



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 2023

EDUCATION



## Table of Contents

<b>Message from the Dean</b>	3
<b>Mission, Vision and Core Values</b>	5
<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	
I. Academic Quality and Reputation	7
II. Partnerships and Community Engagement	9
III. Commitment to Continuous Innovation	11
IV. A Cohesive and Efficient COE Community	13
<b>Conclusion and Next Steps</b>	14
<b>Appendix</b>	
College of Education Strategic Planning Committee	15



## Message from the Dean

To develop this strategic plan, we challenged ourselves to think critically about the College of Education's past and tried to imagine its future at what feels like a moment of reflection for our society politically, economically, and culturally. Two events have been touchstones for us.

Six years ago, we completed a strategic plan for the College of Education. At that time, we took a largely internal perspective, looking at such issues as how to expand academic breadth, increase scholarly productivity, broaden the diversity of our students, faculty and staff, and stimulate collaboration and interdisciplinary activity. Our goals led to numerous successes during the past five years: outstanding faculty hires, an upward trajectory of sponsored research, stronger student recruitment, and successful capital and annual fundraising. As we strengthened our own infrastructure, we saw our external impact grow, visible in such achievements as the College's recent recognition by the Florida Department of Education as one of the largest sources of "high impact teachers" in the state.

Our second touchstone has been Florida State University's bold aspirations. Just over a year ago, as the University's president completed his first year in office, FSU released its new strategic plan, *The Future is Florida State*. The University plan looks outward, to Florida's borders and far beyond, and articulates the role that FSU will play as a public university in service to the people of our state as well as a tier-one research institution with worldwide impact. In crafting COE's strategic plan, we strived to ensure that our plan aligns with the University's and contributes to the achievement of its goals. With the full force of the University behind us, we want to leverage FSU's goals, translating them into bold initiatives that the COE will undertake.

Thus, having achieved the internal goals we set in our last strategic plan and inspired by FSU's aspirations, we wanted our planning process to set the College's vision with respect to the external world—to define the impact we will have on the schools and communities around us and the greater education sphere.

The University plan describes Florida as a bellwether, pointing out: *Demographically, economically, environmentally, politically—the consensus is clear: If you want to know what the future of the United States will look like, look to Florida today.*

We would add this: If you want to know what the future of teaching and learning should look like, look to FSU's College of Education today.

This strategic plan addresses that future. It is the outcome of over a year of intense inquiry and discussion by faculty, students and staff. It draws on numerous conversations—online and in person, individually and in groups—that provided every member of the COE community a chance to share their views. We also reached out to selected faculty and administrators at FSU and to the COE's alumni—who, as practitioners, researchers, and policymakers, are our feet on the ground in diverse teaching and learning settings. As we move forward on the initiatives outlined in this strategic plan, we will continue to consult COE alumni, members of the national education community, and other Florida and Tallahassee community leaders so that our work remains focused, relevant, and responsive.



Our vision for the COE is especially important now, at a moment when American public schools and the colleges of education that prepare teachers and leaders for them are confronting important questions: How can we enhance educational access and success for an increasingly diverse student population and, in the process, better address widening income inequality? What learning environments and pedagogies will prepare students with the tools of inquiry necessary to seek evidence-based truths and confront “alternative facts?” What skills and experiences are needed to ensure that graduates are prepared not only for the careers they will enter, but also for meaningful civic commitments? And most importantly, how can education be a tool for greater social justice?

These are some of the questions that have motivated our strategic planning. The search for their answers will push us forward in designing and implementing initiatives to achieve the goals of this plan. But fundamental to our planning, we have also asked ourselves: What can COE do in the coming years, distinctively among schools of education, drawing on the strengths of the great university of which we are a part?

This strategic plan describes COE’s strengths from three commitments:

- Collaboration and continuous interaction among students, faculty and staff inside our college, with other FSU colleges, and with our partners outside the University
- Public discourse, beyond just academic settings, around ideas generated in COE in ways that make them catalysts for action by individuals, schools, communities, and legislatures and extend the impact of our work well beyond the College walls
- An integration of research, evidence-based practice, and policy formulation that leads to results beyond what pursuit of any one of these alone could achieve

With these commitments in mind, we have set an overarching goal that our College of Education be ranked among the nation’s top 25 schools of education, that each of our programs be ranked among the top 25 of its kind nationally, and that our reputation for scholarship be held in comparable esteem.

What makes a goal of this magnitude imaginable is that our vision is a part of FSU’s vision—a university that is *among the nation’s most entrepreneurial and innovative, that places a premium on interdisciplinary inquiry and draws from the rich intellectual and personal diversity of students, faculty, staff, and alumni.*

Our strategic plan, then, describes how we will pursue educational innovation in a setting of entrepreneurship, interdisciplinarity, and diversity. Our work will be informed by the needs and hopes of many beyond the College of Education—most importantly our colleagues at FSU and among the schools and the communities of Florida, whose high expectations inspire us to our very best.



## Mission

Florida State University's College of Education advances society and enriches our community through the support and advocacy of education as a public good, while enhancing the quality of life of all our students, faculty and staff.

## Vision

We are among the nation's most comprehensive colleges of education, but our distinctiveness results not simply from broad scope, but from three approaches fundamental to how we work:

- Meaningful collaborations through continuous interaction of students, faculty and staff across our numerous programs; between the COE and FSU's other colleges and centers; and with our public, private, and not-for-profit partners outside the University.
- Deep commitment to public scholarship—the dissemination of COE ideas in ways that make them broadly accessible, widely discussed, and powerful catalysts for theory, research, and practice. In this way, we extend the impact of our work well beyond the College's walls.
- The intentional integration of research, evidence-based practice, and policy formulation. We confront challenges in education from this nexus, asking of every endeavor: *How does it impact communities of practice, expand knowledge, and shape educational policy?*

These three forces—collaboration, public scholarship, and integration—allow us to address America's urgent education challenges in the innovative manner characteristic of FSU: We translate ideas rapidly from theory into practice, assess them rigorously, and view challenges as an opportunity to redesign and improve. It is our innovative mindset that enhances the COE's impact on people, communities, and institutions beyond the College and campus. And ultimately, impact—the improvement we make in individual lives and communities—is the measure of our success and the powerful return we offer our students and the people of Florida for their continued support and trust.

## Core Values

### *Empathy and Respect*

We cultivate deep understanding of the needs of students and educators and empathy for their circumstances, with particular attention to populations historically underserved by reason of identity, social class, or circumstance. With respect for their varied experiences and



backgrounds, we engage them as partners in our research, teaching and service, and thus achieve results collectively that none of us could alone.

### ***Diversity***

By creating a diverse, inclusive and connected community of students, faculty and staff, we ensure a fertile educational environment; prepare teachers, leaders, and other professionals with understanding of and empathy for the diverse learners they will serve; fully explore the applicability of COE research and practice to different populations; and responsibly steward the resources and trust of Florida's numerous and varied citizens.

### ***Mentorship***

The effects of formal education are greatly enhanced by personal, informal communication between individuals with significant experience and others seeking guidance. We harness this synergy by creating varied opportunities for mentoring within and outside of the COE community.

### ***Risk-taking***

We are not content with the status quo, and we are not afraid of the possible. By going where the evidence takes us, even when it challenges conventional assumptions and asks us to take risks, we devise practices to transform education and improve our world dramatically.

### ***Social Justice***

We emphasize the importance of addressing inequities of access, opportunity and resources—particularly in the education sphere, but also by using education as a means for achieving fair processes and just outcomes for all members of society.



## Strategic Priorities

### I. Academic Quality and Reputation

Among the most distinctive characteristics of the College of Education is its tremendous breadth of program scope. We address learning the length of the entire “education pipeline,” from pre-k students through lifelong and adult learners. With over 25 programs in the four broad areas of leadership & policy studies, educational psychology & learning systems, sport management, and teacher education, we are among the nation’s most comprehensive colleges of education. We will enhance our reputation for excellence by leveraging this program scope and pursuing the following strategies:

#### 1. *Recruit and retain high-quality students and faculty*

We are distinguished by the caliber of faculty who teach in our College and the exceptional students they attract. In any discipline, the best students are attracted by the most talented faculty, and faculty want to teach at institutions that offer exceptional students for them to mentor and direct.

To sustain this level of excellence, we will develop a faculty hiring plan that aligns hiring with the goals of this strategic plan. We will strengthen the development and retention of faculty, especially at the junior level, by increasing mentorship, setting clear milestones for promotion, and providing strong professional development that encourages ongoing pedagogical innovation and mentorship of students for careers and advanced study.

We will attract the highest caliber students by leveraging existing opportunities for them and by strengthening relationships among our academic programs to encourage the development of multidisciplinary studies and research that are attractive to them. Similarly, we will work with other FSU colleges and centers to explore the creation of programs and degrees that address key professional and academic needs and make our graduates more attractive to employers inside and outside of academia. We will also provide greater financial support and improvements in quality of life that help reduce barriers to their attendance.

#### 2. *Produce high-quality research that is visible, accessible, and impactful*

High-quality research is fundamental to maintaining a strong academic reputation, particularly in a tier-one research institution such as FSU. The COE has long been committed to producing such scholarly work. We want COE research to achieve recognition not only in academic and professional circles, but also among other audiences who can apply and extend our work.





To that end, we will continue to expand both theoretical and translational research. In addition, we will encourage the production of “public scholarship” by our faculty and students. Public scholarship is research that contributes to public understanding; is created in a manner that allows for dialogue, application, and interpretation; and resides in public or non-academic contexts and settings.

Our scholarship connects fundamentally with three areas of great importance to the COE: practice, policy development, and partnerships beyond the academic community. In addition to our continued publication in top-tier academic journals, a key element of our strategy is to increase the College’s visibility, recognition and impact beyond academia. Specific initiatives may include, for example, archiving papers in open-access repositories (such as DigiNole); publishing in practitioner-focused journals, blogs, and similar forums; and research-sharing events, such as the Dean’s Symposium and CORE.

3. ***Leverage our place within a research-intensive university to better prepare practitioners and scholars***

FSU is a top-tier, national research institution, and COE faculty and students are immersed in research and scholarly work throughout their education. We will leverage this exposure to differentiate and distinguish our many programs that prepare educators who work in many different settings.

Even as we continue to provide exceptional training through field placements, practica, internships, and experiential learning, we will also prepare current and future practitioners to examine their approaches and practices from a scholarly perspective and improve them through ongoing experimentation and evaluation. Specific initiatives already underway or that we may consider include: engaging our school partners as colleagues in research; using COE events, such as the Dean’s Symposium and COE Week, to connect COE researchers with practitioners; providing all students the opportunity to pursue research with or guided by faculty; and incorporating the study of research methodology more deeply into our curricula.

4. ***Develop innovative strategies in our programs and continuously experiment with creative approaches***

To develop innovative practitioners and researchers, we must model innovation for students in our own classrooms, labs, and forums. This requires us to be self-conscious educators who consider the outcomes we want for our students, adapt our practices to better achieve those outcomes, and regularly assess the effects of our practices. Moreover, we will involve students in these efforts to make them collaborators in their own education.

Initiatives we might pursue include creating forums in which we can demonstrate high-impact practices and explore their potential use in other programs and settings; expanding the use of “Teach Live” simulations among students and faculty; and increasing faculty use of the Tech Sandbox.





## **5. *Facilitate the exploration of global perspectives throughout the COE***

In our globalizing world, instantaneous communication and access to information are making national and geographic boundaries irrelevant. Students find it increasingly easy to pursue learning regardless of their location. Teachers are finding a greater diversity of nationalities, languages, ethnicities and backgrounds represented among their online and classroom students. In this context, educators must themselves possess global perspectives and understanding and be prepared to develop such competencies in their students.

We will foster such competencies in COE students, faculty, and staff through initiatives such as increasing our number of international students and faculty, and attract visiting international faculty, researchers, students, and speakers; introducing international comparisons of education practice and policy into COE curricula; providing a variety of study, research, and field experiences abroad to COE students and faculty; and encouraging the acquisition of a second language by undergraduate and graduate students.

## **II. Partnerships and Community Engagement**

As a professional college of education, we prepare those who will prepare others educationally—future teachers, counselors, leaders of schools and universities, researchers in education, psychologists, instructional designers, and policymakers whose efforts touch every aspect of education. We partner not only with our fellow educational institutions, but also with innumerable entities outside the conventional education sphere, including:

- Communities seeking schools to help them address personal and social problems that affect the ability to learn;
- Businesses looking to hire employees with not only specific technical expertise, but also adaptability and skills in communication and problem-solving;
- Public officials and agencies needing guidance in shaping education policies to boost economic growth and enhance quality of life for the citizens they serve.

Thus, to serve our students and the future individuals whose lives they will impact, we will:

### **1. *Engage deeply with our local, state and regional education community***

As an education leader in our region, we serve as a hub of information, resources and training for a wide variety of organizations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. We will increase our engagement with them in order to inform our own research, practice, and service; identify promising areas for collaborative research; help them deliver more effective educational programs and support; and improve educational assessment.



Activities we might pursue include: involving schools, government agencies, non-profit organizations and individuals in regular conversations about their needs and goals; developing mutually beneficial relationships with Florida State University Schools (FSUS) and Pembroke Pines-FSU Charter Elementary School; building selected relationships between the COE and Florida's most and least effective school districts in order to understand the different challenges they face and how practices among effective schools might be successfully applied to others; working with Florida's Department of Education to develop more effective approaches to school evaluation and accreditation.

## **2. *Build partnerships beyond the traditional education sphere***

Learning is lifelong and “life-wide;”<sup>1</sup> it is no longer confined to the traditional settings of K-16 education. As individuals seek education for professional development, personal reward, and to make sense of rapid changes in the world around them, they are doing so outside of the traditional school-to-college years and institutions not only in new locations, but through online learning in manners untethered entirely from any particular place. To serve these individuals, we will work with entities in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors to identify the needs of people with whom they work and how these might be informed by and inform COE research and practice.

We will build such partnerships through efforts that might include: engaging chambers of commerce to identify the needs of their local business sector; connecting with FSU's Institute for Successful Longevity to better understand the education needs of seniors; and working with the College of Medicine's Center for Rural Health Research and Policy to explore educational options for individuals in small, isolated communities.

## **3. *Partner with other FSU colleges and centers to bring to bear their diverse expertise on issues that impact educational success***

Myriad social, economic and personal issues affect the educational success of individuals. As we explore strategies, delivery mechanisms and settings that affect access to and success in learning, we will draw on FSU expertise among the colleges of Arts & Sciences, Human Sciences, Nursing and Social Work, as well as entities such as the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship and the Institute for Successful Longevity, among others. By engaging them in collaborative research initiatives, linking them to our school partners, and working with them to promote state and local policy initiatives, we will amplify our own efforts to improve educational success.

We will also focus our energies internally on improving educational practices within FSU. To this end, we will look for opportunities to work with other FSU colleges on the development of innovative methods for their specific disciplines. We will also partner with the University's Center for Teaching Excellence to help make it not only a location

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<sup>1</sup> “Life-wide learning” is education that occurs across a range of formal and informal experiences in a variety of settings, including home, museums and other cultural spaces, athletics, political involvement, workplaces, among others.



for faculty professional development, but also a hub of research and scholarship on innovative and effective teaching.

4. *Maximize the distinctive contributions that our alumni and friends can bring to the College*

COE alumni pursue successful careers in nearly every corner of the education sphere. They serve us not just through their philanthropic support, but also as our eyes and ears “on the ground,” helping keep us attuned to new challenges and opportunities in their particular educational environments. In return, we want to serve as the go-to place for their lifelong education needs.

For mutual benefit, we will expand our efforts not only to inform COE alumni about the current state of their alma mater, but also to engage them as participants in the life of the College. This may include roles such as mentors to current students and new graduates; visiting faculty and speakers; collaborators in research relevant to their segment of the education pipeline; and providers of internships beyond the usual sources for practitioner field work.

5. *Address the educational needs of diverse and underserved populations*

Education is a vital tool of social mobility. As part of a public university, the COE has a particular responsibility to ensure that the least advantaged members of our society have access to the education pipeline and make progress in it. Thus, we commit to building partnerships with other organizations that address the unmet needs of such groups, because only together can we chip away at the many personal and economic barriers to social mobility. Moreover, we will increase our efforts of preparing educators who represent the vast array of backgrounds and experiences in society *and* ensure that they are prepared to respond—through their teaching, research, and service—to the education needs of elder, rural, and minority populations, as well as other diverse and underserved groups.

Initiatives we will consider include: developing solutions to the educational challenges of schools in geographically diffuse communities; providing professional development for teachers and administrators in under-resourced school systems; and leveraging our expertise in online learning for greater impact on underserved groups.

### **III. Commitment to Continuous Innovation**

We commit to innovation that is flexible, collaborative and humane, reflecting above all a profound empathy for the end user—the education professional or the student with whom we work. We aspire to be Florida’s go-to resource for technology-enhanced teaching and learning in any setting, be it schools, higher education, business, government, or community organizations. To that end, we will build on FSU’s innovative mindset to encourage innovation across all of the COE’s endeavors.



1. ***Expand the COE's internal capacity and support for innovation***

To be a provider of innovation resources and expertise, we must first develop a rapid-innovation mindset throughout the COE community, empowering students, faculty, and staff to: (a) develop and implement solutions early, evaluate results critically, and make improvements continuously, and (b) work flexibly, collaboratively, and across disciplines.

To instill this orientation, we will develop programming across the College's departments and programs that prepare students, faculty and staff to engage in successful innovation and entrepreneurial activity. We will embed technology in our courses not because it is available, but because it can be a catalyst for innovation and effect more positive learning outcomes. We will also provide resources, incentives, and recognition for innovative initiatives throughout the College through such options as seed funding, recognition of innovation activity in evaluations and promotion decisions, College-wide innovation competitions, and the like.

2. ***Develop relationships and collaborations with FSU's numerous other innovation and entrepreneurship communities***

The University Strategic Plan commits to deepening FSU's commitment to continuous innovation. This goal recognizes the many innovation ventures that currently exist at FSU and serve as a catalyst to greater efforts. Thus, both to strengthen our internal innovation capacity and create initiatives with impact greater than the sum of their parts, we will work with other innovation champions at FSU, such as the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship, the Innovation Hub, and the Council of Entrepreneurs, among others.

Examples of potential initiatives include establishing a COE Entrepreneur-in-Residence who would sit on the University's Council of Entrepreneurs; creating programs jointly with other schools and colleges on topics such as leadership for innovation or social entrepreneurship for rural education; working with other people and centers on "innovation curricula" for prospective educators; and making the COE's Tech Sandbox a widely-used resource for faculty from across the University.

3. ***Apply our expertise in online learning broadly across FSU***

The COE has been ranked among the top in the nation by U.S. News & World Report for online graduate programs in education. We will work with FSU's other colleges to examine different approaches to content delivery and pedagogy, continue to improve online programming University-wide, and explore opportunities for new multi-college online programs.

Our initiatives in this area may also include working with other University content providers (e.g., academic departments), technologists (e.g., computer scientists, programmers, electrical engineers, etc.), and tech support and instructional development entities (e.g., the University's Office of Distance Learning and Center for Teaching



Excellence) to create programs to train individuals interested in designing effective online learning programs.

#### **IV. A Cohesive and Efficient COE Community**

The COE is a community of problem solvers who understand that to implement this strategic plan, we will need to address many practical concerns with respect to our human, financial, and physical resources. Thus, to support our achievement of the preceding strategic goals and to develop a strong foundation for the College in the coming years, we will:

1. ***Enhance the effectiveness of our people and community***

Our most valuable resources are the students, faculty and staff who compose the COE community. Their collective effectiveness and their individual successes depend on the quality of their interactions—their communications, collaborations, coaching, mentorship and the like. We will invest in our human resources by hiring a diverse, adaptable, and results-oriented faculty and staff and continuously develop their capabilities. We will improve the frequency and quality of their interactions through initiatives to increase their communication and collaboration across departments, programs, and functions.

2. ***Optimize performance and service***

We serve our students first; however, to meet their educational, professional and personal needs effectively, we must ensure that we optimize our service to each other and our interactions with individuals in the greater FSU community whose roles affect our students. To do this, we will continuously examine and improve our core business processes, develop effective managers and teams, reduce cross-functional barriers, and find creative ways to use our resources more efficiently.

3. ***Grow our operating resources and financial assets***

The University and the College have been recognized for their efficiency—their ability to do more with less. But even as we continue to improve our performance, we will also expand our revenue streams and thereby increase the financial resources we have for investments in new people, programs and infrastructure.

Our efforts will include developing relationships with government, corporate and not-for-profit funders in order to identify grant opportunities relevant to COE's strategic goals; working with the FSU's Office of Commercialization to identify opportunities for the monetization of COE intellectual property; increasing fundraising from alumni and other prospective donors; and identifying promising new revenue streams.



## Conclusion and Next Steps

With the conclusion of this strategic planning process, our real work begins. We must transform how we work within the COE community, in the greater University, and among our numerous external partners. These changes will lead COE to our new vision: a college of education that is among the most comprehensive in the nation and takes advantage of its breadth and depth to create meaningful collaborations; intentionally integrate research, practice, and policy formulation; and generate a body of respected and widely accessible scholarship. All of this in service to our belief that education is a public good that advances our society and enhances the quality of life of all its members.

To achieve this vision, we commit to: enhancing our academic quality and reputation; building strong partnerships; innovating continuously; and sustaining a cohesive and efficient community. By achieving these goals, we will move COE to a far greater level of accomplishment and recognition.

Several steps are critical to realizing our vision. These include:

- Developing a plan for implementation that delineates and prioritizes specific initiatives that we will pursue to achieve our goals; indicates how we will operationalize these initiatives; and describes how we will measure our progress in achieving them and their impact.
- Linking our resource allocation process to the goals and initiatives of the strategic plan and using the plan to build a case for COE in the University budget process.
- Communicating our vision for the College and our plans to achieve it to stakeholders inside COE; FSU's senior leadership and other colleges; our alumni, and our community partners.
- Asking each program in the College to develop or revisit its strategic goals in light of the direction set by this strategic plan.
- Preparing an annual status report on how we are doing in implementing the strategic plan, noting progress on each goal and strategic initiative, identifying new opportunities and changed circumstances, and outlining steps to respond to such changes.

Reviewing and updating the COE website and other marketing and communication materials to reflect the vision and goals of our strategic plan.



## Appendix

### College of Education Strategic Planning Committee

The dedicated work of the following members of the College of Education and the University drove the development of the strategic plan.

**Brad Cox**, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies; Faculty Advisory Board

**Holly Crosby**, Business Manager, Office of the Dean; Staff Advisory Board

**Ella-Mae Daniel**, Teaching Faculty, School of Teacher Education

**Samantha DeZerga**, Academic Program Specialist, Educational Psychology & Learning Systems; Staff Advisory Board

**James Du**, Assistant Professor, Sport Management

**Ruth Feiock**, Alumna & FSU Associate VP for Academic Affairs

**Alan Hanstein**, Alumnus & COE Development Council Member

**Marah Kirsten Harrington**, Program Manager, Office of the Dean; Staff Advisory Board

**James Harwood**, Doctoral Student, Sport Management; Student Leadership Council

**James Klein**, SPC Chair; Professor, Educational Psychology & Learning Systems

**Jane Lo**, Assistant Professor, School of Teacher Education

**Toby Park**, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

**Alysia Roehrig**, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology & Learning Systems

#### Project Administrative Support

**Derek Taylor**, Office Administrator, Office of the Dean

#### Consulting Assistance

**John Braunstein**, Director, AKA Strategy