

The College of Arts & Sciences Research Support Services Strategic Plan



COLLEGE OF
ARTS & SCIENCES

Our Vision

To foster a thriving, inclusive research environment that strengthens faculty success, expands student engagement, advances innovative scholarship, and drives growth in extramural funding across the College of Arts & Sciences.

Our Values

Collaboration, transparency, respect, service, excellence, inclusivity, communication/clarity.

Our Mission

Our mission is to serve as a central hub for investigators, providing trusted, high-quality research support to the Arts & Sciences community.

Foundational Elements

Foundational Element 1: Provide high-quality research support services

We deliver comprehensive research support services to the College of Arts & Sciences (A&S) researchers. Our goal is to reduce administrative burden, increase proposal competitiveness, and ensure timely, accurate submissions to external sponsors.

Overarching Goal:

Strengthen the efficiency, consistency, and responsiveness of support services.

Short-Term Actions

- Develop and implement SOPs that guide pre-award processes. SOPs will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.
- Pilot program management support services within the Social Sciences and Humanities departments for new and active proposals. Assess pilot outcomes for the potential of scaling to other units.

Ongoing Actions

- Conduct quarterly internal audits of submitted proposals to identify process inefficiencies, last-minute submissions, and common administrative issues. Share findings at staff meetings and use results to inform process improvements.

Foundational Element 2: Collaborate with UNM research network

We work closely with the Faculty Research Development Office (FRDO), the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP), and other central research units to ensure aligned, efficient, and policy-compliant support. Through strong communication and a networked model, we connect faculty with institutional expertise, facilitate troubleshooting, and advocate for the needs of A&S researchers.

Overarching Goal:

Enhance coordination and communication with central research offices.

Short-Term Actions

- Establish standing meetings with OSP leadership to discuss recurring pain points, clarify policy interpretation, and help to strengthen a collaborative relationship.

Medium-Term Actions

- Co-develop a shared communications channel with FRDO and OSP to streamline the dissemination of updates, tools, and key timelines relevant to A&S researchers.

Ongoing Actions

- Continue participation in biweekly Faculty Research Support Officer (FRSO) network meetings and FRDO working groups, with at least one A&S representative attending each session.
- Maintain an A&S presence on the Research Administrators Network (RAN) working group.

Foundational Element 3: Provide programs to A&S research community

In collaboration with the FRDO, we offer trainings, workshops, and tailored programs to strengthen research capacity and foster a culture of proposal preparedness. Our efforts support new and established investigators in building grantsmanship skills, navigating sponsor requirements, and strategically pursuing extramural funding opportunities.

Overarching Goal:

Expand and tailor research development programming in collaboration with FRDO to meet the evolving needs of A&S faculty.

Medium-Term Actions

- Create an annual survey of A&S faculty to assess satisfaction with current research support services and identify emerging needs. Use feedback to refine programming and resource allocation.
- Work with UCAM to create a video that highlights the research support services available within the College to serve as a reference tool for investigators.

Ongoing Actions

- Partner with FRDO to support and promote programs such as FRESH (Fostering Research Expansion in the Social Sciences and Humanities), GROWL (Grant Revision for Outstanding Wins to Level-up), and new initiatives tailored to faculty in the Arts & Sciences. Ensure A&S presence in planning and outreach.

Foundational Element 4: Advance A&S strategic research priorities

We actively support the College's strategic research goals by promoting faculty success, visibility, and impact through a variety of targeted funding programs and initiatives. We invest in programs that foster scholarly excellence, encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, and expand the reach of A&S research across disciplines and communities.

Overarching Goal:

Increase external research funding for the College by aligning strategic priorities with targeted programming, enhanced visibility, faculty recognition, and donor engagement.

Short-Term Actions

- Strengthen support and visibility for the Arts & Sciences Support for Undergraduate Research Experience (ASSURE) program by creating a system to track outcomes. Hold annual ASSURE celebration event with donors and stakeholders.
- In collaboration with the College's Associate Deans, establish an annual A&S Research and Scholarship Excellence recognition event to celebrate faculty achievement and raise the profile of research across the College.

Medium-Term Actions

- Partner with the A&S development staff to identify fundraising or donor engagement opportunities that align with the College's research priorities, such as student research support (ASSURE), seed funding, or equipment needs.
- Promote A&S scholarly and creative work successes through the college newsletter and website that highlights new awards, publications, A&S researchers, and key research metrics.
- Develop a system to track faculty and student fellowship applications and awards to identify trends, advertise successes, and enhance future strategic planning efforts in the College.

Foundational Element 5: Provide programs and activities to ensure the sustainability and well-being of the office and its staff

We prioritize the long-term effectiveness of the A&S research team by fostering a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative work environment. This includes investing in professional development, promoting staff retention through cross-training and workload balance, and implementing practices that encourage continuous learning, innovation, and resilience.

Overarching Goal:

Retain research support staff by cultivating a collaborative, growth-oriented work environment.

Short-Term Actions

- Launch a new Smartsheet dashboard, to track workload, proposals, and deadlines and gather more useful data on proposal support.
- Offer at least one professional development opportunity twice a year to support staff retention.

Short-Term Actions Continued

- Establish a rotating schedule for A&S FRSOs to work from the FRDO office providing opportunities for extended training and stronger collaboration with central research support services.

Medium-Term Actions

- Implement cross-training for staff to help with a holistic view of the grant life cycle.
- Partner with FRDO leadership to create pathways for FRSO promotion and career advancement.

Ongoing Actions

- Have weekly check-ins to talk about workload, identify burnout risks and discuss professional development needs.

Connect with us for research support

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