CONCEPTUALIZING ARTS & SCIENCES AT THIRTY

PREFACE

The College of Arts & Sciences is the heart of the University of Richmond's nearly two-hundred-year history of educating students in the liberal arts. Long devoted to opening intellectual and career pathways for Virginians, it is today a diverse community of learners from around the world dedicated to deep inquiry, knowledge, and purposeful lives.

During the fall of 2016, President Ronald A. Crutcher charged the Deans of each School at the University of Richmond to engage in a process of planning for its future. Conceptualizing Arts & Sciences at Thirty or Concept 30 is an opportunity for the School of Arts & Sciences to endeavor its first planning exercise, leading us into the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the School in 2021. Concept 30 will give us the chance to understand our past, our mission, and our shared values and to declare our vision for a shared future among the departments and programs that comprise A&S.
**Plan Structure & Terminology**

**The Pillars**
The College of Arts & Sciences's Concept 30 Strategic Plan is supported by four pillars:

1. **VALUES** of the College of Arts & Sciences that shape our mission and goals
2. **MISSION** statement that proclaims the purpose and primary action of the College of Arts & Sciences
3. **FOUNDATIONS** that must be in place for the College to support our values, pursue our mission, and meet our goals
4. **GOALS** that set out to the work we will do to live our values and mission as we approach the College's 30th anniversary. Each goal will have associated initiatives designed to help the College meet it. **Assessment** of these initiatives will include immediate, short, and long term actions over the next 5-7 years. For example, the State of the College Address to build, support, and celebrate community might be an immediate action, whereas the implementation of a Field of Interest Declaration Fair might take 1-3 years to implement. Budget alignment will drive some of the timing of these priorities.

**Our Terms**
- "Liberal arts" defines the broad-based, integrative education that the College exemplifies. Members of this community of learners become intellectually nimble global leaders capable of critical thinking and adaptation in an ever-changing and diverse world. Liberal arts includes humanistic values, artistic perspectives and embodied expression, the sciences of society and culture, and scientific thinking in natural and applied fields.

- **Community of learners** is a term inclusive of students, staff, and faculty at all ranks. The University of Richmond's soul is in undergraduate education. Through "community of learners," we in the College of Arts & Sciences recognize that educating global leaders calls for an analytical disposition among all of us, as exceptional faculty and staff are themselves engaged in investigation, discovery, research, and artistic endeavors, and shine as examples to our students.
VALUES

COMMUNITY
The College of Arts & Sciences supports a thriving and inclusive community of students, staff, and faculty who inquire, discover, take risks, and socialize together. We value 'place-making'—using lived experience to envision what a place is and what it can be—as critical to knowing ourselves and developing an equitable community. In practicing place-making, we recognize the knowledge and experiences of those in our broader community, including across the campus, the city of Richmond, the surrounding region, and the wider world. Dialogue and collaboration on and off campus foster curiosity, creativity, justice, empathy, and hope.

DEEP INQUIRY
Deep inquiry opens spaces for the production of knowledge and creative expression. Creativity and discovery arise from a commitment to scholarly work and intellectual freedom. Sustained attention on a particular question generates new knowledge but only as the result of rigorous academic practice, including evidence-based decisions, preservation and curation of materials, civil engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. As a community of learners committed to deep inquiry, students, staff, and faculty ask questions, pursue solutions, and defend positions or change them based on new evidence. We value such deep inquiry as integral to being and becoming local, national, and global leaders. As a community of learners, we cultivate the life of the mind and well-being through the pursuit of knowledge, beauty, truth, and enlightenment.

SELF-AWARENESS
Self-awareness is the ability to examine and understand ourselves and our impact on the world around us. It begins with reflection and facilitates the capacity to learn from one’s mistakes, accept criticism, and make responsible decisions with conscious direction and intentionality. Essential to self-awareness are humility, empathy, and civic mindedness, which lead to understanding the perspectives of others, past and present, and recognizing and examining our own thoughts, experiences, and character. Self-awareness enables us to identify our priorities, abilities, and limitations, helping guide us toward balanced lives. It also undergirds our willingness to walk in unfamiliar territory, take risks, remain resilient in the face of failure, and have the courage to speak out against injustice and stand up for the public good.

EQUITY & JUSTICE
Diversity and inclusion require attention to equity and justice. We advocate for full participation in the College’s social and academic life and for the broadening of access and contributions to our economic, social, and intellectual capital. The commitment to equity and justice is ongoing and evolves to include those who have been historically excluded from the academy. As a community that stands for justice and equity we seek to break down societal barriers that preclude all of us from thriving. When we practice equity and justice, we foster innovation and inclusivity, and we learn to navigate through
controversy--whether public or private--with critical thinking, empathy, and self-awareness.

ETHICAL STEWARDSHIP
Ethical stewardship is our commitment to create a world that is healthier, cleaner, fairer, and more just. Providing an education in sustainability is critical to being and training civic-minded, global leaders. Literacy in the environmental, social, and economic interrelations of human and biophysical systems establishes a foundation for local action, global thinking, and innovative solutions. We promote ecological resilience through cross-disciplinary learning about our limitations and interconnections. Together, we learn to be accountable not only to ourselves but also to future generations.

MISSION
The College of Arts & Sciences fosters a community of learners who thrive by questioning, knowing, and acting. The College prepares our students to be committed lifelong learners who challenge societal and intellectual barriers, who provide ethical leadership, and who lead sustainable and meaningful lives.

FOUNDATIONS
- Clear and consistent policies and practices across the College
- Efficient and transparent administrative structures
- Robust shared governance
- Curricular and co-curricular flexibility for students, staff, and faculty to make the most of the opportunities and resources at the University
- Effective communication throughout the College
- Time integrity -- appreciation for time outlays and commitments across the community
- Shared time, place, & space
- Essential technology and information services and clear procedures for addressing IT needs
- Sustainable stewardship of financial resources and transparent budgeting procedures
- Intentional and productive relationships between the College (Dean's office, departments, programs) and university-level units (e.g., Business Office, Admissions, HR, Student Development)
- Advocacy for A&S within the University
- Active engagement with A&S alumni
GOALS

COMMUNITY
The College of Arts & Sciences will be a thriving community of learners made of exceptional students, staff, and faculty from all backgrounds and points of view. This community will build a shared identity that recognizes and values the contributions of all of our members and celebrates our diversity of interests, knowledge, and experiences. Our caring and interconnected community members will support and challenge each other to enhance our work within and beyond campus, to promote social justice and critical engagement with past and present inequities, and to draw new members who enrich and renew our shared mission.

CURRICULUM
The College of Arts & Sciences will develop intellectual dexterity in all our community members through a wide-ranging and multi-disciplinary liberal arts curriculum that intentionally scaffolds learning, encourages curiosity, challenges preconceived ideas, and helps define a college-wide identity.

CREATIVITY
The College of Arts & Sciences will support personal and professional development and further creativity and the production of new knowledge by all of our members through the removal of barriers to free and innovative inquiry and expression.

CONSCIENCE
The College of Arts & Sciences will sustain curricular and co-curricular structures and programs to support our intellectual production, community engagement, and ecological responsibility in ways that exemplify our shared values.