Gupta College of Science Objectives – AY2022-2023

Introduction
In AY2022-2023, the Gupta College of Science is focusing on three areas that will serve as the foundation for what we will do as a College moving forward. Those areas are 1) Our Vision, 2) Our Communication, and 3) Our “One College” Approach. Until our internal strategic planning/visioning process is complete and the University’s strategic plan has been realized, we cannot fully define the goals we aspire to accomplish that fulfill our vision/mission or the specific objectives under those goals. However, we do know that there are certain principles and attributes that we do value within the GCOS that are also attributes of leading STEM colleges throughout the country. Based on this and tremendous feedback received so far since the summer from our faculty and staff, below is a list of preliminary objectives that we will work on this year that will help us move towards a more proactive approach to finding solutions to the challenges, opportunities, and issues that are present in our College.

Dr. Chad L. Leverette
Dean, Gupta College of Science

General foundational areas we are focusing on this year:
• Our Vision
• Our Communication (both internal and external)
• Our “One College” Approach (advocacy, awareness, and appreciation of activities for all seven academic departments in our College, the School of the Coastal Environment (SCE), and our Burroughs and Chapin Center for Marine and Wetland Studies (BCCMWS))

General attributes that we value:
• Student success – helping all students to have rich, inclusive, educational experiences that lead to progression, graduation, and career placement
  o Includes experiential learning high-impact practices (HIPs) that prepare our students for STEM careers
    ▪ A full list of nationally recognized HIPs can be found here: https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/high-impact
• Excellent teaching/current and engaged STEM pedagogy (e.g., current and relevant programs, innovative and tested scientific pedagogical methods)
• Embracing the Teacher-Scholar model (e.g., active research/scholarship in discipline that leads to a host of opportunities for students such as mentored research for undergraduate and graduate students)
• Recruitment, retention, and professional development of faculty and staff
• Effective, clear, and transparent processes that fully support faculty governance
• Good stewardship of resources
• External partnerships with individuals, industry, NGOs, and state and federal agencies
• Community outreach and overall STEM awareness/education for the public

Objectives identified – no particular order but focused on foundational areas and general attributes listed above

Visioning
• Creation of ad-hoc strategic planning/visioning committee to gather widespread feedback (from faculty, staff, students, alumni, external/community partners, etc.) and help formulate a complete vision, mission, message, and goals for the College
Identify a way to express our message succinctly and powerfully to build awareness of the distinctiveness of our programs and approach

Further solidify our place as a premier STEM provider

**College Communication and “One College” Approach**

- Create a multi-faceted approach to improve our communication both internally and externally
  - Hire a full-time staff member to serve as our Media and Communication Director
  - Work to develop full communication plan for both internal and external communication (web, print, digital, video, social media)
  - Create internal mechanisms to share information while reducing use of email
  - Create broad presence on social media and increase frequency of posts on faculty, staff, and student accomplishments and activities
    - Link posts to TV boards in science buildings and around campus
- Build excitement, awareness, appreciation, and support for all seven departments in the College as well as the SCE and our BCCMWS
  - Work to develop community and advocacy for each other (all staff, all faculty- all ranks and in all disciplines)
    - Create posts relative to activities/accomplishments in College
    - Increased communication and connection between the Dean’s Office and students/faculty/departments – accomplished by visits to departments, department meetings, invited classroom visits, attending and supporting student presentations, field activities and sharing outcomes of visits
    - Intentional communication of budgets, personnel decisions, objectives, processes
    - Structure college leadership and staff meetings to create opportunity to share ideas, gather feedback, and use ideas/feedback to accomplish work of the college
    - Work to support/develop awareness, resources, and the important roles of our NTT faculty in our College
    - Possible creation of spring “Celebration of Excellence” event to recognize outstanding GCOS faculty, staff, and student accomplishments throughout the year
    - Consider/continue with activities/initiatives from the past that have helped support the “family feel” of the college (e.g., College baseball game, etc.)
    - Consider new initiatives that promote the appreciation of our faculty and staff

**Excellent Teaching, Student Success, Professional Development, and Supporting the Teacher-Scholar Model**

- Support and develop opportunities that enhance the excellent teaching we provide to students
  - Engage in national conversations related to STEM (e.g., AAC&U Annual Meetings, Transforming STEM conference, webinars, speaker series, resources to faculty) and work to disseminate new ideas/approaches to the College as a whole
  - Help departments that have needs for new/updated classroom resources/technology for teaching
- Work with faculty and departments to brainstorm possible future curricular revisions/new programs/accreditations that will help our students based on today’s STEM needs in our state, region, and country – will also provide greater strength of departments over time and maintain our curriculum currency
  - Possible programs/accreditations for us to consider (this objective and subsequent discussions will be ongoing): Data Analytics, Coastal Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering, Clinical Lab Science, Marine Technology, Chemical Oceanography, graduate programs in Biology (maybe other areas), Cyber/Intelligence Interdisciplinary Degree, Mental Health concentration in Psychology, stackable certificates, 4+1 options, ACS approval for Chemistry program
  - Support new programs/degrees that were already in process in MSCI, BIOL, CHEM, MATH
- Increase support and programs that allow for deeper, richer experiential learning opportunities for students
  - Reconsider “Research Fellows Program” as a way to create a premier undergraduate STEM research award for students and faculty mentors
• Share opportunities with students so that they can become more involved in experiential learning opportunities (e.g., national scholarship opportunities, activities on campus)
• Support departments and the BCCMWS with their ideas/initiatives to grow/develop these types of experiences
• Consider our involvement with CUR (Council for Undergraduate Research) to see if we can leverage these resources for our faculty and students
• Support students interested in obtaining at least one regional presentation of their research (e.g., possibly the SC Academy of Science)
• Consider/brainstorm/apply for grant opportunities that are College-wide where the Dean’s Office would work with department faculty to seek funds to help our students (e.g., NSF – Women in STEM, NSF – LSAMP – programs designed to grow underrepresented groups in science/STEM)

• With feedback from departments and the SCE, work with Office of the Provost and deans to create strategy for graduate programs – where they make sense, how many programs are desired and the appropriate size of programs, and how they are supported and advance the work of specific departments and our College
  o Work to help campus understand the types of support, benefits, and access to resources that are usually provided to graduate students compared to undergraduate students consistent with universities that have graduate programs
    ▪ This affects policies like graduate travel, parking, resources if graduate students are teaching, possible tuition waivers, roles of GAs, ways they are paid (yearly compared to 9-month), etc.
• Work to develop ways to create professional development opportunities for faculty and staff
  o Understand and leverage current programs on campus that can create professional development for faculty and staff
  o Create baseline on desire for additional professional development and types of activities/support that would be most desired by our faculty and staff
  o Consider professional development support for Department Chairs and Associate Deans
• Provide support and guidance for faculty going up for P&T, post-promotion/post-tenure review, and third year review
• Work with Office of Admissions on future strategy related to recruitment of STEM students into majors (both in-state and out-of-state students)
• Redo information provided by Dean’s Office for summer orientation to focus on strategies for success in the classroom for incoming students
• Support our incoming freshmen with more meaningful contact with College
  o Discuss with Office of the Provost the current University strategy/approach related to UNIV 110 moving forward
  o Intentional visits/connections of the Dean’s Office with all 32 sections of UNIV 110 to support instructors and to explain STEM “grit” and how to be successful in difficult majors.
  o Consider new ways to interact with these freshmen students and to connect them with their majors.
  o Work with Office of Provost, Dean’s Office, and departments to think about strategies to aid with student persistence/retention and reduce number of students on probation/suspension
• Work with faculty and staff to possibly reimagine the structure of the School of the Coastal Environment to help us plan for the future in emerging STEM areas; leverage interdisciplinary opportunities in STEM; clarify the purpose of the SCE; fully support the work of the BCCMWS and boat operations
  o Work with Department of Marine Science and the SCE as a whole to create strategy for “on the water” locations that might allow us to grow our teaching and research opportunities (e.g. Waties Island, Georgetown, Belle Baruch, Murrells Inlet, etc.)

Administrative Processes that Support Faculty Governance and Good Stewardship of Resources
• Work on budgets as a whole – work with campus to move us from a more reactive budget to a proactive model that will allow us to generate funds to be used towards initiatives our faculty and staff care about
  o Consider areas where budget adjustments should be considered to allow us to steward our resources more effectively
- Work with departments to more fully utilize student lab fees to make sure we are being good stewards with these funds and using them to create state-of-the-art experiences for students in our classrooms and labs.
- Update internal GCOS budget workflow to create more efficient processes – empower Chairs/Departments and Center Directors, as well as faculty serving as PIs of grants, to manage their own funds with little signature oversight or delay.
- Work with campus partners to improve our processes related to hiring, purchasing, and pursuing external grants.
  - Engage in discussions with University Counsel, Procurement, and Human Resources to find ways to be more efficient in our processes related to purchasing and hiring
    - Work with campus to speed up process of purchasing for grants and department activities and follow through on initiated items until complete
    - Track activities related to purchasing to gauge ways to increase efficiency in future years
    - Share feedback with HR about the on-boarding process and advocate for improvement of the new employee experience
  - Advocate for and work with OSPRS to find new ways that would allow GCOS faculty to pursue external funding opportunities where a long lead time is not possible.
- Work to speed up process within GCOS for personnel decisions and work to minimize failed searches based on what we can control
  - Determine personnel hiring decisions at the beginning of the academic year so that searches can be processed earlier and job advertisements can get placed in a timelier manner
  - Work to hire in areas of critical needs to remove departments from overload situations as well as continue to hire to support our strong undergraduate/graduate programs while enabling more flexibility in potential future offerings
  - Work to add staff so departments can be fully supported and to reduce workload demands on faculty and current staff
  - Dean’s Office and Department Chairs will work more closely together on the strategy regarding the actual candidate visits to campus and negotiations to help secure the hire
- Create baseline for equipment inventory and risk – work to develop budget and planning model to handle repairs and replacement of key STEM equipment
- Work with College faculty/staff and current University and GCOS committees to clarify and communicate current internal processes that affect faculty and staff that are listed in our Faculty Manual and College Handbook (e.g., create P&T dates document for faculty regarding all current P&T processes to aid in transparency and clarity of processes; work with GCOS P&T committee to identify areas in our current processes that aren’t clear to faculty; work with College Handbook Committee to identify areas where ambiguities may exist in our handbook; help departments communicate department-specific criteria related to P&T so all faculty are aware; College Council to discuss/review the prior practice of “letter of expectations” so that all departments are consistent in either providing an actual letter or not that details departmental expectations for faculty; work to consider possible guidelines for faculty and student travel to make sure we fully support travel while optimizing and distributing resources equitably; work with departments to clarify faculty evaluation process to help create advocacy and support for our faculty for career advancement; Dean’s Office to provide Department Chairs with annual faculty evaluations that also discuss ways to support them as department leaders; work with College to clarify roles and duties of Department Chairs, Associate Deans, Vice Dean, etc.)

**Community Outreach/STEM Awareness/External Partnerships**
- Support departments in department seminars/series to help bring in speakers to campus to build our reputation and facilitate STEM awareness and outreach (e.g., advertising, planning of events, funds)
  - Consider a possible College speaker series for future years
- Support the SCE, and the BCCMWS with current outreach events to community that help support STEM awareness and build our reputation – in addition, work to create strategy on future outreach events for the College (both for the broad community and K-12 audiences)
• Build our external partnerships
  o Re-engage BOV – create expanded board that has identified work to help provide our College with this important external feedback related to our success
  o Work to engage with important alumni that can provide industrial perspective to what we are doing
  o Grow new partnerships/connections
  o Work with departments to create opportunities for both outreach and partnerships that may generate funds for department scholarships and resources
  o Determine external companies/contacts that departments would like to connect with and begin making these connections

Total preliminary College objectives AY2022-2023: 22