

**LOOK
NORTH**
UNT 2030

DEVELOP | DISCOVER | DRIVE



UNT[®]

**COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION**

WHO WE ARE

Since its founding in 1890, the University of North Texas has advanced education as a catalyst for individual and societal transformation. For more than 130 years, the College of Education has prepared educators, counselors, and leaders who improve learning, strengthen communities, and expand opportunity. Through nine bachelor's degrees, 18 master's programs, and 14 doctoral concentrations, the college delivers rigorous preparation grounded in practice, research, and civic responsibility.

The College of Education is also home to several nationally respected clinics and centers, including the Center for Young Children, the Center for Play Therapy, the Counseling and Human Development Center, and the Office of Research Consulting, which provide critical services to UNT and the broader North Texas community while serving as high-impact training and research environments for students and faculty.

The college's impact is nationally recognized, including a No. 8 ranking for Online Master's in Education Programs by U.S. News & World Report. Each year, more than \$415,000 in scholarships fuels access, persistence, and leadership, amplifying the college's reach and lasting influence.



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Executive Summary

Strategic Direction Through 2030

The College of Education will increase educator certification completion rates, expand high-need workforce pathways, and strengthen clinical preparation models in Texas and beyond. By 2030, we will implement measurable program improvements that elevate first-time pass rates, expand high-quality field and clinical placements, and align curricula directly with district and state workforce needs. Our strategic direction centers operationalizing practice-informed preparation through formalized district partnerships, data-informed program review cycles, and expanded leadership development pathways for teachers, administrators, counselors, and educational psychologists. These actions will ensure graduates are prepared to support student learning, social-emotional well-being, and civic engagement in complex school and community contexts. Together, these priorities position the college to advance student success, support Texas schools and communities, and serve the public good through 2030.

Unique Role, Contribution, and Strengths

COE advances the University of North Texas mission by producing workforce-ready educators, counselors, and leaders who directly serve Texas schools, families, and communities. Over the next five years and beyond, the college will prioritize program quality, enrollment growth in high-demand areas, and improved student progression and completion outcomes. Through strong partnerships with school districts, community organizations, and state agencies, COE expands UNT's regional and statewide workforce impact while aligning academic offerings with documented and expressed labor market needs. The college's core strengths include a long-standing legacy of educator preparation, deep connections to practice, and nationally recognized online and hybrid programs. We will leverage these strengths to expand accessible delivery models, improve time to degree and time to value, and scale programs in high-shortage certification areas. Additional strengths include a commitment to access and affordability, meaningful field experiences, and a culture of innovation that supports new program development aligned with workforce and community demand. Faculty expertise across teaching, leadership, counseling, and educational psychology, positions the college to launch interdisciplinary credentials, pursue external funding, and develop applied research-practice partnerships that directly inform program improvement and workforce preparation.

Navigating External Forces, Trends, and Contexts

COE operates in a dynamic landscape shaped by higher education and K–12 trends, community needs related to mental health access and care, and the needs of children and families. Universities face shifting enrollment patterns, growing demand for flexible and online learning, financial pressures, and increasing expectations for measurable student outcomes and workforce readiness. Meanwhile, K–12 schools, higher education institutions, and community agencies are navigating workforce shortages, social-emotional and mental health needs, hybrid and personalized learning demands, and evolving community and policy expectations. In response, COE will conduct regular workforce alignment reviews, expand flexible program delivery options, and strengthen district-embedded clinical models in high-need

certification areas. We will prioritize program enrollment growth in shortage fields, redesign coursework to incorporate applied competencies aligned with district and partnership feedback, and implement outcome tracking systems tied to graduate employment and retention.

We adapt our coursework and program offerings to meet the changing needs of students, school districts, and communities, preparing graduates who are skilled, innovative, and resilient. By aligning our programs with real-world challenges and community priorities, COE ensures our graduates are ready to lead, serve, and create enduring value for the public good. To seize emerging opportunities, we will propose the launch of a Bachelor of Arts in Education focused on education entrepreneurship, policy, and emerging professional roles; implement a graduate certificate supporting districts in hybrid and online learning; and formalize partnership agreements that guarantee high-quality placement pipelines. Together, these efforts will increase enrollment, stabilize revenue, strengthen the educator pipeline, and position COE as a responsive partner to Texas districts and communities.

Context Surrounding Colleges of Education: The College of Education operates within a complex and shifting educational landscape. Across Texas, K–12 schools are experiencing teacher shortages, early-career attrition, and heightened professional demands. Public discourse surrounding curriculum, governance, and educator roles has intensified, influencing both district operations and how prospective students view careers in education. These conditions require educator preparation programs to reaffirm the professionalism and value of teaching while ensuring candidates are prepared for the realities of today’s classrooms.

In counseling and related mental health fields, rising student needs intersect with evolving licensure requirements, accreditation expectations, and federal financial aid regulations tied to professional degree classifications. Ongoing national conversations about financial aid eligibility for certain graduate programs create uncertainty for students and require proactive institutional planning to maintain access and affordability. Higher education more broadly faces enrollment pressures, demographic shifts, funding constraints, and increasing expectations for workforce alignment and measurable outcomes. As a college that prepares professionals for publicly funded systems, COE sits at the intersection of these pressures.

In this context, COE must sustain strong district and clinical partnerships, support faculty and staff through organizational change, and communicate clearly about career pathways and workforce realities. Acknowledging these challenges directly strengthens our ability to lead with clarity, maintain academic quality, and ensure long-term sustainability through 2030 and beyond.

Strategic Goals (2026-2030)

- **Develop strong, relevant academic programs and the COE workforce, including faculty, staff, and leaders to ensure quality, alignment, and long-term sustainability.**

COE will complete a full portfolio review of all academic programs, aligning curricula, delivery models, and faculty workload with documented workforce demand and enrollment trends. This includes launching or revising at least three cross-disciplinary certificates or concentrations aligned with the new college structure and a comprehensive review of summative educational experiences, such as field placements, internships, and theses and dissertations to ensure alignment with contemporary professional and scholarly goals.

The college will also increase undergraduate-to-graduate pipeline enrollment by expanding undergraduate research participation, early graduate pathway advising, and accelerated degree options. Equally central to this work implement structured mentoring programs, establish clear performance and workload expectations, and create standardized onboarding systems for faculty, staff, and leaders to improve retention, leadership development, and organizational clarity.

Success by 2030: Success will include measurable enrollment growth in priority programs, improved student progression rates, strengthened faculty/staff retention, and clear evidence of workforce-aligned program outcomes.

- **Discover and advance new knowledge, connections, and scholars that strengthen ethical practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and student research engagement.**

COE will increase externally funded research activity, expand interdisciplinary grant submissions, and align research priorities with pressing challenges in teaching, leadership, counseling, and human development. Faculty and students will be supported in sharing discoveries with professional and community audiences, while COE guidelines and practices will be continually reviewed and adapted to reflect emerging evidence and innovation. Discovery will be strengthened through establishing college-level research collaboratives and formal interdisciplinary working groups in several ways with one of the most impactful being prioritizing a full-time staff member to support faculty with pre-award support for external funding opportunities. The college will also expand student engagement in research by including undergraduate participation in COE Research Day, increasing applied research and independent study placements, and securing additional research and employment sites through strategic local partnerships.

Success by 2030: Success will include growth in external funding, increased student research participation, interdisciplinary publications, and expanded research-practice partnerships.

- **Drive meaningful external partnerships through a coordinated, college-wide approach that advances impact, opportunity, and mutual benefit.**

COE will establish a centralized partnership tracking system, designate partnership leads within each department, and formalize multi-year agreements with key school districts and community partners. We conduct regular partnership reviews to assess impact, placement capacity, and mutual benefit.

A staff position that centers on policy and strategic partnerships to strengthen the college's capacity to anticipate, interpret, and respond to state and federal policy developments will be created. This leader will coordinate policy analysis, faculty updates, district engagement, and curriculum alignment; support strategic advocacy efforts; and ensure the college maintains strong relationships with policymakers, professional organizations, and K–12 partners. By formalizing this role, COE will increase institutional agility, reduce compliance risk, and position the us as a trusted, informed voice in education policy conversations.

COE will also work intentionally with UNT students to support continuity in established partnerships and will launch an alumni engagement initiative focused on mentoring, placement support, and partnership development. Partnerships will be pursued strategically across school districts, industry, nonprofit organizations, clinical practices, community colleges, and alumni communities to expand opportunities, strengthen preparation.

Success by 2030: Success will include increased clinical placement capacity, documented district satisfaction, expanded alumni engagement, growth in partnership-based revenue opportunities, strengthened policy engagement and advocacy capacity, and sustained reciprocal collaborations that demonstrate measurable community impact and regulatory responsiveness.

Key Outcomes & Metrics

Core Metrics: Established Benchmarks that Define University Performance

Metric	UNT Baseline (2024/25)	UNT Target (2030)	*COE Baseline W/O KHPR (2024/2025)	COE Target (2030)
1st to 2nd year retention	77%	90%	76.4%	90%
4-year graduation rate	42%	65%	52.5%	70%
6-year graduation rate	61%	80%	59.2%	80%
Annual R&D expenditures	\$124M	\$250M	\$2.9M	\$4.8M
Doctoral degrees awarded	286	300	42	52
Time to value	6 years	Decrease time for programs over median	7 years (median)	6 years

Emergent Metrics: Important Dimensions of Our Success that Require New Approaches

Post-graduation placement: Percentage of graduates placed in high-demand occupations or graduate and professional programs

While some departments collect limited information, it is not aggregated at the college level. A new college-level alumni engagement and recruiter position will begin collecting and coordinating this data in the next academic year.

Career-aligned learning: Percentage of academic programs that integrate internships, industry-sponsored projects, or other work-integrated learning experiences

Career-aligned learning is a core component of our curriculum and educational experience in COE: 100% of our undergraduate majors incorporate structured residency, clinical or field-based experiences, and 80% of our graduate programs (12 of 15) embed internships, practicums, residencies, or comparable applied learning opportunities. These experiences are intentionally designed to connect theory to practice, strengthen professional competencies, and prepare graduates for immediate impact in their respective fields.

Awards and recognitions: Prestigious awards, exhibitions, and performances achieved by our students, faculty, staff, and alumni

Individual units track accomplishments informally and formally via Faculty Information System. We are building coordinated reporting structures to capture achievements college-wide including broadening our college level awards to align with Look North and broadening faculty recognition in areas that drive innovation and community impact.

Innovation and entrepreneurship: New ventures, startups, and public impact projects launched by students, faculty, and alumni

The college currently has limited centralized data on new ventures, startups, or public-impact projects. With the reorganization creating an Associate Dean of Research and Community Engagement, the college will begin systematically tracking and coordinating this information starting next academic year.

Student and alumni engagement: Perceptions of how well UNT prepares graduates to pursue lives of meaning and purpose

The college is strengthening student and alumni engagement through coordinated efforts between the new college-level alumni engagement and recruiter and Student Advising Office to enhance the undergraduate experience and build lasting alumni relationships. Signature events like our STAR Celebration — bringing together alumni, donors, and students - will support meaningful connections and feedback on graduates' preparation.

College-Level Metrics: Other Important Priority Metrics Tracked at the College Level

- **Faculty and staff engagement/climate:** Assesses satisfaction, morale, and organizational climate through surveys such as Gallup and COACHE. Strong engagement supports retention, collaboration, and overall institutional effectiveness.
- **Faculty research productivity:** Measures publications, citations, and grants, signaling the college's scholarly impact, reputation, and ability to attract funding and top-tier faculty. How we describe and capture success in this area is being broadened to recognize faculty innovators, entrepreneurs, and those who are making an impact in the community.
- **Faculty retention and turnover rates:** Though not formally tracked in the past, we will begin monitoring these metrics to ensure we recruit and retain the right people. Exit survey data from Faculty Success (VPAA) already provides insights into departures, helping us understand retention trends. High retention supports a positive work environment, reduces disruption, and strengthens strategic recruitment.
- **Policy responsiveness and engagement capacity:** COE will establish a formal policy monitoring and engagement framework to track policy briefings to faculty and staff, timely curriculum or program adjustments in response to regulatory changes, participation in state and national professional associations, and documented compliance timelines tied to accreditation and state requirements. Success will be measured by proactive policy updates, documented responsiveness within defined timeframes, and strengthened external policy engagement aligned with institutional priorities.

- **Strategic partnership effectiveness:** The college will implement a centralized partnership tracking system to monitor the number of active partnerships, clinical placement capacity by certification area, district satisfaction ratings, partnership renewal rates, and graduate employment within partner systems. Success will include year-over-year growth in high-quality placement capacity, sustained partner retention, and documented workforce pipeline outcomes. This effort will be led by the Associate Dean of Research and Community Engagement.

Goals in Action

Develop the potential of UNT students, faculty, staff, and community members

- **Implement the reorganization of the college and align curricula:** Use the new college and departmental organization to create streamlined day-to-day processes, collaborative certificates, concentrations, and cross-listed courses that reflect workforce demands and promote interdisciplinary learning.
- **Revise and optimize summative experiences:** Conduct a college-wide review of internships, field placements, theses, and dissertations to ensure they align with contemporary professional and scholarly standards.
- **Strengthen faculty, staff, and leader development:** Implement structured mentoring, onboarding, and leadership pathways that reflect the reorg, enabling clear expectations, retention, and succession planning across departments.

Discover new knowledge and insights that bridge traditional academic disciplines

- **Strengthen grant development capacity:** Create a pre-award grant support position to proactively identify funding opportunities, facilitate collaborative proposal teams, provide technical and budget development support, and increase submission and award rates in priority research areas aligned with regional and state needs.
- **Expand student research pathways:** Increase opportunities for undergraduate and graduate engagement through applied research, independent study, and expanded COE Research Day, leveraging new departmental synergies.
- **Translate research into practice:** Ensure discoveries inform teaching, counseling, and human development by developing protocols to share findings with professional, community, and policy audiences.
- **Foster interdisciplinary research hubs:** Use the reorganization to leverage college-level structures that encourage collaboration across newly aligned departments, facilitating innovative, applied research initiatives, and partner with peers and other UNT System institutions to explore joint research/funding opportunities and shared scholarly initiatives.

Drive creative advances, partnerships, and new models of higher education

- **Strategic partnership mapping:** Use the reorg to systematically map external partners across school districts, industry, nonprofit organizations, clinical practices, and alumni to identify opportunities for deeper collaboration.
- **Engage students and alumni in partnerships:** Integrate students and alumni into partnership initiatives to ensure continuity, enhance workforce preparation, and leverage the college's expanded network.
- **Strengthen partnership governance:** Develop college-wide protocols to maintain, repair, and evaluate partnerships, using lessons learned to improve communication, trust, and long-term sustainability.