

STATE OF THE COLLEGE
October 28, 2022
David S. Owen
Interim Dean

Welcome to the 2022 State of the College address. The College By-Laws require that the Dean reports to the faculty annually regarding the state of the College. This address chronicles the many achievements of our exceptional students, staff, and faculty, reports on the current academic and financial health of the college and turns our gaze towards the next year as we pursue new opportunities to strengthen the college and fulfill our mission. In this year's State of the College address, I will address four themes: 1) an overview of the external context and forces that impinge on the College; 2) our achievements and current situation; 3) our goals for this academic year; and 3) Looking ahead.

1. The Context of the Past Year

1.1. The Pandemic

Beginning in January 2022, masking in classrooms was still mandatory, the vaccination rate on campus was above 90 percent, and courses designed to be held in person were mostly held in person. Following CDC guidelines, the Business Operations COVID Support Team transitioned to a policy of masks being optional but strongly encouraged for summer and fall 2022. I want to thank each one of you for continuing to face pandemic challenges with creativity and fortitude.

1.2. The Search for a Dean

The search for a Dean is well underway. The search committee has been appointed by the Provost and Dean Fox of the Libraries is the chair. The search firm R. William Funk and Associates held listening sessions on September 27-28, the position has been posted, and first round interviews are expected to occur later this fall. My goal is to leave the college in the strongest possible state for your new leader.

1.3. Interim Provost and Interim President

In December 2021, Neeli Bendapudi departed for Penn State and Lori Gonzalez was appointed interim president. In January 2022, she appointed Gerry Bradley as the interim provost—he is the third provost since I was stepped into this role nearly three years ago. The search for a permanent president is nearing its conclusion with an announcement expected in the next month or so. By spring, we should feel more of a sense of stability and have a better idea of what the future holds for the university.

2. Achievements and Current Situation

2.1. Faculty Retirements

This past year brought the retirements of dedicated faculty and staff who had impactful careers and transformed students' lives. Their presence, passion, and contributions will be missed, and we wish them well in the next stage of their lives.

Paul Salmon, Psychological & Brain Sciences, 7/16/2022

Thomas Mackey, History, 7/1/2022

Rhonda Buchanan, Latin American and Latino Studies, 7/1/2022

Michael Williams, Comp Hum, 7/1/2022

Leslie Friesen, Fine Arts, 7/1/2022

Wendy Yoder, Classical and Modern Languages, 7/1/2022

Dave Brown, Physics, 7/1/2022

Geoffrey Nelson, Theatre Arts, 7/1/2022
Prof. Masolo, Philosophy, 7/1/2022

Staff Retirements

John Hale, Asst. to Dean – A&S Special Projects
Kim Hosburgh, Program Asst., Sr., Psychology
Virginia Munden, Program Manager, Criminal Justice

2.2. In Memoriam

It is always emotionally difficult when I have to announce the passing of former colleagues. We were fortunate to know and work with them and their passing causes us to pause and reflect on the value they created in the world, and which we are creating each day.

Michael Hottois (Theatre Arts)
Arnold J. Karpoff (Biology)
Charles Trapp (Chemistry)
Lee Shai Weissbach (History)

The College also lost a former staff member:

Arlene Ann Brannon, who served in the Department of Political Science for nearly three decade

Each leaves a legacy of having positively impacted so very many A&S students over their careers. They will be sorely missed by their families, friends, and colleagues.

2.3. New tenure-track faculty

I want to take an opportunity to acknowledge and publicly welcome our new tenure track faculty:

Morgan Balabanoff, Chemistry
Catron Booker, Theatre Arts
Rafael S. Demarco, Biology
Austin Hubner, Communication
Siddhant Issar, Political Science
Felicia Jamison, History/Comp Hum
Matthew Kolmann, Biology
Jennifer Pennington, Theatre Arts
Olivia Schuman, Philosophy
Nathan Smith, Art and Design
Marc Tamarit-Galdón, Classical and Modern Languages
Patricia "Trysh" Wahlig, Art and Design
Jasmine Whiteside, Sociology

2.4. New Term Faculty appointments

Sheryl "Sheri" Squires, Art and Design
Mariella "Mollie" Weisberg, Art and Design
Vilde Lid Aavitsland, Philosophy
Ryan Froese, Philosophy
Florence Goulesque, Classical and Modern Languages
LaShondra Hood, Theatre Arts
Katie Hughes-Taylor, Criminal Justice
Francisco Meizoso, Classical and Modern Languages
Ajith Rajapaksha, Physics and Astronomy
Samiyyah Sledge, Biology
Sanaya Stocke, Biology
Kalpana Venkatasubramanian, Geographical and Earth Sciences

2.5. Promotions to associate professor with tenure

I also want to recognize those faculty who were promoted to associate professor with tenure last year. This is a significant accomplishment in the career of a faculty member, and I congratulate each of the following:

Angela Storey (ANTH)
Yi (Jasmine) Wang (COMM)
Remington Smith (COMM)
Jason Naylor (GEOG)
Bradley Bowman (HIST)
Adam Enders (POLS)
Maria Kondaurova (PSYCH)
Sara Bufferd (PSYCH)
Janna Segal (THEA)

2.6. Promotions to full professor

Congratulations to the following faculty on being promoted to full professor:

Jinjun Liu (CHEM)
Simona Bertacco (Comp HUM)
Judith Danovitch (PSYCH)
Karen Christopher (SOC)

2.7. Term faculty promotions

Term faculty contribute significantly to our academic mission and we are grateful for all they do for our students. I am pleased to celebrate the following term faculty promotions:

Promotion to Senior Instructor (Term)

Khaldoun Almously (CML)

Promotion to Full Professor (Term)

Lora Haynes (PSYCH)

2.8. Leadership Changes

Change has characterized the year, and perhaps especially in various leadership positions in the college.

2.8.1. New department chairs

We have five new department chairs:

Richard Baldwin (CHEM), taking over from Frank Zamborini (interim)

Christopher Reitz (Art & Design), taking over from Mary Carothers

Linda Fuselier (BIOL), taking over from Perri Eason

Yuxin Ma (WGST), serving as a one year acting chair

David Roelfs (SOC), taking over from Gul Marshall

I want to thank the outgoing chairs for their tireless and often thankless contributions to their departments and the College. The success of the College depends directly on faculty who are willing to step into the difficult administrative and leadership role of department chair. I am grateful to each for their work as a part of my leadership team.

2.8.2. Associate Dean Changes

Turnover of staff and faculty has been high in the past several years, and it is no different in my office.

Michael Menze from Biology was appointed as the Associate Dean for Research and Innovation, taking over from Bob Buchanan, who is stepping away after 14 years to focus on his flourishing research program.

Sherri Wallace from Political Science was appointed Interim Associate Dean of Diversity, Engagement, Culture, and Climate taking over for Cheri Dawson-Edwards when she was appointed Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

Latrica Best initially stepped in as Associate Dean of Graduate Education in the wake of Dave Brown moving on to a deanship. When she departed for Boston College this past summer, I appointed Cara Cashon from Psychology and Brain Sciences to the position.

Jason Gainous from Political Science was appointed Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, replacing Linda Fuselier, who served for four years in that role and stepped down to become Chair of the Biology Department.

In effort to expand our capacity for the strategic management of the College's finances, I created the new position of Senior Associate Dean for Finance and Strategy, and I appointed David Schultz from Biology on an interim basis.

I also appointed Jason Sievers as Interim Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management in the wake of Dwain Pruitt's departure.

Lastly, I wanted to better recognize the critical role played by faculty affairs within the Dean's Office. Thus, I promoted Susan Ryan to Senior Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs. I am grateful for her wise judgment, counsel, and cheerfulness in the face of a crushing workload.

2.8.3. New Program and Institute Directors

Lt. Col. David Mott was appointed Chair of the Air Force ROTC program.

Maj. Philip Duff was appointed Chair of the Army ROTC program.

After John Hale's retirement, **Jason Gainous** graciously agreed to serve as Interim Director of Liberal Studies until we can appoint a permanent director, which will be announced in the coming weeks.

Mike Bassi was appointed Director of the Southern Police Institute.

2.8.4. Other significant Dean's office staffing changes

Rae Stilwell joined the College as Web Developer in September

Ramonia Brents joined as Coordinator of International Programs

and **Allison Buchanan** will be joining us next week as Communications and Alumni Relations Coordinator.

2.9. Faculty Demographics

As you can see, our tenure line faculty ranks continue to decline, while we are adding new term faculty and part time lecturers. This is driven in large part by budget pressures. Almost the entire decline in tenure lines is due to the loss of female faculty.

In terms of race, our number of tenure line Black faculty is remaining steady but this masked a relatively high level of churn—losing Black faculty and then hiring new folks in to the College.

Our faculty demographics relative to both our CPE benchmarks and our ACC peers further reflect the challenges we are facing.

We certainly have much work to do and I've asked Sherri Wallace to work to improve both our hiring and retention of BIPOC faculty.

2.9.1. Diversity, Engagement, Culture and Climate Initiatives:

Since joining the A&S Leadership Team in February 2022, Dr. Sherri L. Wallace, Professor of Political Science, has expanded and developed initiatives aimed at creating an inclusive and equitable College. Some highlights include:

- Ensuring that hiring practices promote diversity and equity by revising the A&S job search process to include the presence of Diversity & Equity Advocates on all faculty and staff hiring committees for Faculty and Staff positions.
- Conducting exit interviews of Black faculty.
- Support engagement programs that bridge A&S and the community, for example:
 1. Submitted the annual **Community Engagement Plan**.

2. Eight (8) A&S Faculty received a **GHEENS Foundation grant** to conduct research with community partners : Sarah Emery (Biology), William Scott Gunter (Geography), Lora D. Haynes (Psychology), Melanie Gast (Sociology), Cara Snyder (Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies), Shelby Pumphrey (Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies) and Angela Story (Anthropology) and Lauren Heberle (Sociology).
- Lead A&S’s **strategic planning for equity, equity assessments, and assessment of diversity programming effectiveness** in collaboration with Vice President for DEI, Lee Gill and our Faculty Affairs office.

2.10. Budget

2.10.1. On-going transition to the new budget model

We are continuing to adapt to the performance-based budget model that ties our general funds budget directly to the combination of undergraduate student credit hours and graduate tuition. Accurately estimating revenues based on student credit hours is complicated by continuing downward trends in enrollment, growing levels of dual credit, changing student retention and graduation rates as well as our reliance on the performance of other units at UofL.

It is essential that now, more than ever, we re-double our focus on student success. We need to engage each student compassionately and with genuine care, and provide them with the supports they need to successfully progress towards graduation. We also need to find new ways of demonstrating to prospective students and their families the value of an A&S degree.

The current budgeting model of the university provides more incentives to focus what we do to better fulfill our academic mission. We will need to become more attuned to student interests and needs, develop innovative curricula, and foster interdisciplinary

collaborations, both within A&S and between A&S and other schools and colleges at UofL.

[talking points for slides]

Slide 19

- Student Credit Hour (SCH) production over the last five years is declining.
- Blue line indicates SCH production for students enrolled directly in our courses (declined from 234,390 in 2018 to 210,905 in 2022), a decrease in revenue of \$7,773,535
- Orange line indicate Dual Credit (increased from 3,033 in 2018 to 6,877 in 2022), a 126% increase
- For Dual Credit, we are allocated only \$57.5/SCH instead of \$331/SCH
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- Slide 20
- Graduate tuition is not awarded based on SCH but on overall tuition (75%). The graph is showing a blend of in-state and out-of-state. Our tuition revenue has grown by \$738,045 over the five years shown

Slide 21

- FY22 we had a 4.5% decrease in actual SCH (excluding dual credit) that led to the \$4.2 million deficit.
- FY22 graduate tuition exceeded budget

Slide 22

FY22 end of year finances

- Actual revenues were ~\$4.2 million lower than budget.
- A&S collectively worked to cut expenses ~\$3.6 million leaving a ~\$400,000 deficit.
- During the year, budget adjustments were made from central administration to pay for things such as one-time bonuses and cost of faculty promotions. This added just over \$1 million to our revenue. The net difference of just under \$600,000 will go to our gain share account.
- Our revenue is calculated after RAA has been subtracted and other sources of funds have been accounted so this is not a direct comparison to the earlier tuition-only based slide.

FY23

- Budget required \$1.6 million from central administration (at risk pool) and a final \$800,000 from RAA. We have been asked to develop a three-year plan to address this \$2.4 million in balance.

Slide 23

Endowments

For FY22 we spent only 46% of available funds.

FY23 show an increase in our spend policy.

FY23 expended are only as of 10/21/22.

Gifts

For FY22 we spent only 36% of available funds.

FY23 we started with a lower level of available funds.

FY23 expended are only as of 10/21/22

Summary – Endowment and Gifts combined

FY22 – Close to \$5.1 million in unspent funds

FY23 – more endowment funds available, less available in gifts

2.10.2. Fundraising

We experienced staffing changes in Development as well this year. In July, Asma assumed a new position at UofL in Corporate and Foundation Relations. April Waddell joined the development team from the Kent School of Social Work.

FY2022 total **\$4,326,970**, an **increase over FY21 of \$2,265,489**.

Preliminary numbers indicate that we had an excellent 2022 Raise Some L. We had over **331 donors for a total of \$73,885**. A&S finished #2 on the overall leaderboard. We should be extremely proud of ambassador participation from all most every A&S Department, Institute, Center and Program.

2.11. Student Success

2.11.1. Top student scholars

A&S continues to be a leader in producing award-winning students.

Goldwater Scholars

- Lori Porter, Physics and Astronomy
- Afi Tagnedji, Chemistry
- Christopher Trombley, Mathematics

Mitchell Scholarship

- Samuel Kessler

Rangel Fellowship

- Cornelius Sanford

Pickering Fellowship

- Benjamin Anderson

Fulbright Awards

- Henrietta Ransdell – Thailand
- Lauren Reuss – Thailand
- Jessica Sanders – Thailand
- Farhiya Shaban – Jordan
- Emily Spicer - Czech Republic

Boren Scholarships

- Jacob Foushee: selected to study Turkish in Azerbaijan
- Aditya Mehta: selected to study Portuguese in Brazil
- Lexi Raikes: selected to study French in Senegal
- Zharia Yeast: selected to study Korean in South Korea

English-Speaking Union KY Branch Summer Scholarship

- Elayne Harrington

Mary Churchill Humphrey Scholarship

- Celia Cusick

2.11.2. Undergraduate Mentored Research Awards

Total number of awards funded = 36

Total number of unique A&S programs supported = 9

Fall 22	6
Spring 22	14
Summer 22	16

2.12. Faculty

2.12.1. Research and creative activity

2.12.1.1. Scholarly output

Category	2021
Total publications	445
Books	22
Book sections	25
Refereed journal articles	315

Based on response rate and last year's activity report, this likely captures only 60% of research and scholarship. I am talking to my team about strategies for improving this reporting.

2.12.1.2. Grant funding

Category	2021-22
Grant funding for lead PIs only	\$4.81 million
Grant funding, including PIs, Co-PIs, and Co-Is	\$10.51 million
Total number of active grants lead PIs only	106
Total number of active grants, including lead PIs, Co-PIs, and Co-Is	179

The grant funding of \$4.81 million is lower than normal due to COVID, but on the rise.

2.13. Awards

Distinguished Faculty Awards

Distinguished Faculty Award for Teaching

- Matthieu Dalle, Associate Professor, French

Distinguished Faculty Award for Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity (Social Sciences)

- John Gilderbloom, Professor, Urban and Public Affairs

Distinguished Faculty Award in Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity (Career Achievement)

- Frederick Luzzio, Professor, Chemistry

Distinguished Faculty Award for Service to the Profession

- Yuxin Ma, Associate Professor, History

Distinguished Faculty Award for Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity (Creative and Performing Arts)

- Kristi Maxwell, Associate Professor, English

Distinguished Faculty Award for Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity (Humanities)

- Andrew Rabin, Professor, English

Olorunsola Scholarship

- Yara Mekawi, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Other Faculty & Staff Awards

Innovative Teaching Awards

- (Individual) Danielle Franco, Associate Professor, Chemistry
- (Team) Mikus Abolins-Abols, Assistant Professor (Term), Biology; Rachel Pigg Assistant Professor, Biology; Shira Rabin, Associate Professor (Term), Biology

Outstanding Performance Awards

- Kimber Fogelman, Scientific Instrument Specialist, Chemistry
- Clest Lanier, Program Coordinator, Senior, Office of Diversity, Engagement, Culture & Climate
- Steve Riley, Instrument Specialist, Chemistry
- Joshua Rimmer, Machine Shop Staff, Physics
- Bethany Smith, Fellowship Coordinator, Honors Program

Outstanding Supervisor Award

- Danielle Dolan, Assistant Dean for Advising and Student Services (staff)
- Regina Roebuck, Chair, Classical and Modern Languages (faculty)

Community Engagement Awards

- Thomas Wayne Edison, Associate Professor, Spanish
- Lauren Heberle, Associate Professor, Sociology
- Taleia Fisher Willis, Interim Director of Finance and Lead Fiscal Officer

Diversity Champion Award

- Yara Mekawi, Assistant Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Outstanding Director of Undergraduate Studies Award

- Judith Danovitch, Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award

- Lee Thompson, Assistant Professor, Chemistry

Outstanding Director of Graduate Studies Award

- Tamara Sluss, Associate Professor (Term), Urban and Public Affairs

2.14. Alumni

In 2021, we established a Dean's Council, composed of alumni and friends of the college and is entering its second year. The Council extends the reach of the College and serves as a bridge between the work of the College and the wider community of alumni and friends of the College. The Council meets regularly and is focusing on projects that will further engage our alumni, mentor students, and tell our stories.

The A&S Alumni Fellow for 2022-23 is Lois Cronholm. Dr. Cronholm received her B.A., summa cum laude, in Biology in 1962 and her Ph.D. in Biology in 1967. Dr. Cronholm joined the UofL Biology faculty in 1969, first as professor and later as Dean of the

College of Arts and Sciences in 1978-85. She went on to leadership positions at Temple University, Baruch College, and City College of New York. Dr. Cronholm was the first female appointed to most of her university administrator positions, and she was the first woman President of the national Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences. She cannot travel anymore and was unable to attend the Alumni Awards. However, I was fortunate to be able to visit her at her home in Philadelphia. She is thoroughly delightful and a true inspiration.

The Alumna of the Year was Lucy Helms. She earned her BA in Political Science before going to the Brandeis School of Law for her JD. After practicing litigation and was recruited by Starbucks to start their litigation department, where she rose to Executive VP and General Counsel, and Executive VP and Chief Partner Officer (head of HR). She is deeply committed to diversity and gender equity and an inspiration to our students.

Sadiqua Reynolds, BA Psychology, received the Diversity Leadership Award. She recently served as President and CEO of the Louisville Urban League, the first woman to hold that position in its 95 year history. During her distinguished career she also served in the Mayor's Office and as a District Judge.

2.15. Provost's Strategic Planning Committee

Shortly after arriving in office, Provost Gerry Bradley announced an initiative to examine re-imagining A&S. A committee of elected faculty and staff, and appointees of both the

Provost and myself has met every one or two weeks since early February. The Provost's Strategic Planning Committee is chaired by the Provost and has looked at examples of divisional restructuring. The committee decided over the summer to look further into the details of activating and updating the divisional structure that is already established in our by-laws. Sub-committees have been working in recent months to develop proposals around administration and governance, budgeting, and DEI. The committee continues its work and welcomes your feedback.

3. Priorities for 2022-23:

3.1. Developing a culture of trust

In my term as Interim Dean, I have come to recognize that A&S suffers from a trust deficit. Trust is the glue that holds together an organization so that its members can work effectively together to achieve the mission. Without a culture of trust, faculty, staff, and administrators are skeptical that others are pulling in the same direction. Without a culture of trust, an organization will be dysfunctional and turnover will be high. I believe that lack of a culture of trust in A&S plays a key role in our low morale, high turnover, and frustrating collective efforts to move the College forward.

This is not only a problem in A&S. I suggest that low trust cultures tend to be endemic in higher education. Faculty and administrators distrust one another, in part, I believe because these two groups operate under different imperatives. Faculty are trained to

analyze, question, and critique, while administrators have the responsibility to problem solve and identify pragmatic and concrete solutions. While not contradictory, these imperatives often run in disparate directions.

How do we build a high trust culture? On the individual level we need to strive to be trustworthy by engaging in these behaviors: demonstrating respect of others, being transparent, deliver results, keeping commitments, and practicing accountability.

However, trust is relational and one must also extend trust to others. If we want to build a culture of trust, we need to act in ways that are trustworthy and extend trust to others.

At the College level we will be working with the Dean's senior staff, department chairs, and other leaders to develop stronger relations of mutual trust.

3.2. Fostering Student Success and Improving Retention

A second and equally important priority this year is to foster student success and improve retention of our students. Currently, we retain only 60% of our students within A&S from their 1st to 2nd year, and only 46% of students who matriculate into A&S return in their 3rd year. We have had significant success increasing graduation rates over the past several years, which stands now at 57.5% for the 2015 cohort of students. The Provost has established retention goals for each academic unit this year. The goal for A&S is to increase our retention rate from 1st to 2nd year within A&S to 65%. Re-

dedicating ourselves to the success of our students will provide them with every opportunity to remain at UofL when they face hurdles, whether academic, financial, or personal.

I have established a retention team composed of Jason Gainous, Danielle Dolan, Jason Sievers and myself that meets weekly to develop effective strategies for providing students the targeted supports they need. They are using as a framework a college-level retention plan for A&S developed by Dr. Linda Fuselier, Danielle Dolan and Dr. Jason Sievers with input from the “retention” committee of the A&S Leadership group. Specific initiatives and actions have been developed within this broader framework and is also now being integrated with an action plan developed and implemented by CEHD. The current plan is multi-level and multi-metric with initiatives directed at the student-level, the faculty-level, and the staff-level. These strategies are informed by both qualitative and quantitative data. Jason Gainous has been collecting and analyzing student and faculty quantitative data and has been conducting individual, small group, and large group discussions with faculty to inform initiatives moving forward.

At the student-level, we now have fine-grained data from the Vice Provost of Enrollment Management, Jim Begany, that gives us precise predicted probabilities of retaining all of our freshmen students. We are focusing on this freshmen class because the extant literature on retention and our internal data suggest that we see a sizable loss of students from the 1st to 2nd year and that if we can retain those students the second to third year rate will improve, ultimately increasing graduation rate. These predicted

probabilities are generated from multiple variables including HS GPA, standardized testing, demographics, first generation status, and others. We are using these data to identify patterns across those students with a middling to high probability of dropping out. These results are then being used to inform targeted resources for those students falling in different groups.

At the faculty-level, department committees have been tasked with developing retention strategies directed at their majors. These plans are being submitted to Jason Gainous who will compile them into a Retention Guidebook for A&S Departments to use to further shape their own plans. Next, we are identifying courses, sections, and faculty with high DFW rates and then meeting with the Chairs of those respective departments to develop individualized plans to improve those DFW rates. Part of this plan includes coaching faculty on strategies for effectively engaging with students in meaningful ways. Additionally, using grant funds provided through the Provost's office we have recruited 10 faculty across departments to integrate into their course a set of 10 Essential Skills aimed at preparing students to succeed in the workplace. The idea here is that helping students see how what they're learning will benefit them post-graduation will help retain them.

At the staff-level, first, we asked departments to include strategies for staff to influence retention in the plans they are developing for the Retention Guidebook for A&S Departments mentioned above. Jason Gainous has started conversations with Career Services to identify strategies to better connect A&S students to their post-graduation

opportunities, and he's met with Staff Senate encouraging them to develop ideas to promote retention.

Finally, we are continuing to work with the Provost's office to further develop and implement this comprehensive framework and identify more strategies for providing targeted supports that will be effective in retaining students. retaining students.

4. Looking Ahead

Each one of us experiences every day the challenges the College faces. Many of these are external challenges and some are internal to our college. As we look forward in hopes of building a stronger College that nurtures student success, fosters world-class research, scholarship, and creative activity, and builds collaborative relationships with our surrounding communities, we need to remain focused on those factors that are within our control. This doesn't mean we should stop advocating for changes outside of the College, such as university budgeting or the degree of state funding as a couple of examples. In the short term, however, we need to do all we can to support student success and build the sort of academic community we all desire to be a part of.

The spirit and strength of A&S is grounded in the people in our college—the staff, faculty, administrators, and students. We are, after all, a *college*, which derives from the Latin *collegium*—a community, society, or guild. The quality of our community rests squarely on each of us and whether we cultivate trusting relationships that strengthen community. The A&S Staff Association hosted a fall festival last week and that I was

fortunate to attend. It was truly refreshing to gather together again to break bread, share stories, and simply have fun with co-workers from all across the College. We haven't been able to have such gatherings in the past two and a half years and we need now to be intentional to rebuild those informal bonds that make working in A&S fulfilling and enjoyable.

Despite the many day-to-day frustrations, the College's future holds much potential. We have all we need to shape that future—exceptionally talented and caring staff, faculty, and administrators who care about each of our students. We can, and we will, rise to the challenge of collectively building the College we aspire to be part of.