Plan for our Future

Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028

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LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Dear MCNHS Community,

It is with great excitement that we are launching our new college *Plan for our Future*. This plan is an inclusive reflection of who we are and who we want to become. Through our values of Excellence; Diversity, Equity, and Belonging; Integrity; Collaboration, Community, and Service; and Respect; our plan addresses our Mission, Vision, Goals, and Implementation steps, for our entire college. With Health Equity as an overarching theme, the plan is inclusive of Health (including both individual and population health), Aging, Prevention, Promotion and Policy. Our new plan also reflects the growth of the college, as we have a plan developed encompassing our four departments: Exercise and Health Sciences, Gerontology, Nursing, and Urban Public Health, and for our continuing education program, the Addiction Counseling Education Program. Our plan will serve to guide our work and decisions for the next five years, with frequent updates on our progress and successes.

Clearly, our college has made a collective decision to build upon the current programs to enhance our ability to deliver an outstanding education for our students, providing them with the foundation for future success. We will do this by not only focusing on student success, but also by enhancing our research, academic programming, and community engagement, increasing our reputation, and creating a healthy work environment for our faculty, staff, and students.

Using our plan as a guide to achieve our goals, we believe the MCNHS will be a leader in health equity across the continuum of the life course, from the individual to the community, locally, regionally, and globally. Fully implementing our plan will require a large group effort, involving our entire college. Building on our current success, we aim to improve our positive impact on the Greater Boston area, the State of Massachusetts, New England and on our nation. The success of our students and faculty will positively affect the health of our communities and the people living in those communities, leading to healthier, fuller, and happier lives for all. Our plan is ambitious, but we aim to be recognized as a leading college of Nursing and Health Sciences, both nationally and internationally. We will do this through a solid foundation based on our values, while also contributing to the UMass Boston strategic plan, For the Times, with a special focus on fostering an anti-racist, health promoting culture. Thus, I truly believe our MCNHS Plan for our Future is also For the Times.

~ Bo Fernhall

VALUES

- 1. **Excellence:** We value improvement, development, and growth. We continuously commit to reaching the highest possible standards and outcomes in our academics, research, and community engagement.
- 2. **Diversity, Equity, and Belonging:** We actively work to build a sense of belonging, and meet the various needs of students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community partners. We are antiracist. We are intentional about removing barriers that might keep anyone in our college from achieving success.
- 3. **Integrity:** We communicate honestly and transparently. We build trust by being accountable for our actions and through commitment to our other values.
- 4. **Collaboration, Community, and Service:** We strive to work together cohesively across and within departments, programs, centers, and institutes, and with members of our communities beyond the college. We work together to develop shared meaning and purpose in our collaborations and partnerships.
- 5. **Respect:** We practice generosity and deep respect for one another's abilities, skills, and perspectives. Whether in disagreement or agreement, we seek to understand and value each other and to reach understanding or consensus.

VISION

MCNHS is a leader in advancing optimal individual and population health and health equity over the life course in local, national, and global communities.

MISSION

MCNHS develops innovative solutions for individual and population health and health equity over the life course by building and supporting an integrated academic environment devoted to education, research, and community partnership.

Objectives + Goals

Focus Area #1: Student Success

OBJECTIVES

- A. Improve support for students' mental and physical health
- B. Increase student enrollment and retention
- C. Improve students' preparedness for successful careers

GOALS

- 1. Increase financial support for students (assistantships, fellowships, scholarships, grants)
- 2. Increase the number of MCNHS undergraduates who go on to pursue advanced degrees
- 3. Increase the percentage of students who utilize and have positive experiences with on-campus resources to support mental and physical well-being
- 4. Increase enrollment from Boston's under-represented populations
- 5. Increase the number of graduates who obtain desirable employment within one year of graduating
- 6. Increase the number of students with service-learning experiences and internships to promote practical and academic competencies
- 7. Support bridge programs for freshmen and transfer students

- 1. Create new or improve current programs/activities/initiatives that are designed to improve student health and well-being
- 2. Ensure the students most at risk of failing to thrive at MCNHS have support from student advising from the first semester through graduation
- 3. Create a first year scholars program
- 4. Increase student advisory capacity to industry standards
- 5. Educate students about employment opportunities
- 6. Advance opportunities for students to partner with the community and gain experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating projects
- 7. Support opportunities for students to shadow practitioners
- 8. Recruit and retain diverse faculty

Focus Area #2: Research

OBJECTIVES

- A. Increase the productivity and impact of MCNHS research in service of the college's mission
- B. Improve student engagement in research

GOALS

- Contribute to the University's research success through increased extramural funding—including federal and state budget allocations, donations, contracts, endowments, internal grants, and grants/contracts from foundations and other private sector entities
- 2. Invest in research space, equipment, and administrative capacity to support the scholarly enterprise
- 3. Increase the number of peer-reviewed publications in high impact journals, as well as other outlets (e.g., books, book chapters, reports)
- 4. Increase the number of cross-discipline research partnerships, including within the college, across the University, and with external organizations
- 5. Increase student/faculty collaboration on research to increase the number of students completing scholarly/research projects

- Develop and support research teams strategically (within, across, and with community partners) for mutual support and to increase productivity to advance careers
- 2. Add resources to the research office, such as a grant writer, to provide support and diversify grant sources (e.g., federal, state, foundations).
- 3. Increase funding allocation for professional development (e.g., conference, membership, fees, Research Assistants, etc.)
- 4. Establish small internal grant funding mechanisms to seed research that leads to subsequent applications for external funding
- 5. Expand training and mentorship in research (grant-writing and early career faculty workshops, research work groups, etc.)
- 6. Increase research training, programming, and support for students of all levels (including, but not limited to research scholarships, awards, and pre-doctoral grants)
- 7. Partner with researchers who have the needed resources and space to increase publications' impact
- 8. Create web pages for each research lab/team

Focus Area #3: Reputation

OBJECTIVES

- A. Increase the visibility and reputation of MCNHS's successes and leadership locally, nationally, and globally
- B. Become known for training well-rounded leaders in the exercise, health, nursing, aging, and public health sciences

GOALS

- 1. Hire a communication specialist
- 2. Develop a marketing plan to increase media coverage and internal and external communication about our activities, achievements, and successes in educational policy, scholarship & clinical practice

- 1. Spotlight alumni representation in the workforce across health care, aging, fitness, and public health
- 2. Foster relationships with local, national and global media
- 3. Establish a robust online presence to improve recognition of the college and accomplishments of its programs, students, and faculty
- 4. Invest in communication function to work with faculty for media and outreach
- 5. Recognize faculty, staff, and students for contribution/successes

Focus Area #4: Healthy Work Environment

OBJECTIVES

- A. Secure physical space that enables the kind of work and collaboration envisioned in this plan
- B. Build an integrated health and wellness center for learning, practice and research
- C. Build and maintain a sense of equitable community at MCNHS
- D. Integrate DEIA in hiring, policies, curriculum, training, research, and other programming

GOALS

- 1. Make plans for our own building(s).
- 2. Encourage reporting of and address discriminatory behavior from colleagues or students, acknowledge impact of institutional racism on retention of BIPOC faculty.
- 3. Assess gaps, weaknesses, and strengths in our college workplace culture and structure and make plans to address them
- 4. Support training for students, staff, and faculty on principles of diversity, civility, and anti-discriminatory behaviors

- 1. Fill vacant positions
- 2. Clarify career path for staff and faculty with clear thresholds for promotion
- 3. Professional development for faculty and staff
- 4. Leadership clearly communicates with faculty and staff regularly and are transparent, collaborative, and responsive.
- 5. Host more events (including informal) to increase interactions among faculty, students, and administration
- 6. Improve onboarding (including clarity on reporting mechanism for discriminatory behavior)
- 7. Current and future staff and faculty have a clear connection with the DEI office
- 8. Identify and use technology to support the initiatives
- 9. Create an anonymous portal for reporting

Focus Area #5: Academic Programming

OBJECTIVES

- A. Increase the college's positive impact on health equity through academic programs
- B. Strengthen inclusiveness and innovation in academic programs

GOALS

- 1. Identify and create interdisciplinary opportunities across programs including crosscutting themes on aging, health policy, and health equity
- 2. Use best practices to ensure all courses and research activities are accessible

- Keep current on market trends to establish and launch new academic programs and concentrations
- 2. Use evidence-based research to influence curriculum updates/innovations
- 3. Improve the catalog of online offerings
- 4. Establish an exchange partnership with at least two other universities, including one outside the United States
- 5. Devote resources to ACEP Addictions Counselor Education Program
- 6. Better define, evaluate, and potentially expand HLTH
- 7. Evaluate opportunities to work with health companies on what their needs are in the field and use that information to rework the curriculum

Focus Area #6: Community Engagement

OBJECTIVE

A. Increase our impact in Boston and surrounding communities

GOALS

- 1. Collaborate deeply on research, education, and service with strategic partners in schools, local community organizations, aging service providers, and/or community-based health centers
- 2. Play important roles in decision-making bodies that influence policies and practices that affect our local community
- 3. Play an active role in local and state conversations about diversifying the workforce
- 4. Share what we learn through these efforts with the broader community, practitioners, and policy makers
- 5. Identify UMB and external resource-sharing partnerships across campus (e.g. health services, athletics, recreation)

- 1. For partnerships
 - a. Name criteria for meaningful and strategic partnerships.
 - b. Inventory and review current community partnerships
 - c. Identify new community partnerships that meet the criteria
- 2. Participate meaningfully and regularly in key community events
- 3. Mentor high school students in local communities