



COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION AND FINE ARTS

2025–30 Strategic Plan

Discovery, creativity,
and innovation
thrive in the College
of Communication
and Fine Arts at the
University of Memphis.



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Memphis ignites the soul with its unmatched legacy as the birthplace of blues and rock 'n' roll and its pivotal role in the civil rights movement. It blends raw grit, boundless creativity, and unstoppable Southern spirit like no other place on Earth.





The College of Communication and Fine Arts (CCFA) is a vibrant and dynamic academic college at the University of Memphis, fostering creativity, scholarship, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Encompassing six distinct units—*Architecture, Art and Design, Communication and Film, Journalism and Strategic Media, Theatre and Dance, and the School of Music*—CCFA represents a vital part of the University’s mission to provide transformative educational experiences.

Aligned with the University of Memphis’ strategic plan, *Ascend*, CCFA’s initiatives and priorities reflect the overarching goals of the institution while embracing the unique cultural and creative contributions of the college.





MISSION STATEMENT

CCFA is dedicated to preparing students for successful careers across diverse fields, enriching the University community through engagement with CCFA disciplines, and fostering impactful interdisciplinary research and innovation at local, national, and international levels. We strive to cultivate an inclusive and collaborative academic environment, enhancing cultural life through education, public programs, and community engagement.



VISION STATEMENT

CCFA envisions a bold future where limitless innovation propels us to the forefront of intellectual and artistic exploration in the Mid-South and beyond. We aspire to be a distinct, trailblazing force, empowering students and faculty to push boundaries, reimagine cultural landscapes, and redefine what is possible. Driven by an unshakable passion to stand apart, we inspire our community to defy expectations, shatter limitations, and use creativity to reshape the world. Together, we will spark societal change, fuel artistic and intellectual breakthroughs, and leave an indelible mark on the global stage.





VALUES

CCFA and its constituents are guided by the following values:

- **We are committed to uplifting Memphis’s cultural, historical, and social impact.**
Memphis is a cultural beacon, renowned for its creativity and innovative spirit, which influence global perspectives. We strive not only to honor the city’s legacy but also to cultivate pride, empowering our community to thrive and inspire future generations.
- **We are deeply invested in our responsibility in guiding students through their academic and professional journeys.**
Experiential learning opportunities equip students with professionally relevant knowledge, fostering confident and competent individuals prepared to meet the demands of an ever-changing workforce. We provide high-quality experiential education, meeting students where they are and engaging them in tasks directly aligned with their future careers.
- **We thrive on interdisciplinary collaborations and creative expression that highlight storytelling and artistic creativity.**
Interdisciplinary collaborations foster a dynamic environment that enhances faculty scholarship through diverse perspectives and disciplines. This integration not only enriches scholarship but also drives innovation, encouraging new approaches and pushing the boundaries of practice.
- **Our strong sense of camaraderie enriches an atmosphere where faculty, students, and staff are valued, respected, and empowered.**
When people feel respected and valued, they are more likely to engage actively, collaborate effectively, and contribute positively to the academic community. This environment fosters engaged citizens and supports professional growth, equipping individuals with the skills needed to address complex challenges.
- **We value transparency and collective decision making, modeling strong ethics and integrity for our students.**
Open and honest conversations about opportunities, risks, and consequences provide faculty and administration with essential information for strategic decision-making. Empowering faculty with a sense of ownership fosters continuous improvement and drives innovation.



Aspirational Goals

(2025-30)

CCFA has identified the following goals to guide its efforts and initiatives:

Goal 1: Aggressively Provide Access

EXPANDING HORIZONS, ELEVATING FUTURES.

Grow enrollment while simultaneously improving student preparedness by pursuing a diversified and far-reaching recruitment strategy that emphasizes our University's compelling value proposition.

A. Strengthen and Expand Recruitment

1. Develop and invest in a comprehensive marketing plan highlighting CCFA's destination programs, focusing on innovative aspects within the college.
2. Expand CCFA's online and social media presence to reach prospective students.
3. Engage alumni to share success stories showcasing CCFA graduates' impact in various industries.
4. Develop bold partnerships to spark early awareness and enthusiasm for CCFA programs and career pathways.

B. Build Enrollment

1. Increase recruitment efforts in geographic areas outside of Memphis.
2. Forge seamless transfer pathways that empower students to transition into CCFA with confidence.
3. Implement targeted strategies for non-traditional student segments.
4. Highlight the cultural richness of Memphis, appealing to students from all cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

C. Enhance Student Preparedness and Academic Success

1. Integrate best-practices related to community building and student success.
2. Integrate academic support services such as tutoring, mentoring, and skill-building workshops directly into the first-year experience.
3. Grow dual enrollment programs that allow students to earn college credit in CCFA programs.
4. Implement an academic advising initiative that ensures personalized pathways for student success from admission through graduation, providing tailored support based on individual preparedness levels.



Goal 2: Create Opportunities to Succeed

EMPOWERING SUCCESS, CONNECTING PATHWAYS.

Foster an exciting, all-encompassing student experience that encourages students to persevere, grow and thrive while laying the foundations for future success and creating an enriching lifelong bond with the University.

A. Elevate Student Success and Personal Development

1. Embed career-focused skills and internships within all CCFA programs, ensuring students gain practical, industry-relevant experiences before graduation.
2. Implement comprehensive success coaching that blends academic advising with career mentoring, ensuring personalized support for students' long-term goals.
3. Establish wellness programs that integrate mental and emotional health resources with academic advising, fostering a more supportive and balanced student experience.

B. Enrich Campus and Community Engagement

1. Expand and diversify extracurricular activities that align with students' interests to enhance student involvement.
2. Develop CCFA-specific traditions and events that promote a sense of pride and belonging, encouraging lasting engagement with the University's history and culture.
3. Develop a comprehensive alumni network within CCFA that fosters lifelong connections and provides mentorship opportunities, building bridges between students and industry leaders.

C. Ensure a Safe, Inclusive, and Supportive Environment

1. Ensure student security through regular safety audits and collaborative partnerships between campus and students.
2. Increase awareness of mental health services on campus, with targeted initiatives aimed at reducing stigma and improving overall student well-being.
3. Implement accessibility improvements across facilities and within CCFA programming, ensuring all students, regardless of ability, have equal access to resources, opportunities, and experiences.



Goal 3: Outcomes-Focused Academics

SHAPING EXCELLENCE, DRIVING RESULTS.

Deliver a rigorous, practical, well-rounded and supportive academic experience through innovative programs and teaching methods that focus on student success and prepare our students for the workforce and graduate education.

A. Ensure Academic Rigor and Innovation

1. Expand internships, capstone projects, and collaborative assignments to ensure practical application of classroom knowledge and skill-building in real-world settings.
2. Increase the opportunities for undergraduate research, service learning, and study abroad opportunities.
3. Continuously evaluate and align degree programs with current workforce demands and emerging industry trends.
4. Strengthen graduate programs by increasing research capacity.

B. Foster Student Success and Career Preparedness

1. Implement initiatives to support timely degree completion, such as proactive advising, mentorship programs, and clearer pathways to graduation.
2. Cultivate a culture of inquiry and continuous learning, equipping students with the mindset and tools to adapt to evolving career landscapes.
3. Offer non-degree opportunities to support students and alumni in their lifelong learning journeys and career advancement.

C. Promote Accessibility and Flexibility in Education

1. Increase flexible attendance options to meet the diverse needs of students.
2. Provide targeted services and resources for non-traditional students to support their academic and professional success.
3. Simplify the transition process for transferring students and develop programs to support returning students in completing their degrees.



Goal 4: Strengthen Research Enterprise

INNOVATING TOGETHER, ADVANCING DISCOVERY.

Perform life-changing, interdisciplinary research and scholarship that is supported by world-class infrastructure and conducted by highly motivated researchers addressing the community and society's greatest challenges.

A. Expand Interdisciplinary Capabilities

1. Establish a robust framework for interdisciplinary collaboration.
2. Increase the recruitment of faculty with interdisciplinary expertise.
3. Develop new graduate and undergraduate programs that emphasize interdisciplinary research and artistic creativity.
4. Establish formal partnerships with regional businesses, nonprofits and government organizations to create opportunities for interdisciplinary innovation.

B. Enhance Infrastructure and Support Systems

1. Modernize facilities with cutting-edge technology.
2. Develop a centralized grant funding support center that provides guidance for faculty and students.
3. Establish a sustainable funding model for maintaining and upgrading facilities.

C. Strengthen Faculty Scholarship and Community Engagement

1. Foster a culture that values excellence through faculty recognition programs, interdisciplinary awards, and greater visibility of achievements both internally and externally.
2. Engage the local community by hosting public-facing events, workshops, and conferences that highlight the impact of CCFA in the Memphis metropolitan area, Tennessee, and the broader region.
3. Elevate CCFA's faculty expertise on a national and international scale by actively promoting scholarship outputs through media campaigns, academic publications, and direct communication with government officials and funding agencies.



Goal 5: Recruit, Retain, Reward and Recognize Our People

VALUING TALENT, CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE.

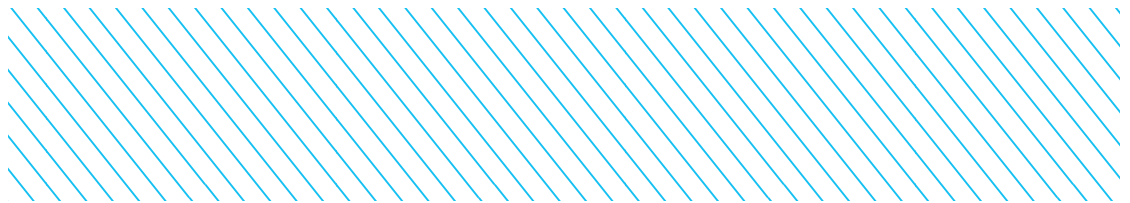
Cultivate a respectful, supportive culture for our exceptional faculty and staff that recognizes and rewards excellence and success and that provides ample opportunities for personal growth, professional development, promotion and leadership.

A. Recruit Exceptional Faculty and Staff

1. Develop a recruitment and marketing strategy to attract dynamic talent.
2. Strive to offer nationally competitive salaries and start-up packages for new faculty.
3. Create a recruitment tour that highlights CCFA programs and Memphis amenities.

B. Reward and Retain Excellent Faculty and Staff

1. Provide faculty (tenure and non-tenure track), staff, and teaching graduate assistants professional development opportunities.
2. Ensure mid-career staff and faculty have support for continuing professional development.
3. Explore additional opportunities to celebrate outstanding faculty and staff performance.



Goal 6: Exemplify Operational Excellence

ENHANCING OPERATIONS, ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE.

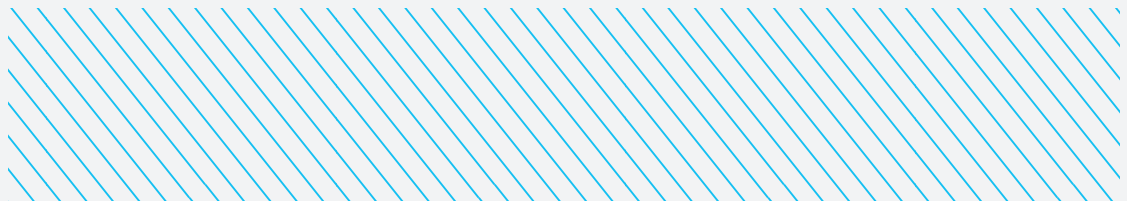
Optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness through the establishment of high standards and expectations to maximize resource utilization and to uphold accountability.

A. Process Excellence

1. Develop a formal CCFA faculty governance structure including bylaws and standing committees addressing the key functions of the College.
2. Review legacy processes and identify areas for reducing unnecessary bureaucracy.
3. Increase transparency and departmental autonomy regarding budgetary and curricular decisions.
4. Develop or identify policy documents for consistency and transparency in decision-making processes.

B. Infrastructure and Technology

1. Identify and prioritize building renovation and updates for a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary learning and research.
2. Develop a long-term capital plan that balances immediate needs with sustainable growth.
3. Identify technology needs and updates across academic disciplines that prepare students for their chosen fields.



Goal 7: Generate and Steward Financial Resources

BUILDING RESOURCES, ENSURING LONGEVITY.

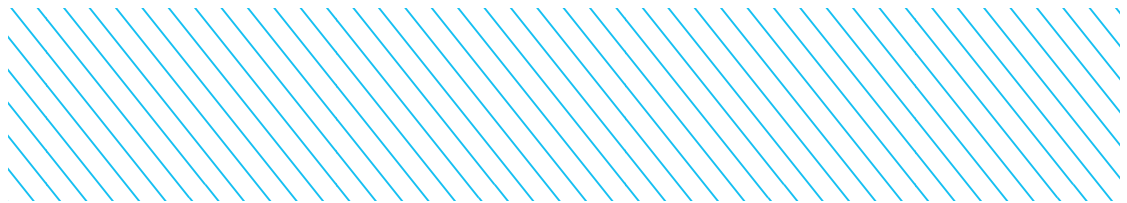
Increase funding and improve resource allocation to fuel growth through better alignment of internal priorities and external funding opportunities, through funding diversification and through application of financial best practices.

A. Cultivate and Maintain Donor Relationships

1. Aid program goals through targeted fundraising.
2. Implement and improve alumni giving program.
3. Strengthen the planned giving program.

B. Adapt to the RCM Budget Model

1. Explore ways to improve efficiencies.
2. Diversify and build revenue streams.



Living Document Statement

CCFA's strategic plan is a dynamic framework, designed to guide our efforts. The plan will be assessed and reevaluated periodically to ensure alignment with the University of Memphis' *Ascend* strategic priorities and responsiveness to the evolving needs of our students, faculty, staff, and community. This deliberate process allows us to measure progress, incorporate stakeholder feedback, and adjust strategies when necessary, ensuring that the plan continues to serve as an effective roadmap for achieving excellence. Through assessment and reflection, we maintain accountability, transparency, and a commitment to continuous improvement as we adapt to an ever-changing world.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS®

The University of Memphis is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University.
It is committed to the education of a non-racially identifiable student body.