect the rights and freedoms of students to explore open and innovative critical inquiry across disciplines.
- Ensure equity and accessibility through diverse and inclusive pedagogies and educational experiences across the College's programs and courses.
- Enhance diversity and intercultural understanding by promoting area studies, international experiences, world citizenship, and global institutional cooperation.

The following Action Items and their sub-items will help to realize the student-focused goals in the Edwards College Mission Statement.

- Develop and promote experiential learning inside and outside the formal classroom with programs/initiatives including but not limited to:
 - Study abroad, "study away" opportunities (within the United States, such as field trips and exchange programs), and other supplemental global experiences.
 - Participation in Edwards College centers and institutes.
 - Engagement with fine arts programming.
 - Encouragement of student volunteerism and service on campus and in the community.
 - Internships.
 - Student research, publication, and presentation.
- Develop and strengthen the College's curricular programming to embrace and promote the diverse academic needs of students and the community.
 - Encourage a redesign of FYE courses with a focus on identity development and development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that improve cross-cultural competence.
 - Encourage, support, and reward more inclusive pedagogy across all disciplines in the College

- Promote new and existing interdisciplinary programs (area studies, majors, minors, certificates, cognates) and other forms of engagement including but not limited to:
 - Specific programs in the Edwards College.
 - Formal and informal collaboration between majors.
 - Common, required liberal arts course(s) for Edwards College students.
 - Cross-disciplinary focus on critical thinking skills in courses such as introductory core offerings and critical courses of the major programs, where feasible.
 - Create better opportunities for students to double-major; possible examples include degree programs of 40 hours or less, appropriate course substitutions and capstone projects that embrace both majors.
- Support and market programs (curricular and extracurricular) which embody the value of a broad liberal arts education.
 - Better inform prospective and current students and parents about career prospects for liberal arts majors.
 - Improve students' job placement through alumni networks, collaboration with industry, and utilization of liberal arts career planning personnel.
 - Connect current students and alumni for mentoring, marketing, and securing financial contributions.
- Recruit high-quality graduate students and market new and existing programs that serve regional educational and professional needs in partnership with the College of Graduate Studies and Research. Efforts may include, but are not limited to:
 - Utilize graduate student recruitment officer(s), whether a new hire, a graduate assistant, or as part of an existing position's duties.
 - Engage potential students through up-to-date marketing materials.
 - Ensure consistency with college and university branding.
 - Utilize college and university marketing/engagement resources such as Teal Nation Communications, Pre-Professional Studio, AIGA student members, and DCD classes to complete graduate recruitment tasks in a student-engaged, cost-effective way.
 - Utilize relevant communication mediums and events per target audience research.
 - Mediums may include physical advertisements, billboards, print ads and social media platforms, etc.
 - Events may include CCU student organization and Panhellenic undergraduate events/meetings, local & regional graduate fairs, local & regional undergraduate research/creative conferences and competitions, etc.
- Develop and promote competitive Graduate Teaching/Research Assistant programs (supplemented via tuition remission, teaching/research funding, course credit, etc.) commensurate with peer institutions.

- Provide student resources for existing graduate programs. Student resources may include, but are not limited to:
 - Grant/scholarship opportunities and/or tuition remission through GT/RA positions.
 - Graduate student housing options/placement.
 - Student research/creative work funding.
 - Student physical space (meeting, office, lounge, etc.).
 - Availability and accessibility of approved equipment and technology for students.
 - Relevant internships and practicum experiences.
 - Career advising and development.
- Develop future graduate programs in Edwards College including but not limited to:
 - Programs that meet the needs of the region.
 - Where desirable, graduate programs that meet the criteria of the accelerated graduate programs policy.
- Develop and strengthen efforts to recruit students to diversify the College's student body to reflect the larger community's composition.

Faculty-Focused Goals and Actions

Mission Statement Goals for Faculty:

- Provide the tools and resources necessary to effectively engage and instruct a diverse student body in the Liberal Arts in the 21st century.
- Advocate for and secure resources for pedagogical initiatives outside the traditional classroom, including funding for faculty, students, and visitors.
- Support interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty for both pedagogical and research ends.
- Support and promote faculty research and artistic productivity by providing and strengthening equitable access to scholarly resources including adequate time to meet expectations.
- Promote and increase the diversity among the College's faculty to better represent the University's student body and the local community.

The following Action Items and their sub-items will help to realize the faculty-focused goals in the Edwards College Mission Statement.

- Integrate the Teacher-Scholar Model into college language and practice.
 - Establish the Teacher-Scholar Model as a standard by which the college evaluates faculty.
 - Define the Teacher-Scholar Model as it applies to the mission of the Edwards College and Coastal Carolina University.
 - Encourage each department to define the Teacher-Scholar Model for its discipline.
 - Showcase faculty as teacher-scholars. This may include featuring faculty as keynote speakers in scholarly and research forums like campus research competitions, scholars' symposia, panel discussions, performances, exhibitions, Edwards Live online events, and other venues and media.
- Support and recognize innovative curriculum development.
 - This includes but is not limited to new program development, directing/mentoring of student research, and experiential learning outside of the classroom.
 - Recognition includes awards, publicity, inclusion in faculty evaluations, and where feasible and appropriate, remuneration.
- Promote, support, and value collaborative research and pedagogical initiatives, especially among members of different disciplines.
 - Facilitate, value, and reward team-teaching, broadly defined to include co-teaching of courses, interdisciplinary collaboration on syllabi, and guest lecture swaps.

- Integrate collaborative courses into appropriate interdisciplinary programs, whether inside or outside the College.
- Develop technical assistance such as training sessions, templates, and best practices for designing and executing interdisciplinary/interdepartmental pedagogical initiatives.
- Establish professional development funding opportunities for interdisciplinary, collaborative research.
- Establish showcases for interdisciplinary scholarship.
- Provide resources/compensation to faculty for graduate programs.
 - Faculty resources/compensation may include remuneration and/or course releases for program development, graduate student advising/mentoring, and graduate program recruitment.
- Maintain clear standards for graduate faculty status consistent with university graduate policies.
 - Ensure faculty that are teaching graduate courses have appropriate credentials or experience.
- Provide research resources for tenured and tenure-track faculty commensurate to or beyond those offered by aspirant, peer, and competitor institutions.
 - Ensure that research resources are adequate to meet research standards of the Teacher-Scholar Model.
 - Enhance collaboration with Sponsored Programs and Research Services, as well as other appropriate bodies, to identify and secure external research grants and aid for faculty.
- Create and maintain structures and policies that support practical balances for the time demands of teaching, scholarship and service.
 - These may include the possibility of regular scholarly reassignments, reasonable course loads and either one-time or ongoing releases for significant service to the curriculum or other needs of the department and/or college.
- Provide appropriate professional development for all faculty members whether tenured or contingent.
 - Support faculty efforts in scholarship and pedagogy, including conference attendance, research, publication, performance/exhibition and other appropriate professional development.
 - Maintain clear and transparent information on resources that are available and how they are granted at the College and Department levels.
 - Expand opportunities for workshops and collaboration through CeTEAL.
 - Reserve separate professional development resources for contingent faculty.
 - Assure that faculty have appropriate technology and training for teaching, whether provided externally (ITS or CeTEAL) or internally.

- Build and strengthen a diverse faculty through recruitment and retention of faculty from minority/historically under-represented populations.
 - Expand faculty search outreaches and methods to help recruit applicants from minority/historically under-represented populations.
 - Encourage programs to embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into their existing performance expectations for teaching, scholarship and creative activity, and service.
 - Create professional development support for faculty teaching, scholarship, and/or service that enhances or supports diversity, equity, and/or inclusion.

Community-Focused Goals and Actions:

Mission Statement Goals for Community:

- Engage the broader community through events and programs that promote cultural empathy, social literacy, and inspire intellectual vitality. We value creative and critical engagement, aesthetic appreciation, autonomy, moral agency, and responsible citizenship.
- Inspire the community to embrace a humane, compassionate, ethical, interculturally aware, and well-rounded perspective.
- Promote and disseminate the accomplishments of students and faculty in the Edwards College.
- Promote relationships between college constituencies and the broader community to develop social awareness and action with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The following Action Items and their sub-items will help to realize the community-focused goals in the Edwards College Mission Statement.

- Research our intended target audience and provide key experiences which will entertain, educate and encourage participation within our regional community.
- Establish a platform for addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion:
 - Ensure that diverse opinions are recognized in community events and programming.
 - Recognize and be ready to raise awareness about existing and anticipated issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Continue development of a comprehensive brand strategy:
 - Create and implement clear brand standards.
 - Release branding by September 2021.
 - Extend that branding to the individual departments within COHFA.
- Establish a stronger, more consistent social media presence.
- Develop a more detailed and informative Cultural Arts website – a hub of information that speaks to our local audience, prospective students, the University and Department families, friends, students and alumni.
- Broaden our community outreach via relevant and inclusive mediums and events, per target audience research.
 - Mediums may include, but are not limited to physical advertisements, billboards, print ads and social media platforms, encouraging faculty and staff to promote these events via their own social media accounts.
 - Events may include but are not limited to those associated with Conway Alive, Myrtle Beach Theater, Long Bay Symphony, and WCCU Radio.

- Utilize campus resources, such as Teal Nation Communications, AIGA student members, and DCD classes to complete community engagement tasks in a student-engaged, cost-effective way.
- Provide quality entertainment, which results in quality experiential learning for our students.
- Host philanthropic (e.g., student benevolence fund, student scholarship funds, etc.) events to inspire the broader community as they connect for causes.
- Inform our community about student and faculty work via a comprehensive communication system.
- Encourage and support our student body to submit high-quality work to regional, national, and international publications, both for community/field notoriety and awards.
- Provide opportunities for student and faculty publication submission to community-available spaces beyond The Chanticleer, Athenaeum Press, Tapestry, and short form videos currently offered.
- Continue to promote award-winning student and faculty work via small and large specialized events (e.g., Town & Gown, Capstone Expos, etc.).

College-Wide Goals and Actions

While the goals and actions listed above are divided by the populations of students, faculty and community, there are certain actions that by their nature impact all of these groups. They are based on various values expressed in the Mission Statement. These goals and actions are as follows:

- Work in conjunction with the Office of Philanthropy to raise funds for major projects that have the potential to expand or improve the college mission in significant ways.
 - For administration and faculty, this means advising the Office of Philanthropy about potential donors, helping design campaigns, and when requested, communicating with donors to share our vision for the College as well as thanking them for their generosity.
 - For the community, this means helping achieve campaign goals through soliciting or securing generous donations as well as networking with people who may share our interests.
- Apply fundraising efforts to major facilities and technology improvements.
 - Support the construction of a performing arts center on campus
 - Support efforts to serve local and regional populations through archives and digital preservation.
 - Support other projects that serve individual or multiple departments (e.g. a museum, a polling center, etc.)
 - Advocate for college control over spaces critical to our mission, including specially equipped classrooms and laboratories, performance and exhibit spaces, and faculty offices and workspaces.
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- Work with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to create a supportive learning and social environment for all students, faculty, staff and community members.
 - Support the historically underrepresented and marginalized college students to holistically thrive and succeed at CCU and beyond.
 - Support and model Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), a critical component of human development related to “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive

goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”⁴

- Actively support university policies making all groups welcome in the learning and social community by sponsoring public speakers, creating welcoming classrooms and helping students through formal and informal advising.
- Be transparent in all matters that do not require confidentiality.
 - Support a budgeting and hiring request process that allows departments to plan effectively for the future.
 - Communicate in a clear and truthful way all matters of interest to particular parties.

⁴ This language is taken from a letter from the South Carolina Music Educators Association (SCMEA) to AccelratED Task Force dated May 20, 2020. The definition in quotes is cited in this letter from the *Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning*