

Annual Report to the Chancellor 2023-24

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NC State University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences respectfully submits this annual report for the 2023-24 fiscal year to the Office of the Chancellor.

Our college contributed heavily to the university's strategic goals in the past year, as evidenced in the initiatives, projects and updates called out below. This work also marks progress toward the [college's 2022-2027 strategic plan](#). Since launching our new plan in 2022, our collective efforts have added new value and energy, driving growth through various projects inspired by our strategic priorities. As a result, college leadership is observing clear signs of a positive transformation and recognizing the commitment of our teams to highlight the work of the college. If you're interested in learning more, we've included a few strategic plan successes toward the end of this report.

Goal 1: Empower Students for a Lifetime of Success and Impact

- **Advanced Critical and Creative Thinking Certificate/Course:** Utilizing the support of a grant from the Teagle Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, we worked with faculty leaders from History and English to develop a 12-credit Advanced Critical and Creative Thinking (ACCT) certificate aimed at non-majors. Emphasizing the practical value and unique perspectives of the humanities and social sciences, the certificate offers a common intellectual experience and a professional pathway through GEP courses. The certificate will begin enrolling students in AY 2024-25. The cornerstone course for this certificate, Critical Thinking in American Life: Engaging Across Difference, launched this past year with 150 seats offered (100% fill rate). In Fall 2024, there will be a total of 260 seats offered and all seats are filled except one.
- **Dean's Graduate Funding:** As in previous years, the college used F&A funding to make travel funds available to directors of graduate programs to support graduate student travel activities during the academic year. Each program received funds for two students to receive up to \$1,000 in travel funding toward scholarly-related travel, lodging, conference attendance, inquiry and research activities, or travel associated with a thesis or dissertation preparation. A total of 10 departments requested and received funding. The Dean's Office also provided supplemental funding for international graduate students accepted into the college during 2023-24. The college provided each graduate program a total of \$1,500 for recruiting outstanding prospective

underrepresented or international students. Seven programs received funding.

- **Community Building and Wellness Initiatives:** The college continues its community-building initiatives to foster supportive, collaborative and inclusive spaces promoting success for all. A new “Navigating Challenges” workshop series aimed to familiarize faculty and staff with resources and strategies for addressing issues such as AI in the Classroom or de-escalating situations. Led by campus partners, these workshops offered information while simultaneously familiarizing attendees with services offered on campus. In addition, the college’s Wellness Week events were expanded in the fall and spring semesters and featured a resource fair featuring 23 campus partners and was attended by the majority of incoming first-year students. The college’s embedded counselor expanded their outreach and organized creative events during stressful parts of the semester with the director of student success. The CHASS Advocates program was also developed to connect and guide students from different ambassador groups throughout the college. The program seeks to complement and enhance ambassador programs by offering high-impact experiences and transferable skills.
- **Scholar’s Network:** Understanding the influence a supportive community can have on student success, the Scholar’s Network offers academic, cultural and social enrichment activities for those students who identify as Black or African American and any who are interested in Black culture within the college. During the past academic year, the college relaunched its Scholar’s Network, provided new and engaging programming and identified three core values: building community, supporting scholars and developing professionals. We also further identified key initiatives for the scholars, including social and academic activities, connecting to faculty members across the college and recognition for academic excellence.
- **Impact Scholars Program:** The college implemented a donor-supported, multi-year program for first-year students in 2021-22 entitled the Impact Scholars Program. Students in this program receive up to \$5,000 in resources, which includes a scholarship, a paid research opportunity and funds toward a high-impact experience. The first and second cohorts each had six students, the 2023-24 cohort had seven students, and the 2024-25 cohort will have eight students. To date, five Impact Scholars have worked as undergraduate research assistants with faculty in our college via the Provost’s Professional Experience Program. In addition, four have used program funding for study abroad, and another has used funding to support internship expenses. Scholars have also engaged in academic and professional development activities such as: 1) discussions with peers who had completed undergraduate research, study abroad or internships; 2) workshops to enhance their resumes and develop LinkedIn profiles; and 3) conducting informational interviews with a professional who worked in a field they were considering. Future goals for the program include having the cohorts work together on volunteer/service projects and offering opportunities for social interaction and community-building.

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Goal 2: Ensure Preeminence in Research, Scholarship, Innovation and Collaboration

- **Ensuring a Sound Transition to New Research Leadership:** Associate Dean for Research and Engagement Thomas Birkland returned to the faculty on July 1, 2024. From July 1 to December 31, Denis Provencher will serve as interim associate dean. On Jan. 1, 2025, sociology professor Sarah Bowen will assume the role full-time. Dr. Birkland assembled materials and information for Drs. Provencher and Bowen to ensure as smooth a transition as possible to new leadership.
- **Rebounding Proposal Volume:** Total awards in the college in FY24, as of June 19, 2024, were \$2.6 million, our lowest point in the past six fiscal years. This is likely a function of substantially decreased proposal volume due to a wave of retirements and a larger number of junior faculty joining our college. This trend is beginning to reverse. Thus far in FY24, we have submitted more than \$45.6 million across 61 proposals, according to the Sponsored Research Activity Reporting system. This is the largest dollar value of proposals in the past decade. We know that proposal volume is a leading indicator of future funding, and we expect to see greater sponsored project revenue in the coming years.
- **Outreach to Junior Faculty:** The Research Office hosted a luncheon with junior faculty to introduce the office's services to these emerging leaders, and the associate dean worked proactively with junior faculty to develop a program of externally sponsored research.
- **Faculty Writing Retreat:** Once again, the college hosted a faculty writing retreat in the North Carolina mountains in Spring 2024. The retreat allowed faculty to develop or refine writing and research projects while also allowing them to get to know colleagues and develop collaborations and mentoring relationships. Over the past two years, 27 faculty members at all ranks from multiple programs have participated in these retreats.
- **Research Reboot:** We provided course releases or summer salary for 18 faculty members whose work was demonstrably affected by the COVID pandemic. Our support will help these faculty recover their scholarly productivity.

Goal 3: Expand and Advance Our Engagement with and Service to North Carolina and Beyond, Defining the Standard for a 21st-Century Land-Grant University

- **Reinvigorating the Humanities Extension Program:** Before the COVID pandemic, the college's Humanities Extension Program was a very popular program that matched college faculty with K-12 schools throughout North Carolina, bringing our expertise to

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the classroom and working with teachers. The COVID pandemic slowed this program, but since we emerged from the pandemic, the Office of Research and Engagement has developed new outreach materials and efforts to place our faculty in schools. We have laid the groundwork for a very active year in 2024-25, and the leadership of our new director of extension and engagement, Lorraine Taylor, will greatly expand the reach of this program.

- **A Solid Foundation for the Center for Family and Community Engagement:** Dr. Taylor's taking on the directorship of the Center for Family and Community Engagement positions this center for increased growth and influence in the coming years. The primary N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) contract that funds CFACE, the Family-Centered Practice Project, is slated to grow from \$1.3M in FY 2024 to \$3.5M in FY 2025. This is a substantial increase that reflects DHHS's reliance on, and trust in, CFACE's expertise in this field.

Goal 4: Champion a Culture of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging and Well-Being in All We Do

- **Wellness and Belonging Mini-Grants:** The college's Diversity Action Committee awarded 10 wellness and belonging mini-grants in amounts ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 to CHASS students, staff and faculty for a variety of projects dealing with wellness and belongingness across NC State's campus. All projects were led by CHASS students, staff and faculty and most projects involved multiple participants from 12 departments, units, and colleges at NC State, in addition to the Performance Aesthetics and Communication Research Group at Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil.
- **CHASS Wellness Week:** We held a college Wellness Week in Fall 2023 and another in Spring 2024, where a variety of events were enthusiastically well attended by students, staff and faculty. The college hosted a Wellness Fair in collaboration with campus partners, CHASS student groups and spiritual communities. Other activities included interactive workshops such as a crocheting event with Dean Dannels, a painting event with our embedded counselor, a mini-grant poster session, therapy dogs, chair yoga, and tie-dye, among others.
- **CHASS Staff FFF Lunches:** This initiative brings CHASS staff together, to take a lunch break with Friends, Food and Fun.
- **CHASS Faculty Diversity Mentoring Breakfasts:** We offered monthly Diversity Mentoring Breakfasts open to all CHASS faculty. These breakfasts have an added goal of fostering support and creating mentoring opportunities for faculty who are underrepresented in higher education, in our college and at NC State.
- **2024 Professional Award:** Associate Dean Juliana Makuchi Nfah-Abbenyi won the Chancellor's Creating Community Professional Award, "for exceptional efforts and contributions in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion at NC State University."

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Goal 5: Improve University Effectiveness Through Transformative Technologies, Cutting-Edge Processes and Actionable Data

- **Designed and Implemented Smartsheet Financial Commitment Tracking Tool:** The college partnered with Smartsheet to design and implement a comprehensive, multi-year, financial obligation tool. Designed to provide unit-level and college-level transparency, this tracking tool provides real-time budget balances by fiscal year, funding source and college strategic priority. The integration of dashboards, workflows and reports allows the college finance team to track requests for financial support from initial request, through approval by various administrative leaders, to allocations in PeopleSoft, recorded in a centralized location, without relying on email communications, increasing accuracy and audit trails for college's finances. Unit leaders also have access to pending commitments, reducing the necessity of confirmation emails or funding uncertainty. This tracking tool has improved efficiency, communication and accuracy, supporting strategic financial decision-making in our college.

Goal 6: Lead in Developing Innovative Partnerships, Entrepreneurial Thinking and Applied Problem-Solving

- **Thought Leadership Initiative:** The college is finalizing a database that articulates areas of thought leadership and faculty clusters with expertise in those areas. This database will be used to further propel the strategic plan and to generate additional partnerships.
- **Best Practices for Interdisciplinary Teaching Buyouts:** The college, under the leadership of Associate Dean Denis Provencher, undertook and completed a study of the current college practices for teaching and administrative buyouts implemented to foster interdisciplinary teaching and leadership in the college. He provided recommendations for a more sustainable and equitable model, which the college began implementing in May 2024.
- **Human Futures/Sustainable Futures:** The college invested time in participating in the monthly meetings of the Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs (OUIP), organized by Senior Vice Provost Rob Dunn to learn more about the opportunities available for future interdisciplinary collaborations between CHASS and other colleges. One example of future collaboration has emerged in conversation with Dr. Christopher Galik (SPIA) of the Sustainable Futures initiative. Drs. Provencher, Galik and Voyles (History) have designed a call for interdisciplinary fellows in the college who will participate in AY 24-25 in the first thought leadership initiative on "Human Futures, Sustainable Futures."
- **National Humanities Center Summer Institute: Podcasting for Faculty and Staff-Storytelling for a Modern Audience:** Seven members of the college leadership team

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(faculty and staff) participated in the week-long workshop (June 10 -14, 2024) hosted by the National Humanities Center to learn how to produce podcasts on interdisciplinary topics of interest in the Humanities and Social Sciences. This workshop drew 72 attendees nationally from 37 universities across the U.S. and Canada. CHASS members worked collaboratively alongside these colleagues to conceptualize, design, record and edit 20-minute team podcasts on a range of topics. CHASS attendees will continue to apply these newly acquired skills as the college launches its podcast initiative and series next academic year.

Goal 7: Elevate the National and Global Reputation and Visibility of NC State

- **Brand Refresh Project:** To articulate what makes our college distinctive and develop a strategy to expand our reach, we partnered with SimpsonScarborough on a comprehensive brand refresh project. This included conducting user research with our primary audiences and developing a new brand platform with an updated value proposition, messaging pillars, strategic drivers and creative concepts. We'll use these new insights and our updated strategy to inform a marketing campaign for the college in the coming years.
- **Engaging with Alumni and Community Partners:** We organized, hosted and/or participated in several engagement activities with alumni, donors and friends. These include the following:
 - October 2023: We hosted two "Class Without a Quiz" events during Red and White Week, which invited alumni and other audiences to engage with our faculty on the topics of AI in the classroom and the 2024 elections.
 - February 2024: In partnership with the Alumni Association and DC Alumni Network, we hosted a professional networking mixer in Washington, D.C., Wolfpack in the District.
 - April 2024: We hosted a luncheon with Dean Dannels for key donors and prospects in Winston-Salem.
 - April 2024: We held a series of donor and prospect meetings in Texas to build relationships and expand the reach of the Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies – and how it can serve communities across the nation.
- **Expanding Our Reach:** The college completed several strategic projects and campaigns to deliver messages to key audiences. Those include:
 - Creating and distributing regular editorial content designed to refine our college identity (and raise awareness about our impact) with prospective students, alumni and other external and internal audiences. This includes publishing more than 75 news posts that generated nearly 15,000 pageviews on our college website and more than 295,000 impressions on social media posts.

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- Engaging with new and existing audiences through social media. From July 2023 to June 2024, our followers grew by 31% on Instagram and 16% on LinkedIn. Our highest-performing posts included a graduation “then and now” Instagram Reel celebrating a few of our outstanding students (29,000 plays, 19,000 accounts reached, 414 interactions).
- **Earning Prestigious Awards:** Our faculty represented NC State on a national stage by landing top recognitions and roles. A few examples include:
 - Three faculty who were named Fulbright Scholars:
 - Lauren Brooks, assistant teaching professor in the Department of World Languages and Cultures.
 - Nora Haenn, professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.
 - Intae Yoon, associate professor in the School of Social Work.
 - Two faculty who were named National Humanities Center fellows for the 2024-25 academic year:
 - Belle Boggs, professor in the Department of English.
 - Susanna Lee, associate professor in the Department of History.
 - David Berube, professor in the Department of Communication, was named a fellow for the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
 - Meg Day, assistant professor in the Department of English, was named the Guggenheim Museum’s 2024 Poet-in-Residence.
- **Nagoya University Partnership:** The College began a partnership with the College of Education and Human Development at Nagoya University. This partnership received seed grant funding from Nagoya to plan a larger study on the use of Virtual Reality (VR) technology to address mental health issues faced by international students on both campuses. This project involves faculty from World Cultures and Language and Social Work and may include other partners in 2024-2025.

CHASS Strategic Plan Wins

As reported earlier, we continue to make strong progress toward our college’s [strategic plan](#). Here are a few examples from our departments and units of how we are bringing our strategic priorities to life.

Priority 1: Be the nation’s most innovative humanities and social sciences college

- The Department of History launched a new **Legal History concentration**, designed to engage undergraduate students interested in careers in law by leveraging faculty strengths and organizing courses around career pathways. The new offering aims to make the curriculum more relevant to learners’ career goals, which has already attracted 33 new students in its first year.

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Wolfpack 2030 Goal 1: Empower students for a lifetime of success and impact

- The Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies has developed an AI-assisted system to increase access to **digitized Arabic resources**, making historical texts more searchable for students and researchers. This innovation has already digitized 400,000 Arabic artifacts, significantly improving the ability to study and utilize these records globally.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 2: Ensure preeminence in research, scholarship, innovation and collaboration

- The Department of World Languages and Cultures has driven enrollment growth by adding **new language sections** based on data from student preferences and language needs. The department reports that these targeted investments in desired classes have successfully increased enrollment – and plans to continue this data-driven approach next year.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 5: Improve university effectiveness through transformative technologies, cutting-edge processes and actionable data

Priority 2: Design and build for collaboration to help solve critical challenges

- The School of Public and International Affairs developed a new **Philosophy, Politics and Economics minor** curriculum, in partnership with the Poole College of Business and the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. The program will address a gap in student interest in public policy, an area that has drawn significant interest among undergraduate students at peer and aspirational peer institutions.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal: Lead in developing innovative partnerships, entrepreneurial thinking and applied problem-solving.

- The School of Social Work is **helping address the shortage of social workers across North Carolina** by elevating community-engaged work through strategic planning processes, speaker series, annual town hall meetings, an application waiver program and curriculum updates.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 4: Champion a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and well-being in all we do

- The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs launched the **"Navigating Challenges" workshop series** to tackle difficult issues faced by students, staff and faculty. This series fostered community building, empathy and collaborative problem-solving, addressing topics like AI in the classroom and managing trauma. The workshops have been well-attended and are shaping broader conversations across the university.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 4: Champion a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and well-being in all we do

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Priority 3: Take effective and groundbreaking action on diversity, equity and inclusion

- The Department of English took proactive steps to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by conducting a **labor study** to ensure transparency and equitable distribution of committee and service responsibilities. This initiative aimed to quantify and balance the workload associated with advising and mentoring, shedding light on previously unseen disparities within the department.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 5: Improve university effectiveness through transformative technologies, cutting-edge processes and actionable data

- The Department of Communication reexamined and revised its **retention, promotion and tenure standards and mentoring practices**. This initiative aimed to recognize a broader range of professional contributions and foster greater equity through updated policies and practices, demonstrating significant progress and commitment within the department.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 4: Champion a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and well-being in all we do

- The college advanced equitable innovation through initiatives such as the **Wellness and Belonging Mini-Grant, Wellness Week and Deeper Connections projects**. These efforts were largely led by Associate Dean Juliana Nfah-Abbenyi, who was recognized for her outstanding work with the university's 2024 Creating Community Award.

Wolfpack 2030 Goal 4: Champion a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and well-being in all we do

Additional Topics for Humanities and Social Sciences

Initiatives

- **Leadership Essentials:** The college continues to implement a leadership orientation initiative to provide new leaders with training on the essential activities and units of the college. Participating leaders include new deans and department heads. Leadership Essentials meets weekly from July to October.
- **Graduate Student Stipends:** The college is in its final year of graduate stipend increases. In partnership with the provost, the college committed to increasing graduate student stipends to a new floor of \$15,000 for master's degree students and \$20,000 for MFA and Ph.D. students. Implementation has begun and will be complete by FY25. This will impact all our funded graduate students (approximately 750 students).
- **Salary Equity:** The college allocated funds for departments and units to increase salaries of staff who were below market, as well as tenure/tenure track faculty below minimum market reference.

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Fundraising

- The college raised a total of \$9.3 million in FY24 (through May 31, 2024), exceeding our stretch goal of \$5.2 million and besting all years since FY15. Highlights include two new EOSI endowments, six student scholarship endowments, two programmatic endowments and four estate gifts over \$1 million each.
- The college had our most successful Day of Giving to date, raising \$1.8 million and receiving a record number of 1,303 gifts (a 49% increase over our previous high). Highlights included funding to establish five new endowments, including a \$1.25 million gift to support the college's Impact Scholars program. And for the fourth year in a row, the college received support from 100% of the 24 active CHASS Advisory Board members and seven emeritus members.
- The college was the recipient of two successful grant proposal requests from the NC State Foundation, Inc.

New Leadership/Administration/Faculty

- New Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Affairs and Partnerships: The college welcomed Denis Provencher as the new associate dean in this position. Dr. Provencher spent the year listening and learning about the existing interdisciplinarity initiatives and partnerships in the college.
- Executive Director of Extension and Engagement: On June 1, 2024, Lorraine Taylor joined our college as executive director of extension and engagement. Dr. Taylor serves as the director of the Center for Family and Community Engagement, and works to develop a vision and a strategy for our college's extension and engagement efforts, including the popular Humanities Extension Program.
- Executive Director of Development: The college welcomed Jill Orr as the new Executive Director of Development July 2023.
- Faculty Searches: CHASS welcomed 26 new faculty (8 of whom are African American) in fall 2023. The new funding structure for faculty lines has been effective in increasing our hiring of new faculty in the college.

Challenges

- Retention and salary equity: Although we made great strides in addressing critical salary issues, we still face challenges with faculty salaries, particularly at the rank of professor (since the promotion increase does not – for the most part – move faculty to minimum market reference for the rank of professor). Unless the promotion percentage changes, this will be a challenge annually.
- Engineering Expansion: The college welcomes the opportunity to be a critical player in the engineering expansion initiative. Our challenge is that we need tools (or support) to better project future impact, and it would be helpful to have a clearer and more timely process and criteria for requesting seats/sections due to engineering expansion (e.g., aligned with the academic timeline of scheduling courses and hiring faculty).

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- **Space:** The move to Page Hall has been delayed, and we still do not have a clear date for the move. In the meantime, we have hired new tenure/tenure track faculty that require space (that will be available in Page).
- **Poe Hall:** The college invested ample time, energy and resources to support faculty and staff in the Department of Psychology during the evacuation of Poe Hall and the relocation to temporary space.

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