College of Humanities and Sciences

Excellence Beyond Boundaries 2025

Montse Fuentes
Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences
EXCELLENCE in

Our People

Our Programs

Our Partnerships

boundless, limitless, unconstrained

Infinite possibilities
OUR MISSION

The mission of College of Humanities and Sciences is to serve as the intellectual “heart and soul” of our institution and wider community.

The College of Humanities and Sciences:
Prepares lifelong learners to participate actively as engaged and responsible citizens.
Propels scientific research and scholarship.
Provides communities with a passionate and creative workforce that serves as a powerful engine for economic development and innovative solutions to problems.
OUR VISION

As the intellectual lifeblood of VCU we inspire our students to explore their passions and dreams and we provide the context to understand their place in the world.

Our educational and research environment addresses an array of societal problems, as well as provides profound insights and reflections of what it means to be human and humane.
OUR CORE VALUES
Diversity and inclusion

For the College of Humanities and Sciences excellence cannot be achieved without diverse thought from individuals with diverse views and backgrounds.

Thoughtful, respectful contributions from diverse individuals offer creative, thought-provoking, innovative solutions to real-world dynamic human challenges.
OUR FOCUS AREAS:

Enhance student success

Build a world-class faculty/staff

Promote Research and Scholarship

Pursue community-centered excellence with global impact
OUR FOCUS AREA #1: Student Success

We are committed to preparing our students for success in their careers and to live a meaningful and rewarding life.
Degrees awarded in 2017-18: the College of Humanities and Sciences conferred a total of 2,631 degrees or certificates -- Summer '17: 409, Fall '17: 845, Spring '18: 1,377.
Enhancing Student Success inside and outside the classroom

• Graduation Rates/Retention rates/enrollment projections
  – Trend data show steady improvement in graduation
    • Low graduation rates students identified as Hispanic/Latino and African American males is of particular concern
    • African American student mentoring program
    • Hispanic/Latinx student mentoring program

• Addressing strategies to improve high rates of DFW in some courses
• Full implementation of our advising hires. Increased participation in reporting of early alerts.
• Improved career services for all students
• Leadership training
• Student Success Collaborative outreach retention programs to all students and specific campaigns

Karen Kester - VCU Bridges to Baccalaureate (NIGMS)
CHS Achieving great heights:

The CHS admitted its largest class ever in Fall 2018 with 2,676 freshman enrolled and 949 transfer students.

35% from underrepresented minority groups up from 29% five years ago.

Undergraduate 6-year graduation rates up to 61%.

Undergraduate graduation rates for Black/Af.Amer. Males has increased from 49.6% in 2016 to 60%.

First year retention rates up to 85% (3% increase from previous year).
Our Focus Area #2: Build a world-class faculty
Our faculty bring distinction
CHS Eminent Scholars

The College of Humanities and Sciences has launched a CHS Distinguished Faculty Scholars program with the intent to incentivize/retain our best scholars.

The purpose of the program is to recognize emerging or mid-career scholars among our faculty and reward them for their scholarly contributions to their discipline, the College, and the University.

Donor has offered the financial support for this initiative (our development funds have increased this year by over 50%!!)
Dean’s Fellows

An opportunity for faculty with interest in leadership roles. Providing leadership training and exposure to administration in the College.

Our current Dean’s Fellows:

Kathy Bassard
Faculty Development Initiatives

Susan Bodnar-Deren
Sarah Golding
Meredith Katz
Anette Loughran-Fjeldstad

Priority: investment in Faculty and Staff professional development and recognition
Supporting excellence for faculty and staff

- Enhance teaching and research opportunities for faculty
- Pedagogical training and orientation initiatives for adjuncts
- Build excellence through a culture that is diverse, inclusive and unites the entire university.

CHS Faculty Diversity:
For the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years, ~30% of the College tenure-track hires have been from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and 59% have been women.
Black/African American Faculty represents 8.6% of CHS faculty today, it was 5.9% in 2015 (2.7% increase)
Hispanic/Latino Faculty represents 5.4% today, it was 4.5% in 2015 (1% increase)
Females tenured represent 39.7% of tenured faculty today, it was 35.5% in 2015 (4.2% increase)
Our Focus Area #3:
Excellence in our Research 1 Mission

Our aim is to maximize the impact of our research by concentrating our research resources in areas where we have strategic strengths and by creating a culture of collaboration and interdisciplinarity. Highlighting the diversity of research.
OUR STRATEGIC RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Mechanisms and Management of Addiction

Building Resilient Urban Communities (LGBTQIA+, Migration)

Data Science

Nanomaterials for Energy and Medicine
Tom Eissenberg (Psychology) continues his study of modified risk tobacco products such as electronic cigarettes, funded by an $20M grant from the NIH.

Brian Daugherity (History) was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to train secondary school teachers on the history of school desegregation in Virginia.
College of Humanities and Sciences

Scholarship and Research

• 578 peer-reviewed publications
• 22 books
• 10% increase in PhD enrollment over FY17
• Total grant funds in FY17: $21.6M
• A 25% increase over FY16
• YTD Award Dollars = $14,751,538 compared to $11,950,245 last year (27% increase)
• Second highest total of indirect cost recovery funding at VCU
• Highest on the Monroe Park campus
• Excellent scholarship and diversity in research that brings distinction to VCU

David Wojahn is the recipient of the 2018 Library of Virginia Literary Award for Poetry for his book *For the Scribe.*

Amy Adkins & Danielle Dick
VCU Guided Research Experiences & Applied Training (VCU GREAT; NIAAA)
Building research infrastructure for success

• **Big Ideas:** cluster hires in LGBTQ, Migration studies, Data science.

• **Catalyst and Seed Awards:** New internal funds to promote scholarship and research.

• **Baldacci Fund:** Funds to support experiential learning (1M endowment)

• **Policies:** New policy on FACR and salary savings distributions

• **Training:** Whitepaper writing workshop

• Increased financial support for graduate programs

**2018-2019:**

Recruitment of 14 new Tenure track lines
Our Focus Area #4: Local partnerships with global impact.

Community-centered excellence in research and teaching
College of Humanities and Sciences

Community Outreach

- 1,290 Student Interns
- 35 Service Learning Courses
- 5 Donor Supported Transformative Learning Experiences
- 10 Department coordinated community Engagement programs
Community-centered focus with global impact:

Expand community engagement and experiential learning

Expand learning abroad

Articulate a process for assessing community-engaged research and scholarship in evaluations and promotions

McKenna Brown
CHS Global Initiatives
SIX YEAR PLAN

In accordance with our six year plan, we are requesting $2 million in permanent funding for FY 2020 (granted). And additional $2M for each of the following 4 years.

We will increase the number of tenure-track faculty in CHS by more than 16% by hiring 38 new tenure-track faculty over the next six years.

Strategic hires will ensure that the College will be a diverse center of scholarship and education, in discipline, faculty composition and degree programs.
SIX YEAR PLAN

Enhance student opportunities

CHS is developing four new degree opportunities. The requested new hires will contribute to these degrees both through instruction and by exposing undergrad/grad students to new areas of research.

New B.S. in Health Sciences
New B.A. in International and Global Studies
New B.S. in Science, Technology and Society
New PhD in Biosciences
VCU’s success in becoming a top research public urban university depends on the success of the College of Humanities and Sciences.

Thank you!