

STATE OF THE COLLEGE
October 16, 2020
David S. Owen, Interim Dean

Welcome. The College of Arts and Sciences By-Laws require the Dean to make an annual report to the faculty regarding the state of the College. The State of the College chronicles our achievements and challenges, and it affirms our purpose and identity. In this State of the College report, I will discuss four topics: 1) the wider-context of the past year that impinges on the College; 2) our current status and achievements; 3) our purpose; and 4) looking ahead to the coming year.

THE CONTEXT OF THE PAST YEAR

1. Second year of Neeli's presidency

We are now settling into a new era under President Neeli Bendapudi. She has brought a sense of optimism and hope. And she certainly has brought new energy and ideas to the University, first with the Cardinal Principles and now, most notably, with the Cardinal Anti-Racist Agenda. The search for a new Provost is progressing on schedule. Semi-finalists have been interviewed and four finalists identified, and on-campus interviews of these finalists will begin in a few weeks. A communication regarding these finalist interviews should be coming out soon.

2. Divided political climate; election year

This past year has been characterized by a divided political climate; a divide that continues to grow. As we brace for a pivotal and extremely high stakes election, we must continue to draw on the strength of our communities and intentionally work to repair the social fabric and build a society where everyone feels a sense of belonging

3. KKL departure; my interim appointment

We began the 2019-2020 academic year with Dean Kimberly Leonard's announcement that she would step down as Dean at the end of the academic year. A search for her replacement was underway when following the Thanksgiving weekend, she abruptly announced that she would end her term early, at the end of December, to attend to her family. The Provost met with stakeholders and asked me to serve as Interim Dean until the search was completed and a new Dean arrived on campus. The transition was a

relatively smooth one, thanks to the knowledge and competence of the Dean's senior staff. Needless to say, the plan for a short interim appointment was derailed by the coronavirus pandemic, which resulted in all searches being halted in March. The search has now been re-started and the committee is completing interviews of the semi-finalists, with on-campus interviews of the finalists planned for mid-November, with the goal of naming a finalist by the end of the year. The start date could be as early as January, but expected to be no later than July 2021. I will continue to serve as Interim Dean until the permanent dean starts in the position.

4. Coronavirus pandemic

Of course, the once in a century crisis that has profoundly impacted each of us and changed the way we work and fulfill our mission is the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has challenged us to rapidly develop new ways of delivering an exceptional education to our students, to devise new safety protocols for conducting research, and to craft new ways of working, teaching, and learning.

The hard work and planning have paid off as we have had a successful start to the fall semester under the circumstances. All A&S offices are open and staffed, though at a lower density. This fall, approximately 60% of our courses are hybrid, with both in-person and online components, with the remainder offered as either synchronous or asynchronous online courses.

The pandemic has challenged each of us personally as well. The risks of contracting coronavirus have made us all anxious and fearful. The disruptions to work, school, and life have added new demands on our time, attention, and workload. We are in a sense building the plane as we are flying it, which makes everything we are doing all that much more difficult. Isolation and alienation are particularly intense during this pandemic and we need to continue to intentionally reach out to others, reinforcing the threads of the A&S community fabric.

While the pandemic has also presented us with some opportunities. We have always been committed to being a student-centered institution, and the pandemic has forced us to refocus how we put this into practice. It requires us both to prioritize upgrading the technology in our classrooms, and to learn new skills as instructors. We need to create courses that are more flexible and utilize online components where they make sense. The pandemic has also shifted how we do our work, hold meetings, and engage with the community. Some of what we are learning now will allow us to be better at what we do going forward.

5. Epidemic of racism; BLM movement

The pandemic hasn't been the only sickness we've been fighting this past year; the struggle against the epidemic of racism—and especially anti-Black racism - has been brought to the forefront of the public consciousness. With the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor in the spring, national protests and actions have erupted across the country and world demanding justice and systemic change. Louisville is on the frontlines of this battle. Many continue to suffer from the pain, anger, and frustration resulting from the flawed and unnecessary raid that led to the death of Breonna Taylor. As a community, we must demand justice, and we must demand systemic change.

REPORT ON THE COLLEGE

CHANGES-BUDGET

This was the context of the past year—certainly a year that upended us all. Nonetheless, as you will see, the College has continued to fulfill its mission extraordinarily well under the circumstances. Our mission is implemented through the fantastic faculty and staff of the College, and I want now to turn to our people:

Faculty, Staff & Leadership Changes

1. Retirements

This past year brought a long list of retirements of dedicated faculty who had long careers making a positive impact on our students' lives and discovering and creating new knowledge and understandings.

The following faculty retired in the past year:

- Dale Billingsley (English - 42 years)
- Gary Cobbs (Biology - 32 years)
- Joy Carew (Pan-African Studies - 20 years)
- Margaret D'Silva (Communication - 27 years)
- Barbara Hanger (Fine Arts - 38 years)
- Maura Hencker (Term) (Classical & Modern Languages - 11 years)
- Alan Leidner (Classical & Modern Languages - 39 years)
- Thomas Maloney (Philosophy - 47 years)
- Mark Noble (Chemistry - 35 years)
- Frank Nuessel (CML - 25 years)
- Jon Rieger (Sociology - 49 years)
- Elaine Wise (Comparative Humanities/English - 50 years)
- Cecelia Yappert (Chemistry - 33 years)

I wish to acknowledge and thank them all for their long service to the College.

Unfortunately, Professors Cecelia Yappert and Jon Rieger passed away shortly after their retirements and after extraordinarily long careers at UofL. Professor George Shields also passed away this past year. He earned his BA and MAs in philosophy at UofL, and after earning a PhD from the University of Chicago and a long career teaching at Kentucky State, he returned to UofL to continue teaching in his retirement. 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.

The following **staff** have also retired. Each of them left big shoes to fill:

- Bob Forbes (Geography & Geosciences – 27 years)
- Lisa Fortwengler (Sociology - 16 years)
- Renu Kakar (Chemistry – 19 years)
- Sharon O’Bryan (Anthropology – 33 years)
- Cindy Saling (Philosophy – 37 years)
- Alison Sommers (Psychological & Brain Sciences – 13 years)

Thank you to all of them for their years of service.

2. New tenure-track faculty

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

- Sara Bufferd, Psychological & Brain Sciences
- Natalie Christian, Biology
- Calvin Coker, Communication
- Damian Guerra, Biology [Gweh'-ruh (emphasis on Gweh)]
- William Scott Gunter, Geography & Geosciences
- Cathryn Johnson, Political Science
- Katie Kleinkopf, Comparative Humanities
- Alycia Lackey, Biology
- Andrew Mehring, Biology
- Evan Milliken, Mathematics
- Megan Poole, English
- Lucian Rothe, Classical & Modern Languages
- Cara Snyder, Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies
- Andrew Wilson, Chemistry

3. Promotions to associate professor with tenure

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

- Tiffany Calvert, Fine Arts
- Daniel DeCaro, Psychological & Brain Sciences
- Brendan DePue [DUH PEW], Psychological & Brain Sciences
- Thomas Wayne Edison, Classical & Modern Languages
- Timothy Johnson, English
- Cheri Levinson, Psychological & Brain Sciences
- Nicholaus Noles, Psychological & Brain Sciences
- Andrea Olinger [O-LEN-JUR], English
- Nicholas Paliewicz, Communication
- Rachel Singel, Fine Arts
- Forrest Stevens, Geography & Geosciences
- Joseph Turner, English

4. Promotions to full professor

Additionally, congratulations to Charlie Zhang, (Geography & Geosciences) for being promoted to full professor.

5. Promotions to associate professor (term)

Last but not least, I want to congratulate our term faculty who were promoted to associate professor term.

- Joshua Adams, English
- Zhanna Goldentul, Theatre Arts
- Kristopher Grady, Political Science
- Mark Mattes, English
- Robin Mozer, English

6. Leadership changes

6.1. New chairs

Chairing a department demands a considerable commitment of time and energy, and requires skill and wisdom. I am grateful to the following faculty for recently taking on this role.

- Nefertiti Burton, Theatre Arts
- Jason Gainous, Political Science
- Tad Hughes, Criminal Justice
- Avery Kolers, Philosophy (Acting)
- Pawel Kozlowski, Chemistry (Acting)

Special thanks to the faculty who have finished their terms as chair or who are outgoing: Cherie Dawson-Edwards, Craig Grapperhaus, Jasmine Farrier, and Kevin Gawley.

6.2. Interim LFO

After our former LFO Ann Moser resigned in the spring of 2019, the College did not hire a Lead Financial Officer. Juli Wagner stepped up to take on the additional workload and we are grateful for her dedication and commitment to ensuring the financial stability of the College.

In February, I appointed Taleia Willis as Interim Lead Financial Officer. She has done an exceptional job under the most trying circumstances. Not only did she work tirelessly to implement fair furlough and staffing plans during the pandemic, but she has also made significant strides improving processes and functions in the Business Center and the Dean's Office.

6.3. New Associate Dean for DEI

In June of 2020, Cynthia Ganote stepped down as Assistant Dean for Diversity and Community Engagement. I thank her for her valuable contributions. Given both my

own commitments to diversity, the national and local BLM actions, and the announcement of the Cardinal Anti-Racism Agenda, I prioritized the appointment of an Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. I am very happy that Dr. Cheri Dawson-Edwards started in this role on October 1st. She will ably lead the College in our commitments to antiracism, equity, and social justice. I am excited about the knowledge, experience, community ties, and energy that she will bring to this work.

6.4. Interim Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education

I am also grateful to Dr. Karen Chandler for stepping in as Acting Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education while Linda Fuselier is on sabbatical this fall. Taking on this role has been made especially difficult under the conditions of the pandemic and we all owe her a debt of gratitude for her tireless work supporting both students and faculty in these new circumstances.

Budget

Another key piece of the puzzle that makes it possible for us to fulfill our mission is the College's budget.

1. New budget model

1.1. Overview

The University implemented a new performance-based budget model this year. The model allocates tuition revenue according to student enrollments, recognizing that, for better or worse, we are a tuition-driven institution. For undergraduate enrollments, 70% of the tuition earned for student credit hours is returned to the units generating the tuition (A&S in this case). For graduate enrollments, 75% of tuition revenue is returned to the unit, and for professional enrollments, 85% is returned. However, there is also a cross-subsidization that occurs between units. Some units earn more tuition revenue than their current budgets—A&S is one of these—while other units run structural deficits and need to be subsidized. The fact that A&S earns more tuition revenue than we get back

in our budget puts us in a strong financial position within the University because we contribute an essential portion of revenue to the general fund.

I have applied the same formulas that allocate revenue at the University-level to department and program budgets within A&S. Taleia and I will continue to work with department chairs and their UBM-Is to be sure everyone has a thorough understanding of how the model operates and how we can most effectively implement it.

1.2. Opportunities

This new budget model does not rebuild or restructure budgets from a blank sheet. Rather, it begins from current budget levels and incentivizes and rewards growth in student enrollments. Increasing enrollments will result in increases to budgets—both for the College and for departments. However, decreasing enrollments will return less revenue to the College and departments.

Once we have a year under our belts of putting the new model into practice, A&S will begin tweaking it to make it more nuanced and to incentivize what we value. We've already begun this process by working out a way for interdisciplinary programs to flourish under the new model—and I am grateful to a group of department chairs who developed this solution. At the University-level, the Budget Model Workgroup, to which I am appointed, will review the budget model and its implementation in the current fiscal year and make recommended revisions. Additionally, I proposed to department chairs that a portion of carryover funds from the prior fiscal year be redirected to fund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, and they agreed to this proposal.

1.3. Challenges

To be sure, the new budget model presents us with many challenges. To start, Taleia and the Business Center must develop new systems and processes for

administering the revenue distribution within the College. We also will want to review the formula for internal cross-subsidization that we have historically done in the College, and which is necessary. As we continue to implement the new model, we will undoubtedly discover additional problems to solve and it will take the year for us to work through these details.

2. Current budget and outlook

As most of you know, the coronavirus pandemic had some severe budget implications, resulting in a projected \$39 Million shortfall in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. A variety of levers were used to close this budget gap, including temporary salary reductions, furloughs, a pause in institutional retirement contributions, a hiring freeze, and a spending freeze. I want to thank everyone, most especially staff, for their sacrifices. It was those sacrifices that allowed the University to end the year in the black and the College to avoid any layoffs.

The 2020-2021 budget was adopted in light of the pandemic and includes projections that account for revenue losses and additional expenses. The FY21 budget for the College is \$67,173,824, which is an increase of \$1,827,628 (2.8%) over the prior year's budget. At the end of the first quarter, our revenues and expenses are tracking as planned, and the budget outlook for the current fiscal year is good at this time. All units, including A&S, were required to set aside 5% of our budgets in a contingency fund to cover any unexpected shortfalls during the remainder of the current year.

Students

1. Enrollment

Since we are a tuition-driven institution, much turns on the strength of student enrollments. The good news is that summer 2020 enrollments university-wide were up 9.9% over the prior year. While fall undergraduate enrollments for A&S, year over year, were down 3.5%, and graduate enrollment declined just .7%, total

enrollments for the University increased this fall by 1.8% over the prior year. In addition, budgeting for FY21 was based on projections of lower than normal enrollments, and the University has so far exceeded these projections. At the end of the first quarter, A&S is in a sound financial position.

1.1. Undergraduate enrollment

EAB APS Analytics reports that the College's three-year undergraduate enrollment trend from AY 18 to AY 20 is +1.1%.

2019-20	2020-21	% Difference
6721	6489	-3.5%

1.2. Graduate enrollment

EAB APS Analytics reports that the College's three-year graduate enrollment trend from AY 18 to AY 20 is -2.4%

2019-20	2020-21	Difference since AY18
679	674	-.7%

As you can see here, credit hour production is down slightly, but six-year graduation rates are actually up.

1.3. Credit hour production

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Difference since AY 18
26,2094	25,5101	25,0685	-4.4%

1.4. Six-year Graduation rates

4.8 percentage point increase since 2011 cohort graduated

2011 Cohort	2012 Cohort	2013 Cohort
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51%	52.4%	55.8%
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Spring enrollments are unknown, of course, and the health of the A&S budget depends significantly on the strength of spring enrollments. This is why it is especially important that each of us exercise care and concern for students. They are suffering from the coronavirus pandemic and the epidemic of racism just as we are. And they are struggling to learn under these conditions and in an online environment, just as faculty are learning to adapt their teaching to this new environment. We all need to be doing what we can to support student success and to give them reasons to believe they will continue to have an exceptional educational experience in the spring.

2. Top Student Scholars from A&S in 2020

While we are talking about students, I would like to take the opportunity to mention some of our most exceptional students. They are truly an incredibly impressive group. Thank you to our many faculty and staff who serves as supporters and mentors to them

2.1. U.S. Student Fulbright Awards

2.1.1. *English Teaching Assistantship (ETA)*

- Evan Clark.
Graduated in May 2020 with degrees in international relations, Spanish and history and minors in political science and linguistics
Danielle Graves
Graduated in May 2020, with degrees in biochemistry and political science
- Megan Lenahan
Graduated in August 2018 with a degree in art and Latin American Latino Studies
- Alex McGrath
Graduated in May 2020, with degrees in English and philosophy.

- Travis Ray
Graduated in May 2020 with degrees in biology and Spanish
- Jared Thomas
Graduated in May 2020 with a degree in political science
- Niara Wakaba
Graduated in May 2019, with a degree in political science, minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and a certificate in Peace, Justice and Conflict Transformation

2.1.2 Research/Graduate Study Awards

- Kasey Golding
Graduated in May 2018 with a degree in political science. She also has an MA in European Studies with a concentration in European External Relations from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven).

2.2. Critical Language Scholar

- Evan Clark
Graduated in May 2020 with degrees in international relations, Spanish and history

2.3. Boren Scholars

- Celia Cusick
Graduated May 2020 with degrees in political science and philosophy
- Madeline McCloud
Expects to graduate in May 2022 with degrees in chemistry and neuroscience

2.4. English Speaking Union

- Sabrina Collins
Expects to graduate May 2021 with a degree in political science with a track in law and public policy

- Abigail Posey
Expects to graduate in May 2021 with a degree in history and Pan-African Studies
- 2.5.** Mary Churchill Humphrey Scholarship
 - Meagan Floyd
Graduated in May 2013 with a degree in political science
- 2.6.** Moore Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program
 - Sidney Garner
Expects to graduate in May 2021 with a degree in women, gender, and sexuality studies and Pan-African Studies and a minor in social change
- 2.7.** NASA DEVELOP Program
 - Laura Krauser
Graduated in May 2020 with a master's degree in geography and geosciences
- 2.8.** Woodcock Medal for Undergraduate Achievement
 - Dasha Kolyaskina
Graduated May 2020 with a degree in political science, law and public policy track, and a minor in Spanish

A&S by the Numbers

1. Faculty

Turning to faculty, here are the current totals, demographics, and trends.

1.1. Full-time faculty

	2017	2018	2019	% change since 2017
Ten/TT	333	314	301	-9.6%
Term	70	72	77	+10%

1.2. Gender

Full-time tenured/tenure track faculty

	2017	2018	2019	% change since 2017
Male	201 (60%)	192 (61%)	184 (61%)	-8.5%
Female	132 (40%)	122 (39%)	117 (39%)	-11.4%
TOTAL	333	314	301	-9.6%

1.3.Race (Ten/TT)

	2017	2018	2019	% CHANGE SINCE 2017
Black/Afr Amer.	30	27	24	-20%
Indigenous	1	1	1	0%
Two or more races	10	10	9	-10%
Asian	35	34	34	-2.9%
Hispanic/Latinx	11	11	10	-9.1%
White	242	231	222	-8.3%
Other	43	41	35	-18.6%
TOTAL	372	355	335	-9.9%

→ Since 2015, we are down 15% black; 11% BIPOCRCA and Funding

→ Last hiring cycle, no faculty of color were hired. We need to redouble our efforts.

2. Research & Creative Activity

As an R1 Research University, our faculty are extraordinarily productive scholars.

2.1.Creative Activity

2019	
Total refereed publications	673
Refereed books	16
Total books	21
Total edited books	7
Refereed journal articles	507
Refereed exhibits and performances	44

2.2. Grant funding

	2018-19	2019-20	Percentage difference
# of Awards	81	71	-12.3%
Award Amount	\$4,844,212	\$5,961,514	+23.1%
Award based on PI/CoPI collaboration	\$5,311,093	\$6,892,815	+29.8%

3. Fundraising

As state appropriations continue to decline, we become more and more reliant on philanthropy dollars. The pandemic, the resulting uncertain economy, combined with the virtual environment have made it challenging to secure major gifts. So now more than ever we will need to rely on smaller gifts and multi-year pledges

3.1. On the slide, you can see the past two years of fundraising:

	2019	2020	% Difference
TOTAL	\$2,274,815 ¹	\$1,880,859	-17.3%
Major Gifts (Gifts over \$25K)	\$1,873,844	\$1,427,467	-23.8%
Annual Fund (Gifts between \$1 and \$999)	\$111,210	\$116,009	+4.3%
Day of Giving (Total # of donors)	288	297	+3.1%

¹ includes one-time estate gift from one donor of \$1,640,913.00

3.2. Raise Some L

The College has well over 55,000 living alumni, so small gifts from lots of people can make a substantial impact. For this reason, next week's "Raise Some L" day of giving campaign is especially important. It's a crowdfunding campaign, so the number of gifts is just as important as the amount. I encourage members of the College who are active on social media to participate. By participating, we can provide much needed discretionary funds for our departments, more scholarships for students, and extend the reach of our social justice programs and initiatives.

4. Awards

One of our biggest strengths is our people, and so I want to take a few minutes to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding faculty and staff of the College. We could not have the Celebration of Excellence last spring as planned, and at this point, it looks likely to be combined with the 2021 Celebration.

4.1. Distinguished Faculty Awards

Scholarship, Research & Creative Activity

- Outstanding Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity in the Humanities - Ranen Omer Sherman (Comparative Humanities)
- Career Achievement - Michael Nantz (Chemistry)
- Basic and Applied Sciences - Muriel Maurer (Chemistry)

Teaching

- Distinguished Full-Time Teaching - Karen Christopher (Sociology)
- Distinguished Part-Time Teaching - Angela Orend (Sociology)

Service

- Service to the Community - Dewey Clayton (Political Science)
- Service to the University - Craig Grapperhaus (Chemistry)

4.2. Outstanding Performance Awards for Staff

- Cassandra Book (University Writing Center)
- Kamla Gant (A&S Business Office)
- Michelle Henderson (A&S Advising)
- Sherry Nalley (Chemistry)
- Jason Sievers (Chemistry)
- Sarah Springer (Honors / Liberal Studies)

4.3. Diversity & Engagement Awards

- Diversity Champion for Faculty – Sherri Wallace (Political Science)

- Diversity Champion for Staff – Yolanda Demaree (Dean’s Office)
- Community Engagement Award – Lora Haynes (Psychological & Brain Sciences)

4.4. Special A&S Awards

- Teaching Innovation Award - Tricia Gray (Political Science)
- Outstanding Supervisor Award - Tiffany Dillard-Knox (Pan-African Studies)
- Outstanding Graduate Mentor – Marci DeCaro (Psychological & Brain Sciences)
- Outstanding Director of Graduate Studies – Lisa Markowitz (Anthropology)

OUR TELOS: KNOWLEDGE AND JUSTICE

I know want to turn to a consideration of our purpose. What is the telos, end or purpose of the university?

It is said that higher education is in crisis these days, that its purposes are unclear, its contributions to the public good limited to technological advancements, and that it has just become another politicized institution. As John Thelin has shown in his comprehensive history of American higher education, higher ed has been through multiple periods of crisis and has been, from the start, continually seeking its identity, purpose, and relationship to the broader society. Nonetheless, it is important for the College of Arts and Sciences to have a clear identity and vision of its purpose and relation to social forces.

The essence of a research university is the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge and understandings. Our work expands the boundaries of human potential

through research, scholarship, and creative activity, preservation of knowledge and understandings, and passing these on to the next generation. Some have argued that the project of the research university is nothing more than disinterested inquiry that seeks only truth. In seeking nothing but the goal of truth, the research university, on this view, is purely objective, impartial and separate from social, cultural, and political forces – a true ivory tower.

On this view, seeking racial justice, as the Cardinal AntiRacist Agenda challenges us to do, or social justice more broadly conceived, is in conflict with the fundamental purpose of the university. Truth is seen as impartial, objective, disinterested, while social and racial justice are seen as partisan, political, and interested. The two are at odds with one another and promoting social and racial justice undermines our fundamental purpose. Or so it is argued.

I believe this view of the essence of the research university and its goal of truth is too simple. I come from the school of thought known as critical social theory. In this school, human knowledge and human interests are intertwined. The philosopher Jurgen Habermas has argued that knowledge is bound up with three fundamental interests that humanity has: the interest in control over our physical environment; the interest in achieving agreed upon understandings about our shared social world; and the interest in emancipation from domination. To be sure, this is not the place to dive more deeply into his arguments and their justification. But I think this provides a useful framework for thinking about the relation of truth and social and racial justice. If the discovery of knowledge and construction of understandings is our purpose, then the purpose of a research university is to seek both truth *and* social justice.

If we don't include all interests, perspectives, and voices in the discovery and creation process, then the consequent knowledge and understandings that result are limited and distorted renditions. If adequate forms of knowledge and understandings require that we cast our net broadly to include all voices, we must commit ourselves to making sure

that how we go about discovery is not exclusionary. And there is plenty of historical and contemporary evidence that this is precisely what has happened in higher education—exclusionary practices that result in the maintenance of distorted forms of knowledge and understandings. Further, recent work in philosophy has drawn attention to epistemologies of ignorance—structures of knowing that expressly prohibit certain kinds of knowledge or inquiry. For example, Charles Mills has argued that white supremacy as a social system functions in a way so as to discourage public discourse about whiteness, white privilege, and white supremacy itself. This demonstrates another way that truth and social justice are interconnected.

A&S has somewhat of a storied relationship with social and racial justice. Since at least the late 1960s, A&S students and faculty have insisted that fulfilling the commitment to access and inclusion means expanding the scope of who does the research and what questions are asked. In 1969, then student, and later Dean, Blaine Hudson was a leader in demonstrations demanding an expansion of the curriculum and greater support for historically excluded black students. This led to the creation of the department of Pan-African Studies in 1973. Since that time, pushed by tireless advocates within, A&S has continued to expand its commitment to a broader conception of knowledge and deepened its commitment to social justice. Here is partial list of programs that demonstrate A&S's recognition of this interrelation of knowledge and justice: the Pan-African Studies department; the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department; the Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice Research, programs in Social Change; Peace, Justice, and Conflict Resolution; Latin American and Latino Studies; Asian Studies; Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies; and the African American Theatre Program. The STEM disciplines also recognize the value of these linkages from, the Bridge Program in Physics that serves to diversify graduate education, to a seminar series on inclusive practices in teaching and research that are being considered in Mathematics. Although we have occasionally lost the path, A&S has remained committed to linking the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge and understandings to human interests and the emancipation.

But now we are called upon to do more. We must do more.

LOOKING FORWARD

As we look forward, I believe the College of Arts and Sciences would benefit from developing a stronger sense of identity, one that is grounded in our shared purpose and A&S community. We are, as Dean Hudson used to say, a “living community,” and this means we need to be intentional about who we are and what draws us together. Also, there is no doubt the higher education marketplace is becoming ever more competitive, especially as we look beyond the pandemic. Therefore, we also need to be able to answer the question: what distinguishes the University of Louisville’s College of Arts and Sciences from any other college of arts and sciences or liberal arts college in the state or even in the nation? In other words, what gives us our particular identity and how do we stand out from the others?

I propose that in the course of the coming year, we engage in a college-wide conversation involving faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of the college about our purpose, identity, and distinctiveness so that we can clarify and sharpen our self-understanding and have a coherent narrative about who we are. In the remainder of this address, I want to offer my own ideas about what could be included in this conversation.

As I have already intimated, our history, academic strengths, metropolitan location, and faculty and staff expertise, all point towards our being able to carve out at least one aspect of our identity—that of being a leader for social and racial justice. While this is already a significant aspect of who we are, we need to become clearer about what this means to us a College. While we have a significant legacy to build upon, we also have much work to do. Many are already doing this work and we need to acknowledge and

celebrate them, but we also need a focused and sustained effort to systematically transform the practices and policies of A&S.

Another central aspect of our identity is the world-class research, scholarship, and creative activity produced by the faculty. Being classified as a Carnegie Very High Research, or what is commonly referred to as an R1 university, is central and critical to who we are. The outstanding research, scholarship, and creative activity we generate is what makes us truly an institution of higher education, and it greatly improves the quality of the education we provide for students, both undergraduate and graduate students. Not only do we need to continue to support research, but we also need to find ways to recruit and, most importantly, retain world-class faculty. We are already producing exceptional work in each of our divisions: the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities, and it is imperative that we build on this strength. We also have valuable and distinctive interdisciplinary programs and initiatives. We need to recognize the unique value interdisciplinarity brings to achieving our mission, and thus we must restructure our policies and practices to more adequately recognize this value and support these programs. One way to better integrate research into our identity is to find new ways to communicate and discuss the significance and impact of our phenomenal research, scholarship, and creative activity for a wider public audience.

Being student-centered is another key aspect of our A&S purpose, identity, and distinctiveness. We have a unique opportunity to revisit this aspect of who we are and to recommit to it. I think the pandemic has highlighted both the central importance of this to our mission, and also where our strengths and weaknesses lie. Our success rests critically on providing students with an excellent education while also making sure they have the best possible college experience while at UofL. I believe further conversations would be helpful to clarify for ourselves what it means to be student-centered and how that can be put into practice.

A final aspect of what makes A&S distinctive is our strong sense of community, our connectedness with one another, and the sense of belonging we feel. Here, I think we sense that we share a common purpose, and many of us take pride in working in higher education. Our community--our A&S community--is our strength, even though our sense of this has been challenged in recent years. This sense of community is an important aspect of who we are, an aspect that requires continuous renewal and recommitment.

In conclusion, despite severe external pressures and challenges, the state of the college is sound. We have challenges ahead of us, but we are in a good position to confront and overcome those challenges, and we are in a good position because of the members of the A&S community, including staff, faculty, students, alumni, and friends of the College. WE are our greatest strength, and I am proud to count myself as a member of this community.

Thank you to each of you for joining me today and for your ongoing commitment to the College. Have a great weekend.