

# Guidelines for Fall Strategic Planning Letter

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## *College of Arts and Letters*

October 15, 2018

During this period of intense institutional change at Michigan State University, it is important to take time to critically reflect on the core values that shape our work together. We in the College of Arts & Letters need to take a leadership role in modeling how to be intentional about putting our values into practice in the priorities we establish and the initiatives we undertake. To ensure that all our activities are rooted in shared values, we will pursue a values-based planning process this year.

To facilitate this, these guidelines lay out the planning process for all units in the College of Arts & Letters. They outline the structure of fall planning letters and provide a timetable for various steps in the process.

### **Values-Based Planning**

The planning process we are asking each unit to undertake this year is as important as the letters that are produced as outcomes. The conversations about values you are having in your units are central to our ability to move forward as a College in a way that is true to our educational mission. In this sense, *the process is the product*; its success will depend upon our ability to deepen the level of trust and accountability in our interactions with one another.

The Fall Planning letter should emerge from a substantive conversation in your unit in which you:

- Identify the core values that animate your work together, and
- Articulate how these values are put into practice in the main initiatives you plan to undertake over the next three years.

The values that will shape the College's Fall Planning letter will be based on the common values that emerge from these unit level conversations.

### **Guidelines for the Fall Planning Letters**

The Fall Planning Letters this year are designed to be different from past planning letters in their orientation toward values-based conversations. In order to open a space for these conversations, we are separating them out from conversations around budget requests and constraints. Even so, this year, as in past years, we can anticipate returning to the Provost the usual 1% Program Efficiency and Reinvestment Funds (PERF). As we move into the Spring budget process, we will ask units to identify how to make a .5% cut in your general funds budget. Spring budget letters, however, will need to be informed and justified by the values you establish in the Fall Planning Letters. Your letters should be structured as follows:

#### **Part 1: Unit Values**

Identify the top three core values of your unit that will inform all aspects of faculty, staff, and student work together over the next three years.

#### **Part 2: Program Initiatives**

Map these core values onto the top three academic initiatives you will undertake to ensure we are able to advance any of the three imperatives of the College of Arts & Letters below.

With an abiding commitment to practice equity as a matter of institutional habit, the College of Arts & Letters must:

- Recruit and retain world-class faculty
- Enhance graduate education
- Enrich the undergraduate experience

Please discuss any ongoing partnership or opportunities you see to collaborate with other units in pursuit of the initiatives you identify.

### **Part 3: Sustaining the Culture of Care in the College of Arts & Letters**

Describe how you will continue to foster a culture of shared accountability and trust in your unit based on the values conversations that you have undertaken as part of this planning process. This portion of the letter should articulate specific activities through which you will ensure that all staff, students, and faculty have a supportive environment in which to do their best work.

### **Part 4: College-Level Request**

Articulate how the College might help your unit advance and sustain the work of culture change in your unit.

#### **Nota Bene**

To foster transparency and conversation across units, we plan to share Fall Planning Letters with all Chairs and Directors in the College of Arts & Letters. Further, since this process grew out of practices developed by the Mellon Funded HuMetricsHSS project (for more see, [HuMetricsHSS.org](http://HuMetricsHSS.org)), we would like to share the values and initiatives articulated in your letters (Parts 1 and 2) with the primary investigators of the HuMetricsHSS project. Please contact me directly, if you and/or your faculty are not comfortable with sharing the letters in this way. Our priority is establishing the conditions for candid conversations about values, so if sharing those conversations in either of these ways undermines that, we will respect the desired confidentiality of the units involved.

#### **Scope and Timetable**

Please limit the text of your letter to no more than 3 pages and submit them by:

**5pm, Friday, November 16, Letters Due to CAL Dean's Office**