

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION SCIENCES

STRATEGIC PLAN | 2016 - 2021



College of
Communication &
Information Sciences

Table of Contents

C&IS Overview.....	2
History.....	2
Mission & Purpose.....	3
Mission.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Vision & Values.....	4
Vision.....	4
Values.....	4
Key Themes.....	4
We Believe.....	4
C&IS by the Numbers.....	5
Enrollment.....	5
Credit Hour Production.....	6
Awarded Degrees.....	6
Faculty and Staff.....	7
Contract and Grant Awards.....	8
Degree Programs.....	8
Accreditation.....	9
Strategic Priorities.....	10
I. Cultivate High-Quality Academic Programs.....	11
Goal IA – Advance Teaching & Learning.....	11
Goal IB – Enhance Undergraduate and Graduate Support.....	11
II. Enhance the Research Culture.....	12
Goal IIA – Expand Research Strengths.....	12
Goal IIB – Emphasize High-Quality Students and Faculty.....	12
Goal IIC – Integrate Research.....	12
III. Improve Internal and External Communities.....	12
Goal IIIA – Develop a Vibrant Community.....	13
Goal IIIB – Invest in Faculty & Staff.....	13
IV. Provide a Learning Environment that Promotes Diversity, Equity, Leadership, and Service.....	13
Goal IVA – Strengthen Diversity and Inclusion.....	13
Goal IVB – Cultivate an Ethos of Leadership and Service.....	14
V. Strengthen National and International Profiles.....	14
Goal VA – Promote National and International Leadership.....	14
Goal VB – Foster Global Citizenry.....	14
Strategic Planning Process.....	15
Background.....	15
Phase One.....	15
Phase Two.....	16

C&IS Overview

The College of Communication & Information Sciences offers undergraduate degrees in Advertising, Communication Studies, Journalism, Public Relations, and Telecommunication & Film, master's degrees in Advertising & Public Relations, Book Arts, Communication Studies, Journalism, Library & Information Studies, and Telecommunication & Film, and an interdisciplinary doctoral degree. The College is the only communication unit in the state of Alabama offering bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.

The College prepares students for careers in the production of public communication, such as in news, media, and film, for professional positions in government, business, and industry requiring training in media and communication, and for educational positions requiring graduate study in specific areas of communication and information sciences. The College also provides study of the processes of human and mass communication, preparing students to be effective communicators and fostering their abilities to think critically, to express and to advocate their ideas effectively, and to understand and appreciate the diversity of human communication in practice. Supporting the College in these goals are the Digital Media Center, the Alabama Program in Sports Communication, the Betsy Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, and the Institute for Communication and Information Research.

History

The College originated from the School of Communication, which was created on July 1, 1973, by combining the Department of Journalism (founded in 1926) and the Department of Broadcast & Film Communication (founded in 1940) with The University of Alabama Television Services (now The Center for Public Television) in a single administrative unit. The Department of Broadcast & Film Communication was later renamed to the Department of Telecommunication & Film which merged with the Department of Journalism in 2016 to become the Department of Journalism & Creative Media.

During its first year in 1973, the School of Communication created an additional department, the Department of Advertising & Public Relations, from course sequences that had been part of the Department of Journalism. University Radio Services (now Alabama Public Radio) was established in 1980, as was the Communication Research & Service Center (now the Institute for Communication and Information Research). On May 16, 1981, the Department of Speech Communication (founded in 1932, now Communication Studies) moved from the College of Arts & Sciences to the School of Communication. The former School of Communication became the College of Communication on September 9, 1988, by action of the Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama in recognition of the school's expanded role and scope. On July 1, 1997, the College of Communication and the School of Library & Information Studies merged to form the College of Communication & Information Sciences.

Mission & Purpose

Mission

The University of Alabama's College of Communication & Information Sciences is a comprehensive multidisciplinary division in which teaching, research, and service are focused on shared creation, presentation, dissemination, retrieval, collection, analysis, and evaluation of messages and meanings in a variety of settings. The mission is supported by one of the country's most diverse combinations of academic and service programs.

Purpose

- To offer courses leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees in those specialized areas necessary to prepare students to pursue careers in communication- and information-related areas.
- To provide students with a broad education that will allow them to become productive and creative citizens in society and leaders in their professions, their communities, and the nation.
- To encourage students to pursue further formal study and self-education in communication- and information-related areas.
- To engage actively in research and service.

Vision & Values

Vision

The College of Communication & Information Sciences develops global leaders who do the extraordinary across the full communication, media, and information spectrum.

Values

- Personal and professional excellence
- Creativity and intellectual curiosity
- Interpersonal adaptability and negotiation
- Integrity and ethical grounding
- Diversity and appreciation for differences
- Passion and resilience
- Collaboration and unity

Key Themes

- All students have potential.
- The ethical choice is always the right choice.
- Diversity strengthens our community.
- Growth comes from being challenged.
- Curiosity and creativity are essential to learning.
- New, diverse, and futuristic ideas are encouraged.
- Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Dreaming big and thinking differently are essential to success.

We Believe

We believe communication and information can change the world. We believe the analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of information requires integrity, creativity, and professional excellence.

We believe consideration of different perspectives increases our ability to connect, grow, and contribute. We respect the insights and experiences of all members of our community.

We believe in treating each other with dignity and respect. We remain curious. We seek collaboration. We respect potential. We dream big. We show up. We do the work, and if we make mistakes in the process, we always try to get it right.

We believe we have a responsibility to advance the study and practice of communication and information sciences. We believe communication and information can change the world because they have already changed the world inside each of us.

C&IS by the Numbers

Enrollment

Overall Enrollment	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Undergraduate	2,704	2,759	2,690	2,550	2,458
Graduate	323	355	385	397	413
Total	3,027	3,114	3,075	2,947	2,871

First-Time Undergraduate Students by Sex	Male		Female		Total
	No.	Row %	No.	Row %	No.
2015	116	24.0	368	76.0	484
2014	122	23.6	396	76.4	518
2013	127	23.0	424	77.0	551
2012	133	26.4	370	73.6	503
2011	149	30	348	70.0	497

New Graduate Students by Sex	Male		Female		Total
	No.	Row %	No.	Row %	No.
2015	21	21.0	79	79.0	100
2014	38	28.8	94	71.2	132
2013	29	22.7	99	77.3	128
2012	31	23.5	101	76.5	132
2011	28	23.3	92	76.7	120

Credit Hour Production

Fall Credit Hour Production by Course Level	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Lower Division	13,568	12,701	11,622	11,930	11,434
Upper Division	9,078	8,569	8,099	7,217	6,436
Graduate I	2,050	2,122	2,350	2,483	2,560
Graduate II	383	458	402	441	427
Total	25,079	23,849	22,473	22,071	20,857

Awarded Degrees

Degrees Awarded by Level	14-15	13-14	12-13	11-12	10-11
Bachelor's	606	623	542	487	444
Master's	156	147	176	166	177
Doctoral	17	9	12	8	10
Total	779	779	730	661	631

Faculty and Staff

Faculty by Rank	Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Instructor	Lecturer	Total
2015	18	21	26	40	14	119
2014	16	20	23	39	16	114
2013	16	18	20	40	15	109
2012	20	17	19	45	10	111
2011	18	15	22	39	10	104

Faculty by Full-Time/Part-Time Status and Sex	Full-Time			Part-Time			Total		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
2015	33	50	83	18	18	36	51	68	119
2014	32	43	75	17	22	39	49	65	114
2013	33	39	72	20	17	37	53	56	109
2012	35	37	72	21	18	39	56	55	111
2011	36	37	73	15	16	31	51	53	104

Employees by Job Group	Executive/Admin/Managerial	Faculty	Professional	Technical/Paraprofessional	Clerical/Secretarial	Total
2015	7	119	55	16	18	215
2014	7	114	58	13	17	209
2013	7	109	50	19	15	200
2012	6	112	48	16	17	199
2011	6	104	47	16	14	187

Contract and Grant Awards

Grant and Contract Awards	Research		Instruction		Public Service & Other		Total
	Federal	State	Federal	State	Federal	State	
2015	\$109,126			\$1,000	\$169,946	\$100,461	\$380,533
2014	\$105,528		\$317,450		\$166,434	\$72,367	\$661,779
2013	\$114,944				\$254,961	\$80,295	\$450,200

Degree Programs

CIP Codes	Degree Program Title	Nomenclature
09.0903	Advertising	B.A.Com.
09.0903	Advertising and Public Relations	M.A.
50.0799	Book Arts	M.F.A.
09.0102	Communication and Information Sciences	Ph.D.
09.0101	Communication Studies	B.A.Com., M.A.
09.0401	Journalism (Mass Communication)	B.A.Com., M.A.
25.0101	Library & Information Studies	M.L.I.S.
09.0902	Public Relations	B.A.Com.
09.0701	Telecommunication and Film	B.A.Com., M.A.

Accreditation

CIP Codes	Unit	Accrediting Agency	Accredited Degrees	Year of Last Accreditation	Review Cycle (Years)
	The University of Alabama	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)	Baccalaureate, Master's, EdS, and Doctoral Degrees	2015	10
9.0903	Advertising	Accreditation Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)	BACom	2016	6
9.0903	Advertising and Public Relations	Accreditation Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)	MA	2016	6
50.0799	Book Arts	National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)	MFA	2008	10
9.0401	Journalism	Accreditation Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)	BACom	2016	6
25.0101	Library and Information Studies	American Library Association (ALA); Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)	MLIS	2010	7
9.0902	Public Relations	Accreditation Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)	BACom	2016	6
9.0701	Telecommunication and Film	Accreditation Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)	BACom	2016	6

Strategic Priorities

Starting in Fall 2015, The University of Alabama initiated a University-wide strategic planning process that culminated in the creation of four strategic goals that serve as the pillars of the University's strategic plan.

During the strategic planning process, the College of Communication & Information Sciences mapped each of the College's five strategic priorities to the overall institutional goals, ensuring alignment as the College advances both the institutional and unit-level strategic plans.

The University of Alabama Strategic Goals

The College of Communication & Information Sciences Strategic Priorities

- Provide a premier undergraduate and graduate education that offers a global perspective and is characterized by outstanding teaching, high-quality scholarship, and distinctive curricular and co-curricular programs.
 - I. Cultivate High-Quality Academic Programs
 - V. Strengthen National and International Profiles
- Increase the University's productivity and innovation in research, scholarship, and creative activities that impact economics and societal development.
 - II. Enhance the Research Culture
- Enrich our learning and work environment by providing an accepting, inclusive community that attracts and supports a diverse faculty, staff, and student body.
 - IV. Provide a Learning Environment that Promotes Diversity, Equity, Leadership, and Service
- Provide opportunities and resources that promote work-life balance and enhance the recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty and staff.
 - III. Improve Internal and External Communities

I. Cultivate High-Quality Academic Programs

Offering rigorous, quality academic programs will prepare our students for success in their chosen fields and careers. C&IS will provide all students with an academically-challenging environment, high-quality course offerings, and teaching excellence. We are committed to the development of faculty, support services, and resources that help deliver quality academic programs. We seek to provide optimal use of technology in support of teaching and learning, curricular and co-curricular innovation, and academic program development to prepare students for an evolving, global society.

Goal IA – Advance Teaching & Learning

Advance teaching and learning through innovations in course design, assessment, and new partnerships.

OBJECTIVES

- Integrate the Digital Media Center into academic programs as a teaching and research laboratory.
- Involve the School of Library & Information Studies in undergraduate academic programs.
- Focus on experiential learning opportunities.
- Strategically grow online education programs.
- Emphasize the visibility and quality of graduate programs.
- Develop a C&IS Honors program.

Goal IB – Enhance Undergraduate and Graduate Support

Enhance and expand undergraduate and graduate learning support services.

OBJECTIVES

- Expand and strengthen programs that focus on degree completion and time to degree.
- Develop targeted initiatives to recruit and retain under-represented populations.
- Strengthen the pipeline of transfer students into C&IS from two-year schools.

II. Enhance the Research Culture

A robust research culture advances knowledge and creativity while enhancing student and faculty experiences. C&IS will provide undergraduate and graduate students with experiences that promote scholarship and faculty mentor relationships. We are also committed to developing our research culture by increasing the level of research and creative activity while further integrating research as part of the student learning experience by providing resources and support to achieve research objectives and compete nationally and internationally.

Goal IIA – Expand Research Strengths

Build on established research strengths and pursue new strategic and focused opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

- Generate increased applications and awards of funded faculty research.
- Expand the utilization of research facilities by internal and external researchers.
- Strengthen education and training of faculty about grants and journal submission.
- Enhance promotion of research efforts.

Goal IIB – Emphasize High-Quality Students and Faculty

Attract, develop, and retain highly-qualified students and faculty.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide competitive incentives and graduate student financial packages.
- Expand undergraduate student involvement in the research activities of the college.

Goal IIC – Integrate Research

Foster excellence, collaboration, and the integration of research into all areas of the college.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify, strengthen, and prioritize the college's existing and emerging areas of research excellence on a regular basis.
- Collaborate across campus and across college disciplines on research.
- Encourage and reward research excellence and productivity.
- Re-conceptualize the definition of research to include diverse forms of scholarship.

III. Improve Internal and External Communities

The communities of C&IS enrich the experience of our faculty, staff, and students. Forging strong relationships both internally and externally helps build a supportive, dynamic college environment. We understand that our alumni, friends, faculty, staff, and students deepen the educational experience and ensure the success and vitality of the college. A strong community also enhances the work life of every faculty and staff member. We are committed to strengthening these communities to allow every member to contribute and learn from each other.

Goal IIIA – Develop a Vibrant Community

Develop a vibrant college community.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve communication, reduce barriers, and enhance collaboration among members of the college community.
- Strengthen the sense of affinity and college pride among all C&IS constituencies—students, alumni, staff, faculty, and friends.
- Enlist alumni and donor support of strategic priorities and improve their relationships with the college.
- Collaborate with our alumni to build a pipeline between students and employers in industries that represent our majors.

Goal IIIB – Invest in Faculty & Staff

Invest in our faculty and staff.

OBJECTIVES

- Support the professional development of faculty and staff members who are committed to our values.
- Ensure a robust and reliant committee structure which promotes faculty governance and staff empowerment.

IV. Provide a Learning Environment that Promotes Diversity, Equity, Leadership, and Service

Diversity of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, life experience, political perspective, and economic condition promotes a rich academic experience for students. Ensuring equitable access reinforces this commitment to diversity. Leadership and service by students, faculty, and staff supports intellectual, professional, and personal development and contributes to the development of leaders, critical thinkers, and problem solvers. C&IS will provide an environment that encourages and celebrates diversity, equity, leadership, and service among every member of the college community.

Goal IVA – Strengthen Diversity and Inclusion

Strengthen college-wide diversity and inclusion.

OBJECTIVES

- Recruit and retain a diverse faculty, staff, administration, and student body.
- Provide programs and support services that ensure all students feel welcome and able to succeed.
- Expand strategies to promote an inclusive community.

Goal IVB – Cultivate an Ethos of Leadership and Service

Affirm leadership and service as an important component of the educational experience.

OBJECTIVES

- Create leadership and service opportunities throughout curricular and co-curricular structures of the college.
- Recognize and support leadership and service by faculty, staff, and students.

V. Strengthen National and International Profiles

C&IS recognizes the importance of creating an international reputation and prominent leadership in our fields of study. Nationally recognized programs and faculty will help C&IS attract and retain quality faculty/staff, undergraduate, and graduate students. Through partnerships, outreach, and leadership, the college seeks to strengthen the educational impact of our students through national and international opportunities, leadership, connectivity, and awards.

Goal VA – Promote National and International Leadership

Create a culture of leadership involvement and recognition.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage faculty and professional staff to serve on national and international boards.
- Evaluate national awards and align resources to support nominations from the college.

Goal VB – Foster Global Citizenry

Develop global citizens who are prepared to excel in the global job market.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase college-specific international experiences for students.
- Connect with employers nationally and internationally to promote diverse internship and employment opportunities.
- Deliver a globalized curriculum to increase cultural understanding.

Strategic Planning Process

Background

During the past four years, the College of Communication & Information Sciences has been under the leadership of three different deans. Dean Loy Singleton, who had been serving in that capacity since 2006, announced in summer 2013 his intent to retire. The provost appointed an interim dean, Dr. Jennifer Greer, to serve starting September 2013 to enable the college to conduct a national search for a new dean. After a successful search, Dr. Mark Nelson was named dean of the college, effective July 1, 2014. Amidst this change in administration, the college was led by the interim dean and the leadership team of assistant and associate deans and department heads, who followed the original strategic plan of the college developed during Dean Singleton's administration. Shortly after taking office, the new dean and his new leadership team determined that extensive long-range planning was needed to ensure the continued success of the college.

Dean Nelson convened the members of the college's leadership team immediately upon taking office. At a retreat, the executive team discussed the need for a new strategic direction for the college. They expressed their desire to view strategic planning as a continual assessment process that routinely evaluates direction and responds to internal and external landscapes. As a part of that discussion, the executive team also decided to continue advancing the college during the planning process. This approach provided an avenue for the college to focus on specific outcomes in the short-term while also providing a foundation to engage in a longer-term, intentional strategic planning process. The ideal outcome of the process was to develop specific objectives that could be accomplished over the upcoming two years while developing a set of holistic priorities, goals, and objectives that would guide the continual assessment of the college's direction in the future.

The result was the identification of multiple short-term outcomes closely aligned from the goals of the last strategic plan and endorsed by the faculty. These outcomes guided the college throughout the strategic planning process and elements were incorporated into the final strategic plan. Primary outcomes included expanding online learning, improving physical facilities, building and empowering faculty/staff ranks, revamping academic advising, growing development and fundraising efforts, redesigning the college's approach to graduate programs, and merging the departments of Journalism and Telecommunication & Film. Measurable success was achieved in all areas throughout the two-year period in which the strategic planning process took place.

Phase One

Throughout the 2014-2015 academic year, the college underwent the first phase of an extensive strategic planning process, which began by polling faculty, staff, and alumni for names of "futurists" who could be invited to campus for lectures to engage all constituencies in dialogue surrounding the future of C&IS disciplines and of higher education. Together, Jerry Michalski, a renowned generalist, Clifford Lynch, an information sciences expert, and Robert Picard, a respected media economist, lectured on a spectrum of topics that were used as a foundation for strategic planning. Afterward, groups of faculty and staff were asked to provide feedback from small group discussions on the futurist lectures, and that feedback was collected and synthesized by internal information studies experts.

The synthesized faculty feedback was distributed to all of the faculty, who participated in departmental retreats to discuss the collective information and ideas. The outcome of these sessions provided focused

feedback tailored by each academic unit in the college, which was used as the basis for another executive retreat. The executive team distilled the faculty feedback down into key themes and utilized those themes to craft four overarching strategic priorities, which were announced to the faculty at the beginning of the 2015 academic year.

Phase Two

After the strategic priority announcement, the second phase of the strategic planning process began by defining goals and objectives associated with each of the strategic priorities. Faculty and staff were encouraged through their unit heads to provide ideas for ways the college could accomplish each of the determined strategic priorities moving forward. Under the guidance of the executive team, goals and objectives were proposed and evaluated for their feasibility and alignment with the strategic priorities.

During that process, a common theme emerged that the faculty wished to place greater emphasis on research than articulated in the existing priorities which, combined with a newly formed institutional strategic goal emphasizing research, prompted the executive team to split the original priority of cultivating high-quality academic and research-based programs into two distinct priorities, thereby further entrenching a focus on improving the research culture as a desired outcome.

After receiving ideas and suggestions, the year culminated with a final executive retreat in which the goals and objectives were solidified and each academic unit in the college developed meaningful, measurable, and manageable action steps that aligned with the various goals and objectives. These action steps will be accomplished over the next academic year and will be reviewed on an annual basis to hold college units accountable to the overall strategic plan. Additional steps will also be determined to ensure the college moves forward in the direction articulated by the faculty through the strategic priorities. Ultimately, treating implementation as part of the strategic planning process creates an environment in which action steps will be continually reassessed and additional avenues will be developed to advance the college.

The combination of the strategic priorities, goals, and objectives provide the vision and direction necessary for the college to adapt to the dynamic media and higher education landscapes over the next five years while the annually reviewed action steps ensure that the college accomplishes its ambitions in line with the stated mission, vision, and values.