

Report of the Research Scholarship and Creativity Working Group

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Date: April 4, 2016

Mission of Research, Scholarship and Creativity at Emory:

We are the arts and sciences college of a Research 1 university. As an institution dedicated to intellectual discovery and creativity, Emory College of Arts and Sciences generates new knowledge, invents new ways of understanding of what is already known, and communicates this knowledge through sustained academic and public engagement and inspired teaching. Our mission is to enhance the impact of scholarly work at Emory College of Arts and Sciences and to become one of the best universities in the world.

Our faculty and administrators collaborate to foster a community of scholars that expands the boundaries of the known, advances learning, and betters the human prospect through research and experimentation, creativity and performance, and sharing our skills and scholarship.

Guiding Principles:

1. We develop and sustain a prominent and diverse faculty engaged in discipline-leading research, scholarship, and creativity.

Our tenure track faculty set the highest standards in their research and share their knowledge, curiosity, passion for inquiry, scholarship and creativity with students, colleagues and academic communities.

Our lecture track faculty are superlative teachers and mentors. Their scholarship plays a critical role in shaping the academic experience.

2. The ECAS positions departments to fulfill their research missions, to attract a strong and diverse faculty, and to support collaborations within and between disciplines that sustain research at the highest level.
3. College administrators and faculty collaborate to acquire resources to foster ambitious research programs.

Goals:

1. Enhance the research productivity and profile of our faculty.
2. Identify areas in which Emory College of Arts and Sciences has and can support scholarly work of the highest quality and greatest impact. Prioritize investment in departments and programs that best represent these areas.
3. Provide opportunities to explore and create research that transcends the boundaries of the traditional departments and disciplines.
4. Assure that all our scholarly and creative work — disciplinary and interdisciplinary — is appropriately assessed and valued. Find innovative ways to encourage and reward nontraditional contributions such as public scholarship, performance and production, and the acquisition of patents.
5. Increase the external support generated for our research from agencies, foundations, and philanthropy.
6. Build and sustain leading graduate programs to strengthen the quality and impact of our scholarship and research.
7. Provide undergraduates with opportunities to engage in research, independent scholarship and creative activity at multiple levels, including research-oriented seminars, performance, capstone courses and independent research projects. Sharpen education in the College by exposing students to the practice of research.
8. Expand the number of our faculty who are recognized nationally and internationally for their scholarship through awards, induction into national societies, and notable accolades.
9. Implement policies and practices at all levels of institutional administration that reduce obstacles, inefficiencies and unnecessary constraints on the work of the faculty.
10. Improve and extend the visibility of our departments, programs and activities through investment in ECAS websites and electronic communications.

Criteria:

In order to effectively and consistently evaluate initiatives that are proposed to reach our goals, explicit criteria are required. The following set of questions present several relevant criteria.

1) Does the proposed initiative present opportunities for the college and for its faculty, departments, and programs to become nationally and internationally eminent in a specific research domain, and raise the visibility of ECAS as a destination for excellent research faculty and talented, promising students?

a) Is there disciplinary significance, a compelling problem to be addressed, and intellectual merit in the proposed initiative?

b) Does the impact of the proposed work reach beyond its disciplinary boundaries, and is interest in this work likely to be sustained and to grow in coming years?

c) Is the proposed area consistent with the ECAS mission, does it promote liberal education, and will it stimulate undergraduate research projects?

2) Does the proposed initiative build on institutional strengths (schools, departments, researchers, infrastructure and culture) and/or nurture and promote new opportunities for excellence.

3) Does the proposed initiative support the expansion of a diverse faculty and student body?

4) In areas where graduate student participation in research is critical, are there strong programs in place? Does the proposal have the potential to elevate graduate training and foster synergies between graduate and undergraduate education?

5) In areas where external funding is essential for successful research, is there support from government agencies, foundations, industry or donors for the proposed program?

Initiatives:

A number of initiatives emerged in working group meetings and in its discussions with department chairs and ECAS administrators. Several were included in responses to the faculty survey. Note that the following list is not an attempt to account for all ECAS research strengths or to provide a catalog of the suggestions the working group received. Rather it contains a small number of proposals of particularly well-developed, highly visible and cross-cutting research programs with a clear intellectual focus in the College.

1) Institute for Quantitative Life Sciences

This Institute will be highly visible from the outside, and host a Fellows program for interdisciplinary research. Specific existing areas of strength include Modeling and Theory in Population Biology and Evolution, Computational Neuroscience, Systems Biology, and Molecular Biophysics. Its members will come from several Departments (Physics, Biology, Environmental Science, Psychology, Chemistry, Math/CS), and new joint faculty recruitments with participating Departments will be made. For educational programming it will work closely with the existing QTM faculty. It will be guided by a Director, and an Executive Committee, and managed by an administrative staff.

2) Center for the Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Disease

This Center will fund and coordinate talks, workshops, and short term research visits by outside faculty. Further it will support a Fellows program in this subject area to aid in the establishment of new collaborations and directions. Fellows will be engaged in undergraduate mentoring and teaching. The key faculty of this Center come from biology and environmental sciences, but other departments (e.g. chemistry, anthropology), are also engaged. Our special interactions with the CDC lend additional visibility to the Center as a nationally eminent player.

3) Research Center in Cognitive Neuroscience

This Center will host Postdoctoral Fellows, who will be engaged in teaching and interdisciplinary research in brain and cognition. This Center will build a research focus to complement the programming activities of the Center Mind, Brain, and Culture and the teaching mission of the NBB major. The Center would engage in targeted faculty hires and further host a vibrant postdoctoral fellows program.

4) Emory College Heart-Mind Institute

This institute will host research on brain, mind, and behavior in conjunction with the special relationship Emory has built with the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhism, and build on College strengths with early leadership in contemplative science. It aims to provide programmatic

support for and creatively advance contemplative science and scholarship (such as imaging studies probing meditation or empathy, integration of first-, second-, and third-person approaches, or comparative bioethics), and development of evidence-based applications (such as cognitively-based compassion training (CBCT), secular ethics, techniques from Buddhist debate). Existing strengths include faculty research in Anthropology, Biology, Human Health, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Religion; resources in Center for Ethics, Carlos Museum, Emory-Tibet Partnership, Emory-Tibet Science Initiative.

5) Race and Gender Initiative

An interdisciplinary and global initiative that will integrate the resources of Philosophy, WGSS, African American Studies, the James Weldon Johnson Institute, Art History, Global and Postcolonial Studies Program, Comparative Literature, Global Health and the Rose MARBL/Woodruff library. Building coalitions across such programs would place Emory at the forefront of Race and Gender discussions in the academy and beyond. This initiative could build support for establishing an overdue PhD program in African America Studies at Emory as well as create links for recruitment and outreach programs to HBCUs in Atlanta and beyond.

6) Arts / New Work Initiative

This initiative will provide deeper support for the ongoing creation and dissemination of new creative work at Emory. The Arts at Emory are distinguished from most other undergraduate BA arts programs in the commitment to innovation and the creation of new work. This will include a new and prominently featured web presence that will showcase the new work being done by faculty and students in the creative and performing arts departments. Establishing an Arts at Emory fellows—housed in the existing Center for Creativity & Arts will enhance departments' research and teaching missions by bring to campus and the classroom, young MFA and PhD artist/scholars who would have the opportunity to not only develop and explore their own work but also teach and provide near-peer mentorship for undergraduate students in these departments. The fellows will become resources for the various entities that support the creation of new work such as the CCA, the Playwriting Center, the new production wing of Film and Media Studies, Jazz Studies, and the Integrated Visual Arts co-major.

7) Humanities / Interdisciplinary Center

Building on the successes of the FOX CHI and the nascent new ILA program, a robust Interdisciplinary Humanities Initiative will offer Emory scholars and external senior and post doc fellows a chance for focused research projects for a specific period of time in a variety of contexts. These could include solo research, such as is now conducted thru the CHI, and collaborative interdisciplinary research, such as in the new ILA. Such a center would have the resources to enrich our "next step" research, scholarship, and creative activity. Investing in this

center would build a national reputation and stature for the interdisciplinarity in the humanities at Emory. This initiative would provide additional public scholarship venues, such as the upcoming Year of Shakespeare, and give support and credit to faculty that are involved in these kinds of events, which often involve interdisciplinary thinking and the creative arts.

8) Health Economics and Policy Research

The Health Economics and Policy Research initiative builds on existing strengths and planned expansion in health economics and demography/income inequality and incorporates the full range of social sciences and natural sciences, while also connecting to the Schools of Public Health, Medicine, and Nursing and potentially others. Example fields of enquiry include: aging, mental and behavioral health, population and demographics, poverty and inequality - family income security, the social safety net, for example, social security, Medicaid/Medicare, and development economics.

9) Data Science Initiative

Data Science is broadly described as an interdisciplinary field concerned with methods that draw knowledge from data. Methods derive from statistics, data mining and analytics, and information science, to name a few of the areas involved. One particular aspect, big data, refers to management and methods that capitalize on the huge amount of data becoming available for social science study. This topic connects all areas in social science that use data, so just about every department in the Division of Social Sciences, as well as Math & CS and the QTM Institute. More connections exist to researchers throughout the university in data security and in medical informatics.

Two other issues were discussed extensively by the working group, both internally and with chairs and administrators. Consequently, questions were included on the faculty survey that pertained to the creation of a fellows program and to the relationship between Emory College and the Laney Graduate School.

Emory Fellows Program

The survey question that referred to an Emory Fellows Program elicited almost 140 responses, with positive reactions outnumbering negative at about 3.5 to 1. Of course, the defining features of a program that provides institutional support for post doctoral fellows vary a great deal between and within universities where these exist. In broad outline, our intention was that such a program would provide institutional support for fixed term (say, two-year) appointments of recent PhD or other terminal degree holders that would include teaching duties and full involvement in the scholarly activities of the involved unit(s). Mentoring and professional development

would be integral, as would opportunities for interdisciplinary involvement in research and teaching.

Note that several of the proposed initiatives cite the importance of fellow programs. Development of such programs would require the involve departments, programs, centers or initiatives to make a compelling case for the importance of a group of fellows to their mission.

Report on Survey Results regarding the Laney Graduate School

Given the centrality of graduate education to Research, Scholarship and Creativity in ECAS, we solicited opinion from the faculty on how ECAS and LGS could improve their relationship to enhance graduate education.

According to the survey, there were 108 narrative responses to the question about the relationship between the ECAS and the LGS. There were a diversity of opinions across the three divisions but some themes emerged that could be used in strategic planning for Research, Scholarship, and Creativity.

1) The LGS-ECAS dichotomy is widely perceived as a structure that impedes progress and reduces our ability to develop world-class graduate programs.

2) Given the current structure, however, there are several areas where better coordination in needed.

a) Joint ECAS-LGS strategic planning concerning the size and definition of graduate programs.

b) LGS must better serve the research needs of the faculty by adjusting graduate lines to faculty hires, and the ECAS should hire faculty that can most effectively contribute to existing graduate programs.

c) LGS must better serve the teaching needs of the faculty by adjusting graduate lines to TA needs and providing more TA training, and the ECAS should consider ways to separate stipendiary support in the first two years from LGS and TAs provided in later graduate years by ECAS. ECAS should also explore creative ways of involving graduate students in undergraduate teaching, especially in STEM fields.