

# RADFORD UNIVERSITY

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## College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences

TO: Faculty and Staff in the College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences  
FR: Dr. Matthew J. Smith, Interim Dean  
DA: March 22, 2019  
RE: Dean's Report

I began serving the College as Acting Dean on May 29 and assumed the role of Interim Dean on June 26. Throughout those early months, I also continued to serve as Director of the School of Communication until Dr. Bill Kennan took on the Interim Directorship on August 10. In the earliest days of my tenure, I reached out to each of the chairs across the College to seek their counsel in better understanding the functioning of our various programs. I also offered to meet with each department at the start of the fall term in order to more personally introduce myself to the faculty.

As the academic year has progressed, I have grown to enjoy many aspects of this experience, but most particularly participating in programming across the breadth of the College, whether that be welcoming prospective Psy.D. students to campus, dining with the Pre-Law speaker, attending the Army ROTC Formal, greeting guests at the Chinese New Year Celebration, or making a presentation in conjunction with Women's History Month. When I consider the variety of programming this College makes available to the campus community, it is truly inspiring.

### **Community Building Initiatives**

At the College Meeting in August, I pledged to introduce efforts to strengthen the sense of shared identity across the College, and to that end pursued the following initiatives:

- Recruited for, promoted, and hosted the "September Series" and spring "Works in Progress Series" lunchtime brown bag lectures to spotlight scholarship across the College
- Implemented a College-wide adjunct training workshop, which itself evolved into a College-wide adjunct handbook under Associate Dean Kim Gainer's efforts
- Requested updated photos for all departmental webpages and coordinated "photo days" with Assistant to the Dean Kerie Benson
- Supported the CHBS Awards Committee proposal to inaugurate a Distinguished Service Award for 2019
- Invited faculty and staff to the Winter Carnival, a family-friendly social gathering at the end of fall term
- Facilitated the purchase and placement of bulletin boards outside participating department suites
- Introduced a second, semi-annual meeting of the CHBS Advisory Board in conjunction with the Volunteer Summit, featuring programming from Dr. Roberto Santos and Mr. Eric Snow

### Academic and Managerial Initiatives

Additionally, I undertook the following College-relevant initiatives, as dictated by circumstance and responsibility:

- Initiated weekly staff meetings for Dean's Office to improve internal coordination
- Convened with the Office of Advancement—especially our gifts officer, Dr. Carter Turner—to launch strategies towards College fund-raising goals and priorities
- Advocated for resources like faculty lines, especially the 11 vacated by retirements
- Researched and articulated policies to better govern access to the building
- Supported Dr. Shuo Yao and Mr. Michael Meindl in opening dialogues to international partners in China and Germany, respectively

### Searches

I believe that the single most important administrative task we undertake is the hiring of colleagues, as these decisions impact our students for years to come. As such, as Interim Dean I consider time collaborating with departments on searches to be time well spent, including the following searches we have conducted within the College:

- Advising Center: Assistant Director of Advising (Ms. Sarah Bradbury)
- English: Director of the Writing Center (Ms. Katie Garahan)
- Political Science: Full-Time Temporary Assistant Professor (Dr. Iulia Hoban)
- Political Science: Assistant Professor (Dr. Allyson Yankle)
- Criminal Justice: Chair (pending)
- Criminal Justice: Full-Time Temporary Assistant Professor (finalist withdrew)
- Philosophy and Religious Studies: Full-Time Temporary Assistant Professor (Dr. Geoffrey Pollack)
- Philosophy and Religious Studies: Assistant Professor (pending)
- Philosophy and Religious Studies: Full-Time Temporary Assistant Professor (Dr. Gilbert Goffstein)
- Communication: Full-Time Temporary Instructor (Ms. Heather Derrick)



*Dr. Smith meets with First Year Students at the Dean's List Reception.*

I have also worked on internal leadership positions involving the Communication, English, and Interdisciplinary Studies in Liberal Arts programs. In addition, I served on the following searches across the university:

- Harvey Knowledge Center: Director (Dr. Jessica Beckett)— search chair
- University Relations: Associate Vice President (Ms. Caitlyn Scaggs)

### **Evaluation of Faculty and Staff**

A sizeable portion of the dean's responsibilities involves reviewing and recommending faculty and staff, due in no small part to the fact that we are the largest College in the University. Since taking on the position, I have processed the following:

- 115 Faculty Annual Evaluations
- 34 reappointment reviews for contingent faculty
- 12 tenure and/or promotion recommendations
- 3 staff annual reviews

### **Administrative Duties**

In addition to those vital personnel matters, I have also assumed responsibility for the following fiduciary, academic, and managerial duties:

#### *Fiduciary Responsibilities:*

- Consult with Ms. Stacey Griffin, Executive Secretary, to manage the College's \$11 million budget
- Collaborate with the chairs and director to develop ETF funding requests
- Approve all spending requests across the College through Chrome River



*Dr. Tanya Corbin and Dr. Daniel Reed host U.S. Representative Morgan Griffith in the CHBS Courtroom, along with Dr. Smith.*

*Academic Responsibilities:*

- Interface with Ms. Gloria Tuckwiller, the Director of the CHBS Advising Center, to review academic petitions and policy changes
- Review all study away/abroad proposals, of which CHBS has the most in the university
- Confer with the Director of the Governor School and the Dean of CVPA in managing Governor School policies, personnel, and budgets
- Work with the College of Education and Human Development on personnel matters related to the Selu Conservancy
- Approve the work of the CHBS Curriculum Committee

*Managerial Responsibilities:*

- Draft agendas for and preside over bi-weekly meetings of the CHBS Leadership Team
- Meet with individual chairs and directors to address matters in the departments and school (e.g., personnel issues, resource requests, schedules)
- Host the CHBS Advisory Board and its Distinguished Alumni Award ceremony
- Supervise the Assistant to the Dean in managing the College's 144,000 square foot facility
- Coordinate with the Associate Dean to manage projects, ongoing and ad hoc, that benefit from her superior organizational abilities

**University Committee Membership**

As interim dean, I serve on three standing university-wide leadership bodies, and I recently took on a charge from the Provost to lead another:

- Academic Affairs Leadership Team (AALT)
- Academic Program Review Committee (APRC)
- Ad Hoc Committee on the Faculty Recruitment Guide—appointed chair
- President's Leadership Council

**Representing the College**

I was honored to represent the College in the following events during the last year:

- Academic Advising Summit
- Board of Visitors meetings
- Dean's List Reception
- Emory & Henry signing ceremony
- Highlander Days
- Homecoming
- Institutional Effectiveness Day
- Jefferson College meetings
- Major/Minor Fair
- New Student Convocation
- Quest
- Quiz Bowl
- Retention Summit
- State of the University address
- Taubman Museum consultation
- Volunteer Summit
- Winter Commencement

## Teaching

In the past year, I have conducted the following instructional activities:

- Led COMS 460 Topics: The Experience at Comic-Con (1 credit) for 9 students traveling to San Diego on July 17-23
- Taught COMS 460 Topics: US Television History (3 credits) to 15 students in Fall 2018
- Served on the comprehensive exam committee for Ms. Eman Amir in Summer 2018
- Lectured for a session at the Western Virginia Regional Jail under the auspices of Dr. Amanda Kellogg



*Dr. Smith recognizes Ms. Holly Breedlove with a prize at the Winter Carnival.*

At present, I am working on these instructional activities:

- Offering COMS 460 Topics: Event Planning (3 credits) to 18 students in Spring 2018 in collaboration with Dr. John Brummette
- Chairing the thesis committee for Ms. Rebecca Hogge, set for completion by May 2019
- Planning the fourteenth iteration of my study-away program for July 2019

## Scholarship

A number of projects came to fruition over the course of this academic year, including:

- Conducted co-curating duties on “Marvel: Universe of Super Heroes” by contributing a monograph to the published catalog and developing a new display for the April opening at Franklin Institute in Philadelphia; during its 2018-2019 run in Seattle, the exhibit hosted more than 250,000 people
- Chaired a panel on edited series at the first Comics Studies Society conference at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in August 2018
- Published a co-authored chapter, “Next Issue: Anticipation and Promise in Comics Studies” in the *Oxford Handbook of Comic Book Studies*, March 2019
- Contributed expert commentary to an article featured in *Playboy* on the emergence of female super heroes in cinema

In addition to those, I am still working on the following:

- Continuing to co-edit the manuscript for *More Critical Approaches to Comics: Theories and Methods* with its 22 contributors, due March 30, 2019
- Co-editing the Routledge Advances in Comics Series, publishing two volumes this year

### Professional Service

- Serving as conference co-planner and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the Virginia Association of Communication Arts and Sciences, whose “Redrawing Boundaries” conference will convene at Radford on March 29-30, 2019
- Was elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the Comics Studies Society and assisted planning the “Comics/Politics” conference for Toronto, Ontario in July 2019



*CHBS Distinguished Alumni Award Winner, Mr. Anthony Terrell of NBC News, visits the welcome tent at Homecoming, where he is greeted by State Representative Christ Hurst, Dr. Carter Turner, and Dr. Smith.*

I have sincerely appreciated the opportunity to serve the College this year, and I am grateful to everyone who has demonstrated their support throughout this transitional period.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Smith, Ph.D.