

LAS DEANS GROUP

IMPACT ON A GRAND SCALE

BIG
ACADEMIC ALLIANCE

About the Liberal Arts & Sciences Deans Group (LAS Deans)

The membership of the LAS Deans Group is comprised of the chief academic and administrative executive officers of the liberal arts and sciences colleges of the Big Ten Academic Alliance. Members of this group lead colleges representing the full range of liberal arts and sciences disciplines. Because of the peer nature of their universities and the commonality of their roles, members have built a trusted community within which they find great value in discussing shared missions, opportunities, and challenges. Additionally, LAS Deans readily share data and policies; sponsor consortial professional peer communities within their colleges; support long-standing collaborative programs; and develop new initiatives as opportunity and mutual interests arise.

LAS DEANS INITIATIVES

LAS Deans Collaborative Grant Fund

As a mechanism for strategically investing consortial group funds to foster academic and administrative collaborations, the LAS Deans have created a grant program to support promising proposals from across the consortium. The program invites proposals that advance scholarship; address shared administrative challenges and opportunities; accelerate the adoption and application of innovative and effective models for teaching, research and beyond; or otherwise serve common goals or interests.

CourseShare Program

Since 1959, the Big Ten Academic Alliance universities have been working together to meet ever-evolving needs for language acquisition. Through the CourseShare Program, launched in 2006, member universities enhance access to less commonly taught languages. Since its inception, this cost-neutral partnership has seen steady increase in the number of courses taught and overall student enrollment.

Designed specifically to collectively meet student need for low enrollment language courses, in 2021-22 the CourseShare Program had 215 courses established, 625 enrolled students, and 278 established partnerships among member universities.

Recently Funded Initiatives

Career Initiatives Project

A three-year initiative that regularly brought together college and campus professionals with the goal of determining how Big Ten liberal arts colleges could best support students in making the connection between their liberal arts education and broader career and life goals.

African American Studies Workshop

Convened scholars and administrators of African American Studies departments to explore the role of the discipline in the 21st century and discuss curricula, research, and the potential for collaborative initiatives.

Strategic Partnership for Applied Redistricting Knowledge (SPARK) Conference

A multidisciplinary and cross-sector group of scholars, researchers and non-profit organizations gathered to discuss how academia could address challenges associated with redistricting and gerrymandering.

PROFESSIONAL PEER COMMUNITIES

LAS Associate Deans of Research

Associate Deans of Research, or others with similar responsibilities for leadership of research, scholarship and creative activity in the liberal arts and sciences colleges, come together to foster collaboration and learn from one another. Federal funding trends, research productivity metrics and benchmarking, professional development, and mutually beneficial collaborations are examples of discussion topics.

Chief Administrative & Financial Officers (CAFO)

Senior administrative, operations, and financial officers of the liberal arts and sciences colleges comprise the membership of this collaborative community. CAFO holds monthly virtual meetings and periodic in-person meetings to discuss budgetary and operational matters of importance to their colleges.

Topics include managing change processes, budgetary models, professional development, recruitment and retention, and other pressing shared challenges and opportunities.

BIG TEN ANNUAL TOTAL ENROLLMENT



631,470 STUDENTS

The Big Ten liberal arts and sciences colleges touch the academic lives of almost all of the over 630,000 students of the Big Ten.

“In convening the LAS Deans, the Big Ten Academic Alliance produces a rich, collaborative zone that has long helped its members develop as administrators by sharing their ideas, ambitions, and experiences. In this way it has led to the development of innovative programs across our institutions. In recent times, the consortium has proved to be an invaluable resource as we collectively addressed the pandemic and its rippling consequences.

Through its formal programs, the Big Ten Academic Alliance brings topical issues to the attention of key academic leaders; by bringing the deans together, it also fosters the type of informal conversations that advance excellence in higher education.”

Adrian Randolph

Dean,
Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

The Big Ten Academic Alliance is the academic consortium of the world-class research universities in the Big Ten Conference and the University of Chicago. By casting our collective futures together, we can fulfill our missions and meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Core Member Groups

- Provosts
- Chief Information Officers
- Deans of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Graduate Deans
- Senior International Officers
- Procurement Directors
- University Librarians
- Vice Provosts for Faculty Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
PURDUE UNIVERSITY
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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