



**Department of
Leadership Studies**

Annual Report
July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

1. **Mission Statement**
2. **Status/Achievement of 2025 Goals**

Goal 1: Continuously Engage Partners to Maximize Program Quality and Opportunity

Alignment with UCA 2035

- *Centering Student Success:* School and district partnerships create the internships, practicum placements, and mentoring relationships that give students direct, applied experience and readiness for their careers.
- *Arkansas Campus of Innovation:* Ongoing partnerships with school districts and community organizations build the coordinated, regional collaboration network the university is expanding.
- *Discovery in Action:* Field and practicum placements connect coursework to real-world problem-solving in schools and communities.
- *Future-Ready Foundations:* Advisory boards, signed agreements, and consistent communication with partners build a durable, well-documented infrastructure for sustaining these relationships over time.

Action Plan

- School partnerships will continue to be facilitated for internships, advisory board involvement, and guest speakers.
- On- and off-campus partners for practicum and internship experiences will be sustained and created, for part-time and full-time students, along with event coordination.
- Partnerships with school districts in Arkansas will continue for field experience placements.
- Partners will continue to be engaged through guest speakers in school libraries, advisory board involvement, and practicum partnerships.

Expected Results

- All mentoring, advisory board, and speaker needs will be filled with school partners.
- Students will successfully match with field experience opportunities that align with their career goals.
- Students will successfully complete field experiences, as verified through supervisor evaluation, in alignment with the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.
- Faculty will successfully collaborate to develop and implement events or programs for faculty, staff, and students.
- Students will gain experience in school counseling.

- Partnerships with school districts will be maintained and expanded, resulting in consistent student placements in diverse, high-quality field experience sites and positive feedback from site supervisors and candidates.

Actual Results

- SLMA/EDLP continued to meet mentoring, advisory board, and speaker needs with school partners.
- SCCN established signed partnership agreements or MOUs with participating school districts.
- SCCN maintained field placement records documenting student assignments across diverse school sites.
- SCCN collected site supervisor evaluations and candidate feedback surveys reflecting satisfaction with placement quality.
- SCCN documented communication and collaboration with district partners through emails, meeting minutes, and partnership updates.
- LIBM maintained advisory board meeting minutes.
- LIBM collected practicum course grades and supervisor evaluations.
- CSPA collected field experience course grades and supervisor evaluations.
- CSPA maintained a spreadsheet tracking student and field experience matches.

Status

On-Going

Supporting Program Statistics

None

Links to Supporting Documents

[Link](#) to College of Ed Advisory Board Minutes

Goal 2: Develop, Implement, and Review Processes, Practices, and Policies to Ensure Fairness and Equal Opportunity

Alignment with UCA 2035

- *Centering Student Success:* Fair, transparent application and support processes remove barriers and keep every student's path clear and predictable.
- *Arkansas Campus of Innovation:* Accessible, multimodal application options widen who can enter and benefit from the program, expanding its reach across the state.
- *Discovery in Action:* Accessible course materials and open educational resources broaden equitable access to scholarship and coursework.

- *Future-Ready Foundations:* Regularly reviewed policies and assessments build fair, well-documented systems that can adapt as state requirements and student needs change.

Action Plan

- The application process will be updated to meet state requirements.
- Key assessments will be reviewed to ensure fairness and opportunity.
- Student survey data will be reviewed to ensure fair policies across the program.
- Meet-and-greet sessions will be scheduled with new and current students, along with recent alumni, to answer questions and provide support for online learners across the country.
- Inclusive virtual meet-and-greet sessions will be developed to ensure all online students, regardless of location, have access to peer and alumni support, resources, and program information.
- The application process will include multimodal options for applicants to discuss their eligibility and alignment with the program.
- Courses will be designed with accessible sources, such as a program library and open educational resources (OERs).

Expected Results

- The application process will meet state requirements.
- Key assessments will be updated as needed to ensure fairness and opportunity.
- Program updates will be made as needed.
- Program components and key assessments will be regularly updated based on student feedback and program data to better align with student needs and improve overall program effectiveness.
- Online students will report increased access to support, resources, and program information, as well as a stronger sense of connection to peers and alumni, as reflected in post-session surveys and participation data.
- All applicants will be invited to interview (in person or via video conference) and submit written materials to post candidacy.
- Faculty will offer primary source texts and/or materials in an online and/or physical format through the department or learning management system.

Actual Results

- SCCN used student feedback to make program improvements.
- SLMA/EDLP updated the application process to meet state requirements.
- SCCN produced summary reports of student feedback, including survey results and course evaluations, to inform changes.
- SCCN collected post-session survey results demonstrating student perceptions of support, access, and connection.

- CSPA maintained records of interviews and reviews of applicant materials.
- CSPA conducted a review of course syllabi.

Status

Ongoing

Supporting Program Statistics

None

Links to Supporting Documents

None

Goal 3: Sustain a Data-Driven Quality Assurance Process for Continuous Program Improvement

Alignment with UCA 2035

- *Centering Student Success:* Reviewing end-of-program, key assessment, and internship data ensures the program continues delivering strong outcomes for students.
- *Arkansas Campus of Innovation:* Ongoing accreditation and assessment review keeps the program responsive to changing state and workforce expectations.
- *Discovery in Action:* Data-driven review turns assessment findings into evidence-based curriculum improvements.
- *Future-Ready Foundations:* A sustained quality assurance process is core infrastructure that keeps the program accountable and positioned for long-term excellence.

Action Plan

- The advisory board will meet to review program data.
- The updated SPA accreditation report will be completed.
- End-of-program data, key assessment data, and internship data will be reviewed.
- Key assessment data will be reviewed to ensure continuous program improvement.
- End-of-program data, key assessment data, and practicum data will be reviewed.
- The program assessment process will be deployed and continually reviewed, as guided by College of Education (COE) requirements and the program's strategic plan.

Expected Results

- Data from the above sources will be evaluated and used for continuous improvement.
- Changes will be made to curriculum based on key assessment results.
- Data from the assessment process will be reviewed annually to identify needed changes or areas of strength for potential expansion.

Actual Results

- CSPA produced an annual comprehensive report based on select assessments.
- SLMA/EDLP met with the advisory board to review program data in February 2026.
- SLMA/EDLP updated the SPA accreditation report.
- SLMA/EDLP continues to review end-of-program data, key assessment data, and internship data.
- SCCN revised curriculum components based on key assessment findings to better align with student learning needs and program outcomes.

Status

On-Going

Supporting Program Statistics

None

Links to Supporting Documents

None

Goal 4: Incorporate Transformational and Innovative Experiences Grounded in Evidence-Based Practices

Alignment with UCA 2035

- *Centering Student Success:* Action-based research and evidence-based coursework build the practical skills and confidence students need for their careers.
- *Arkansas Campus of Innovation:* Assignments built around schoolwide data and real community problems connect student learning directly to workforce and community needs.
- *Discovery in Action:* Action research and high-impact practices are direct expressions of applied inquiry and real-world problem-solving.
- *Future-Ready Foundations:* Continually updating courses, handbooks, and requirements keeps program infrastructure current and adaptable.

Action Plan

- A research methods class that includes an action-based research opportunity will continue to be offered.
- The internship experience will be reevaluated to meet changing state competencies and expectations.
- The research course is moving toward practitioner, action research.

- Assignments will be incorporated that give students the opportunity to gather schoolwide data to identify gaps in student achievement.
- Opportunities will be provided to work in K-12 schools, public libraries, and with community partners to gain experience.
- Courses will include high-impact practices (HIPs) in non-field experience courses.
- Courses will include assessments that require a practical artifact relevant to scholarly practice in the higher education enterprise.

Expected Results

- The internship handbook will be updated.
- Research requirements will be updated.
- Students will gain experience creating action plans to address student achievement gaps.
- Students will display learning through practical artifacts in courses.

Actual Results

- CSPA students submitted work demonstrating course learning outcomes.
- SLMA/EDLP updated its internship handbook.
- SLMA/EDLP updated its research requirements.
- SCCN students demonstrated competency in analyzing student achievement data, identifying achievement gaps, and developing data-informed action plans designed to improve student outcomes through the SCCN 6365 project.

Status

Ongoing

Supporting Program Statistics

None

Links to Supporting Documents

None

Goal 5: Recruit, Retain, and Support a Diversity of Students, Faculty, and Staff

Alignment with UCA 2035

- *Centering Student Success:* Growing and diversifying enrollment expands access to the program for more students across the state.
- *Arkansas Campus of Innovation:* Recruitment efforts at conferences and community events strengthen ties with schools and organizations across Arkansas.

- *Discovery in Action*: A more diverse student body broadens the range of perspectives brought into research, coursework, and applied learning.
- *Future-Ready Foundations*: A dedicated recruitment position and updated recruitment tools build sustainable capacity for long-term enrollment growth.

Action Plan

- A recruitment table was staffed at the AAEA and ADE summit.
- The recruitment coordinator will be engaged to increase student enrollment.
- A recruitment table was staffed at AAIM on campus, with 300 educators in attendance.
- Partnerships with divisional and departmental leaders will be pursued to increase part-time student enrollment.

Expected Results

- Student enrollment will grow.
- Student enrollment will increase.

Actual Results

- SLMA/EDLP staffed a recruitment table at the AAEA and ADE summit.
- A new recruitment position was established within the Graduate School.
- Program website updates were completed.
- SCCN expanded its student recruitment and enrollment reach, with students enrolling from outside Arkansas. The program strengthened collaboration with the Graduate School's new recruitment personnel and updated the SCCN website to provide prospective students with clearer and more comprehensive program information.

Status

Ongoing

Supporting Program Statistics

None

Links to Supporting Documents

None

Goal 6: Faculty Will Be Actively Involved in Research/Scholarship That Contributes to Their Discipline and Profession

Alignment with UCA 2035

- *Centering Student Success*: Faculty scholarship keeps instruction current and evidence-based, strengthening the classroom experience for students.
- *Arkansas Campus of Innovation*: Conference presentations and published research extend the program's expertise and visibility to partners and the field.
- *Discovery in Action*: Faculty research, presentations, and peer-reviewed publications are a direct expression of this imperative's focus on scholarship and creative activity.
- *Future-Ready Foundations*: Ongoing faculty engagement in research builds the program's academic reputation and long-term institutional capacity.

Action Plan

- Faculty will research and present in areas related to the program.
- Research studies will be conducted in counseling-related areas.
- Faculty will research and present in related areas.

Expected Results

- Faculty experiences in publishing, presenting, and research will be demonstrated through Watermark.
- Faculty will present at AAEA, AERA, and MSERA, among other conferences.
- Conferences will be attended, and findings will be published in peer-reviewed journals.

Actual Results

- Faculty presented at relevant conferences, including AAEA, ACES, AERA, MSERA, ArLA, and AASL.
- Faculty attended professional conferences, including ACES, AARE, and ArSCA, to disseminate research findings and develop manuscripts for submission to peer-reviewed journals.

Status

On-Going

Supporting Program Statistics

None

Links to Supporting Documents

None

3. 2026 Goals

Faculty is currently crafting these goals based on the UCA 2035 Strategic Plan.

4. Five-year Goals

5. Challenges

The 2025 - 2026 academic year faced many challenges. The faculty were not allowed to work on-campus due to the department suite being flooded early in the fall semester. The department's credit hour production continued to be lower than desired and there has been a decrease in students in the EDLE, SLMA, and CSPA programs. Additionally, the department lost a faculty line when a clinical LIBM faculty member resigned.

6. Opportunities

The faculty continued to publish, present, and produce grants. These contributions are spotlighted in a display case in the hallway.

Due to the flooding, new flooring replaces all the old flooring in the department, a much needed improvement. While the suite was empty, we took the opportunity to have the walls and door facings painted, replaced switch plates, replaced fluorescent light fixtures with brighter LED fixtures, and purchased updated door nameplates. It has drastically updated the appearance of the department suite.

The department's reactivated aUCA Foundation account continues to grow which has allowed for social activities, bereavement gifts, and extra supplies for the department.

7. Summary

Although there were a few obstacles during the past year, the department has worked together to meet those challenges and continues to be a strong group of colleagues.