Robert Frank- Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Statement of Goals and Accomplishments, February 2014

There are a number of routine duties I perform as the dean. These include oversight of promotion and tenure processes, staffing, supervision of college personnel, representing the college at university functions and administrative committees, fundraising, alumni relations and a host of other activities that are included in any dean’s portfolio. I will not focus on these routine duties in this report. Rather, I will describe new initiatives that have required my leadership and that are, I believe, critical to the future of the college. I have organized these goals and accomplishments into four general categories.

- Reorienting the College of Arts and Sciences
- Promoting student success
- Revitalizing the curriculum
- Investing in faculty and staff

Reorienting the College of Arts and Sciences

Upon my arrival at Ohio University, the College of Arts and Sciences impressed me as a collection of loosely affiliated departments with little sense of connection and common purpose. With the exception of a few centers and institutes focused narrowly on specific areas of research, faculty members were provided with few opportunities for cross-departmental interaction and planning. This circumstance presented two problems. First, the University was transitioning to a new financial model (responsibility-centered management) that would require college-level planning and cooperation. The infrastructure, practices and culture necessary to survive and thrive in RCM were not in place, either with regard to collaborative decision-making or a shared sense of purpose. Second, the college faculty had few opportunities to engage in serious discussions about the future of the college’s liberal arts curriculum, and how the college’s academic plans should be shaped by the rapidly changing landscape of higher education at the state, national and global levels. The Arts and Sciences undergraduate curriculum, by its nature, requires collaboration across departments, but the structures supporting collaboration had atrophied in recent years. Given these challenges, one of my primary goals has been to develop the infrastructure to support college-wide discussion, planning and decision-making. Significant progress has been made.

- Recasting chairs and directors: The Chairs and Directors group has been recast as a college strategic planning and decision-making body. This group had largely served as a vehicle for information dissemination and a venue for expression of departmental views in the past. It has been reformulated as a deliberative, college-level decision-making body that plays a critical role in policy development and strategic planning.
- College strategic plan: College mission statement has been revised and a strategic plan has been adopted. When he was allied supreme commander during World War II, Dwight Eisenhower is quoted as saying “Plans are useless
but planning is indispensable.” Although Eisenhower was referring to battle plans, I think he captured the value of strategic planning. We know plans will be modified in response to ever-changing circumstances so the plans, while important, are only part of the value of planning. The more important aspect is the articulation of shared goals and priorities, the habit of public discussion of ideas and creating a culture of engaged conversation and decision-making. Creating a culture of planning will serve the college well as we respond to internal and external forces that impact our teaching, research and service activities. The mission statement and strategic plan are revisited periodically by the chairs and directors, shared with the faculty and revised as appropriate. In the process, we build an organization characterized by collective goal-setting, planning and evaluation.

- **Data summit meetings:** Beginning in Fall 2012 and each semester since, a college-wide meeting called the Data Summit has been held. All college faculty and staff are invited to these sessions meant to facilitate information sharing and discussion across the college. These meetings provide opportunities to review enrollment and staffing data, financial information, academic performance and national trends in higher education. College-wide meetings of faculty and staff had not been held prior to my arrival.

- **Better communication:** Effective and frequent communication is a key to building a sense of community. In Fall 2012, the Chairs and Directors voted to begin a search for a Director of Communications, and the new director began in February 2013. The director has brought significant enhancements to the college online profile (e.g., A&S Forum) and social networking practices, added PACE student workers to the college resources, and serves as a liaison with University Communications and Marketing. A new college website and a first ever college annual report will be published in February 2014. The work of A&S faculty and students is being publicized much more effectively, and is now being tracked with internet data analytics. The number of Arts and Sciences stories in university publications such as Compass has increased dramatically.

- **Financial management infrastructure:** A new A&S Finance and Administration Team has been formed to manage the college under RCM. The team includes the Chief Finance and Administration Officer; the Associate Dean for Strategy, Finance and Administration; the Senior Business Manager; and the College Resource Analyst. Each of these positions was developed by reassigning existing lines or obtaining funding support from outside the college. Together, this group is building the college’s capacity to responsibly manage an organization with roughly 5,000 students, 600 employees, and gross annual revenues well over $100 million.

- **Departmental Budget meetings:** Individual meetings with department chairs and budget staff were held in Fall 2013 in an effort to foster better integrate of departmental and college financial planning. Effective collaboration and communication is a key to the success of RCM in the college. Departmental budget meetings had not taken place in the past.
• **Collaboration with other university units:** I am a proponent of collaboration across organizational units. I believe that this approach often creates synergy and promotes efficiency. The college has undertaken a number of collaborative efforts in the past 18 months.
  o The college has partnered with Human Resources to embed an HR professional in A&S. This individual (Nick Wortman) spends half his time in Wilson Hall and half in HR. The position of a dedicated HR specialist within the college was eliminated. To date, this arrangement has produced better service to the college and departments and is being copied by other colleges through the university.
  o A partnership with the Career and Leadership Center has resulted in much better career services for A&S students. Starting next year, a dedicated A&S career advisor will be shared by the college and Career and Leadership Center staff.
  o A dedicated international student academic advisor has been hired jointly by the Ohio Program in Intensive English and the college to better serve the advising needs of international undergraduate students.
  o The college is supporting and collaborating with the Center for Community Engagement in its efforts to develop more service learning opportunities for our students.
  o A&S and the Scripps College of Communication collaborated on the hiring of a tenure-track faculty member who is half time in Media Studies and half-time in Women's and Gender Studies.
  o A&S co-sponsored (with Regional Higher Education) the Spotlight on Learning Workshops in Spring 2013 and 2014.
  o Arts and Sciences partnered with the Center for International Studies on an 1804 grant to build the War and Peace program curriculum and launch the War and Peace curricular theme.
  o eLearning is providing an dedicated, on-line instructional designer (Laura Pach) to A&S as a resource for the development of on-line courses.

**Promoting student success**

The key to our success as an institution is the success of our students. Student success fulfills our covenant with students, parents and the public, contributes to a better future for everyone and enhances the financial health of the university. A number of A&S initiatives supporting student success have been launched in the past year.

• **Advising:** Effective advising can play an important role in student retention, The college implemented a Student Advising Survey in April 2013, with 980 undergraduate students responding. The results provided evidence for knowledgeable and effective advising but also areas for possible improvement, such as career advising. Based on this feedback, each department committed to
implementing an advising intervention that would improve the effectiveness of advising services. Also, as noted above, enhanced advising is being provided through collaborations with OPIE and the Career and Leadership Center. The latter collaboration involves offering the class CAS 1130, Career Planning in Liberal Arts. This new class provides an opportunity for students to learn about and develop the necessary skills to help themselves in all areas of career planning. Students' academic integration and learning are increased through guided self-exploration, experiential learning and goal setting. Students develop and articulate academic goals and career plans as well as learn self-marketing techniques.

- **BIOS 1700:** Another curricular innovation in A&S involves Biology 1700. This large-enrollment introductory biology course historically has had a high failure rate (students earning Ds, Fs or withdrawing). To address this problem, the Biological Sciences Department, in concert with the A&S Office of Undergraduate Student Affairs and the Health Science Professions Student Affairs Office, developed a plan to identify struggling students very early in the semester so that appropriate advising, tutoring, and enrollment changes can occur before students fail the course. Preliminary results demonstrate a much higher success rate (92% passing grades) for students who participated in the program.

- **Undergraduate Research:** The college provided support to two new efforts. The college named Dr. Sarah Wyatt to head efforts to promote undergraduate student research activity across the college. The aim is to publicize and expand student research opportunities in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. Participation in undergraduate research is known to promote student persistent and success. The Condensed Matter and Surface Sciences program kicked off a summer internship program. Students worked with faculty on a variety of research topics and attended weekly luncheon discussions with faculty across topics in chemistry, physics and engineering. The summer program plans to expand in 2014, with the aim of applying for status as an NSF REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) program.

- **Center for Law, Justice & Culture:** The center welcomed its first cohort in the CLJC certificate program in 2012-13 and, gained college support for an annual budget, construction of offices and the hiring of a pre-law adviser. The Center’s leadership has taken responsibility for building and promoting the curricular theme “Making and Breaking the Law.” (see themes initiative below)

## Revitalizing the Curriculum

Higher education is changing quickly and dramatically. The future of Ohio University and the College of Arts and Sciences depends on our ability to offer an education that meets the needs of 21st century students. Since, for the most part, our curriculum was developed in the 20th century, it is in our interest to re-evaluate its goals, structure and content. I have been involved to two efforts aimed at re-evaluating and re-invigorating the curriculum.
- **Re-evaluating general education**: I am the co-chair of the University’s General Education Taskforce. The Taskforce on General Education was formed by Provost Benoit last spring, and charged with evaluating the current general education curriculum, identifying potential modifications and, as necessary, seeking approval for any appropriate changes. Members of the General Education Taskforce concluded that the first task was to solicit faculty feedback and endorsement regarding the goals of an OU education. This information was necessary for consideration of the contributions of general education and the major to an OU degree. About 460 faculty members either completed surveys or participated in discussion of the goals of an Ohio University education. For this semester, the Taskforce is reviewing the feedback from the faculty, and plans to use it as the basis for a Faculty Senate resolution on the goals of an Ohio University education.

- **Curricular themes**: The curricular themes initiative was launched in Spring 2013. A theme is composed of a set of interrelated, multi-disciplinary courses and extracurricular activities organized around a topic of importance for the 21st century. Ideally, a theme includes content from the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. However, it is not essential to have representation from each of these domains to have a viable theme. In its simplest conception, a theme is simply a suggested set of related courses and experiences that provide a guide to fulfilling a substantial portion of the breadth of knowledge requirement. Following a theme allows students to explore interdisciplinary study that may or may not be related to their major, and enables them to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. In A&S, we have been developing themes in support of our college distribution requirements. More broadly, themes can be designed to support completion of the general education Tier II requirements. The curricular themes under development include: Conflict & Cooperation; Making & Breaking the Law; Sustainability; Food Studies; Knowing the Future; Love & Hate; Wealth & Poverty; Fire to iPhones; Becoming Human; A Sense of Place; So You want to Change the World. The themes will be “launched” for students in Fall 2014. The college has funded course development, retreats, speakers and other activities in support of the themes. Over 150 faculty members have participated in themes-related activities. Five new, collaboratively-taught, introductory themes courses are schedule to be taught in Academic Year 2014-2015. The themes initiative has promoted interdisciplinary teaching, collaboration, networking and a re-examination of curricula in A&S and beyond.

- **Distance education and summer school**: There is a pressing need to “regularize” on-line teaching and summer offerings now that they are the purview of the college and a critical component of college revenue. To this end, efforts have been made to support development of on-line courses with the hiring of non-tenure faculty specializing in on-line instruction. In addition, the college partnered with eLearning on the hiring of an instructional designer for on-line courses. Novel approaches to summer instruction also are being explored. A committee of department chairs is working to develop principles, policies and procedures related to on-line and summer instruction now that they are the responsibility of the college.
Investing in Faculty and Staff

The college’s people are its most valuable asset. Investing in their professional development ensures the future quality of our teaching, research and service activities.

- **Facilities Planning:** People cannot work effectively in dysfunctional buildings. I have taken every opportunity to remind campus leaders that A&S has a number of high-use buildings in dire need of attention. I believe these efforts bore fruit in the decision to add $100 million in bonding debt to the university’s plans for building replacement or renovation. The efforts to replace Clippinger Hall, Ryors Annex, and Irvine Annex with an Interdisciplinary Science Facility have moved into the programming phase after the Board of Trustees approved planning funding for the much-needed facility to replace aging laboratories that have outlived their expected lifespan. Consultants and resident faculty will begin working with University Planning staff in Spring 2014. The Board also put Ellis Hall and Morton Hall, which have significant deferred maintenance problems, onto the slate for planned renovation.

- **Faculty Professional Development:** A&S expanded professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance teaching excellence and student learning and success. These opportunities included advising workshops, a faculty mentoring event, faculty learning communities (including ePortfolios and Taking Risks in Teaching), and the Spotlight on Learning Conferences. In addition, an A&S faculty leadership group began to meet this year. This group is composed of department chairs and other faculty with interests in developing their administrative leadership skills.

- **College administrative/professional staff meetings and organization:** The college administrative staff was invited to a college-wide meeting in Fall 2013. Over 50 staff members attended. The goal of the meeting was to facilitate networking and take the first steps toward developing a staff organization that would (1) promote staff professional development and (2) identify, develop and reward staff talent in an effort to cultivate expert users of university systems and procedures. A staff steering committee was formed as a result of the meeting, and is planning staff professional development and networking events for Spring 2014 and beyond.

- **Staffing:** I have been working on adequate staffing levels since my arrival. Years of budget cuts had reducing staffing to the bone. In FY2012, the college employed 441 FTE faculty (groups I-IV). This number increased to 455 in FY2014. In terms of group I faculty, there were 290 in FY13, 299 in FY14 and, if all the faculty searches are successful, there will be 313 in FY15. Some needed positions were support staff, and we have made progress replacing in some areas. The number of staff increased from 78 to 83 from FY12 to FY14. It is clear that the future health of the college depends on the right mix of tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty as well as support staff. The all-funds budgeting approach of RCM is partly responsible for the progress that has been made, as are healthy enrollments and a better state economy. I will continue to explore creative approaches to filling positions within the college. In RCM, this
will depend on our ability to grow our revenue or cut our costs. I think there are more opportunities for revenue growth as compared to cost-cutting.

- **Faculty and Staff annual awards**: The annual college awards have been revised so that in addition to faculty advising and teaching, research/scholarship will be recognized by awards in the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. In addition, awards for outstanding staff member and faculty leadership/service have been developed. These awards have been revised to better reflect all the important contributions to the success of the college.

- **Building a cadre of dedicated teaching faculty**: The university has made significant strides toward stabilizing and enhancing the status of non-tenure track faculty. The college needs to support this effort by recruiting faculty who will serve as dedicated, expert teachers. We need people who are focused on improving pedagogy and assessment of learning as their primary university mission. The college is looking to recruit instructional experts on the national level who will pursue a long career within the college. Searches of this sort are being conducted by several departments.

### Academic Year 2013-2014 Goals

- Move a general education review process forward
- Further develop and implement curricular themes
- Institute more robust faculty and staff professional development programs
- Develop strategies for enhancing student persistence
- Build an integrated approach to alumni relations and development
- Enhance career advising opportunities for students
- Support and expand opportunities for undergraduate research, internships & service learning (so called high impact educational practices)
- Develop a college distance education and summer instruction strategy
- Work on assessment of learning outcomes as part of university reaccreditation
- Continue to build a culture of goal setting and assessment
- Continue to reformulate the role of department chairs
- Continue development of a stabilized and supported non-tenure track faculty
- Further develop the college’s data management and analysis infrastructure