Penn State shield logo with black text and blue shield

Unit Strategic Plan: College of Arts and Architecture

2014/2015 through 2018/2019

A more detailed version of this plan can be found at:

<http://artsandarchitecture.psu.edu/sites/artsandarchitecture.psu.edu/files/aastrategicplanjuly2014.pdf>

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***Making the Arts and Design Central to Penn State***

**College of Arts and Architecture**

**2015-20 Strategic Plan**

April 2015

# Preamble

The spring of 2013 marked two important milestones for the College of Arts & Architecture: first, the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the college’s founding in 1963, and, second, the close of the university’s 2008-13 strategic planning cycle. (An accomplishments report is posted at: [A&A Plan Update 2008-13](https://artsandarchitecture.psu.edu/sites/artsandarchitecture.psu.edu/files/strategic_plan_update-2008-2013-final.2.pdf).)

Through an eighteenth-month process that involved consultations and discussions with focus groups, standing committees, ad-hoc working groups, as well as conversations with individual administrators, faculty, and staff, we have developed and refined this statement of our goals for the next five years. Rooted in our Mission, Vision, and Values, this plan will guide the college’s decision-making, budgeting, and development priorities through 2020.

Considered a “living document,” our plan charts a clear course for the next five years, while allowing us to respond nimbly to unexpected challenges and opportunities. We will review and update the plan annually and measure our progress against clearly defined performance indicators.

As we embark enthusiastically on Arts & Architecture’s next half-century, our 2015-20 strategic plan positions the college to play a key role in all five ‘pillars’ of University’s strategic plan as we strive toward our aspirational goal of “making the arts and design central to Penn State.”

# MISSION

The College of Arts and Architecture provides the highest quality training for artists, designers, scholars, teachers, and arts professionals, while also advancing research and creative activity in our disciplines. We equip students to pursue careers in the arts and to adapt their life and career plans in an ever-changing global environment. We grant professional and liberal arts degrees, and we play a fundamental role in the university’s general education curriculum, which equips students with essential life skills. We enrich lives and foster community and economic development by offering a myriad of opportunities for the university community and the general public to engage with the arts and the creative process.

# VISION

* To create a rich and dynamic intellectual ecosystem that fosters excellence in teaching and learning, in research and creative practice, and in exhibition and presentation across the arts and design, thereby positioning the College, our units, their programs, and individual faculty, and staff, and students as present and future leaders and forces for creative change in their fields.
* To play in important role in fostering community and economic development by equipping our students for success and adaptability in life and careers, and by creating a vibrant cultural destination in the center region of the Commonwealth.
* To foster a culture that embraces diversity by demonstrating respect for differences in culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ways of knowing and understanding the world, and by encouraging intercultural experiences and affirming the value of differing perspectives within and between our disciplines.

# VALUES

Our mission and vision are rooted in the Penn State Values, though we also desire to develop ways to ensure these “words” are backed by our “actions.”

**INTEGRITY**: We act with integrity in accordance with the highest academic, professional, and ethical standards.

**RESPECT**: We respect and honor the dignity of each person, embrace civil discourse, and foster a diverse and inclusive community.

**RESPONSIBILITY**: We act responsibly and hold ourselves accountable for our decisions, actions, and their consequences.

**DISCOVERY**: We seek and create new knowledge and understanding, and foster creativity and innovation, for the benefit of our communities, society, and the environment.

**EXCELLENCE**: We strive for excellence in all our endeavors as individuals, an institution, and a leader in higher education.

**COMMUNITY**: We are Penn State, one University geographically dispersed, committed to our common values and mission, working together for the betterment of the University and the communities we serve and to which we belong.

## 2015-20 ASPIRATIONAL GOAL

***Making the Arts and Design Central to Penn State***

The arts and design disciplines offer timely answers to timeless questions, helping us understand what it means to be human. Rooted in ways of knowing that connect mind and body, our disciplines teach the eye to see, the ear to hear, and the heart to feel. They foster imagination and innovation, which form the essential foundation of nearly all human thought and the scientific and social progress that has accompanied it. And, in an increasingly diverse world, engagement with the arts and design disciplines plays a vital role in creating an educated and humane citizenry, while also providing an important means of achieving community and economic development.

***Guided by these principles, our goal for 2020 is to ensure that the arts and design disciplines become, and are recognized as, core elements of the Penn State identity and experience.***

Indicators of our success in reaching this goal will include:

1. Our ***research and creative practice*** is, and is recognized as, central to the Penn State research mission, valued for both its intrinsic merit and its significant role in university-wide collaborations and initiatives. ***[Continue to track A&A research through a wide range of metrics, with particular emphasis on A&A participation in large interdisciplinary research projects and on frequency and quality of A&A research presence in university and national websites and publications; create additional research centers to better coordinate and highlight research activity.]***

2. Our ***courses and academic programs***—in our disciplines and in the university’s General Education curriculum—are, and are viewed as, models of pedagogical excellence and innovation at Penn State and beyond. ***[Continue to monitor shifting enrollment patterns in majors, minors, certificates, and GA courses; measure pedagogical effectiveness of GA courses by adding specific SRTE questions; develop workshops with Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence to promote pedagogical excellence and transfer arts-based pedagogies into other knowledge domains; track accomplishments of students, and career placement and path of alumni through on-going participation in the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) and other means.]***

*3.* ***Students—regardless of major or program of study—identify “the arts”*** as influencing their decision to attend Penn State, and upon graduation understand arts experiences as having helped prepare them to succeed in their chosen careers and to be educated, humane citizens. ***[Hire Assistant to the Dean for Student and Community Engagement, charged with designing goals and metrics; collaborate with LIVE IT project coordinators (Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center, SSRI) to incorporate arts experiences for non-A&A freshman as a pilot for assessing student attitudes towards, and participation in, the arts by non-majors; track attendance at arts events and enrollments by non-majors in our general arts courses and in minor and certificate programs; add questions to the Student Experience survey re: creative thinking abilities and enhanced understanding and appreciation for the arts; work with Student Affairs and the umbrella Performing Arts Student organization to identify and define criteria for “arts-related” groups at PSU, followed by tracking levels of participation over time; collect data and analyze trends regarding the number of non-majors taking part in A&A faculty-led arts organizations (e.g. Blue Band, Essence of Joy, etc.).]***

4. Working in concert with University and Centre region leaders and decision-makers, we will create ***a significant cultural destination for the Commonwealth*** in the Centre Region. ***[Assess increased square footage for arts exhibitions, performances, and events, and for “maker” space both in State College and at University Park; track number of events and audiences in arts spaces; track press coverage and impact of these activities.]***

## 2015-20 SUPPORTING GOALS, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS, AND INDICATORS

To achieve our aspirational goal of “Making the Arts and Design Central to Penn State,” we will pursue four supporting goals. These are outlined below, along with strategies and actions for achieving them and measures for knowing if we have succeeded in doing so.

### SUPPORTING GOAL 1 Create Transformative Experiences for Students

*The college embraces its dual mission to prepare students for careers in the arts and design disciplines and to provide meaningful experiences for all students through our general education courses, as well as our performances, exhibitions, and other programs. As the arts disappear from K-12 education (and none are required for admission to the University), we must ensure that all students are afforded opportunities for transformative engagement—in the classroom/studio and beyond—with the arts and design disciplines. Such engagement not only has intrinsic merit, but also facilitates the development of important values and life skills with wide-ranging applications, including intellectual risk-taking, self-expression, empathy, materials-based inquiry, cultural competency, respect for difference and diversity, and visual and aural literacy that is crucial in our media saturated culture. To create the highest quality experiences for students, we will:*

**1.1** Play a central role in shaping and delivering the university’s General Education curriculum by offering courses that are relevant to the lives and experiences of our students, and that equip them to attain their professional and personal aspirations, regardless of major. ***[Support the A&A Faculty Council in creating and implementing a General Education Committee, and charge this committee with advising on GA excellence, using as a point of departure the recommendations of A&A Gen Ed working group (April 2015); provide resources and incentives to support innovative curriculum development in response to university-wide General Education reforms; continue to track data found in 2014 college study of GA enrollment trends and use to inform resource allocation; take additional actions / track indicators listed under “Aspirational Goal, part 2,” including SRTE questions specific to A&A GA courses to measure effectiveness in meeting this objective.]***

**1.2** Assume a leadership role in the emerging field of Arts Entrepreneurship in order to equip our students for a wide spectrum of careers in, and related to, the arts. ***[Create and implement Arts Entrepreneurship minor and programming under the leadership of new faculty member in AE, assess using SRTEs and student surveys, monitor enrollment, create and arts business plan competition, and track alumni.]***

**1.3** Offer the highest quality graduate training and placement in light of the shifting university priorities and national trends, the 2011 Core Council Report, and limited college resources.

***[In concert with unit leaders, track number of applicants, selectivity, placement, and accomplishments to inform decisions about reallocation of limited resources; work more concertedly to improve program rankings; devise strategies to assist graduates in identifying and securing employment in non-traditional fields; raise level of financial support for graduate students to match Graduate School guidelines; make graduate support a “top-three” priority for the next capital campaign.]***

**1.4** Address the important role of diversity in our educational processes, both inside and outside the classroom, preparing students to thrive in an increasingly globalized world. ***[Emphasize engaged scholarship, study abroad, and other opportunities for cultural competency and interchange, measuring increase over time; work actively to recruit and retain faculty and students from diverse backgrounds, setting goals and tracking success; use faculty processes to assess curriculum within each program in the College for diversity content; program performances, exhibitions, and lectures that foster discussion about issues around diversity; pursue the myriad of other strategies outlined in our 2015-20 “Strategies for Fostering Diversity” document, formulated by the College Diversity Committee and conceptualized in relation to the Penn State “Framework for Diversity.”]***

**1.5** Continue to innovate in on-line education for both residential and World Campus instruction, and diversify our portfolio of courses and programs. ***[Identify and develop 4-6 new online programs, including a mix of undergraduate and graduate-level degrees as well as certificates; grow online enrollments at a strong pace, anticipated to be 12-18% annually through 2020; explore online program options in multidisciplinary areas, in collaboration with partners from other Penn State colleges; evaluate support resources, both financial and personnel, to create structures for identifying, developing, and delivering new online programs.]***

### SUPPORTING GOAL 2: Maximize the Visibility of the Arts and Design at Penn State and Beyond

*In support of our aspirational goal of ensuring that “the arts and design disciplines become, and are recognized as, core elements of the Penn State identity and experience,” we will increase the college’s visibility at multiple scales. As part of this effort, the College will work with University and community leaders to help our region increasingly become an important cultural destination in the center of the Commonwealth. Strategies to achieve this goal will include:*

**2.1** Better define the college’s identity by promoting core values and signature activities and events that transcend our individual disciplines and units. ***[Develop and implement a comprehensive A&A brand and communication strategy; make five “transformative hires” to support key initiatives that transcend individual units and programs, and that place A&A in a position of international leadership; create signature campus arts events, such as fall artsUP celebration (piloting in 2015) and Blue/White weekend cultural events, such as 2015 “Julius Caesar,” and measure impact; assess and measure impact of College’s involvement in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia Penn State Centers.]***

**2.2** Sustain our leadership role in key national organizations. ***[Incentivize and reward A&A faculty and administrators for leadership roles in national and international organizations, accrediting agencies, etc., and track numbers; continue to play a leadership role in the Alliance for Arts in Research Universities.]***

**2.3** Increase our research profile and expenditures, particularly in sponsored research and nationally competitive fellowships for faculty. ***[Increase research expenditures from $1.4 to $2 million by 2020; continue to invest in the Research Office’s pre-award infrastructure in order to encourage and support funding applications, tracking effect on submissions and success rate; create incentives for, and track number of, first-time grant applicants; collaborate with PSU Corporate and Foundation Relations to secure research funding and measure impact in terms of submissions and funds, and track progress in this area; ensure that A&A faculty members apply for major national fellowships every year, tracking applications and success rate, and continuing to subsidize successful applications;*** ***create and implement effective communications strategies to publicize A&A faculty research activities; devise non-monetary metrics that effectively capture the scope and impact of A&A research and creative activities.]***

**2.4** Increase the quality and raise the profile of our graduate and undergraduate research and creative activity. ***[Continue to extend Research Office resources and services to graduate students—and possibly to undergraduates—tracking effect; increase A&A participation in the graduate and undergraduate exhibitions, particularly in the poster sessions; increase travel funds to allow graduate students to take advantage of increasing opportunities for presenting their work and track ROI in terms of awards, etc.; ensure that students apply for, and are competitive for, PSU and national fellowships, tracking applications and success rate; create and implement effective communications strategies to publicize A&A student research accomplishments.]***

**2.5** Establish strategies and mechanisms to most effectively communicate with our multiple constituencies at the university and beyond. ***[Effectively use web and social media by tracking and setting goals for website traffic, Facebook activity, followers of twitter feeds, viewers of YouTube channel, etc.; extend livestreaming from School of Music concerts to other A&A performances, events, and lectures to the extent possible in light of copyright and other restrictions, and set targets for viewership.]***

**2.6** Continue to advocate for our facilities needs outlined in the A&A Master Plan, and for recognition of, and support for, for the “Arts District” on the University Park campus. ***[Work with university administrators to ensure that the A&A Master Plan continues to be implemented in a timely manner (See: opp.psu.edu/planning-construction/master-plans/university-park-campus-master-plan/college-of-arts-architecture-master-plan); implement the recommendations of the A&A Arts District Working Group (April 2015).]***

**2.7** Explore opportunities to work with administrators, faculty, and staff at Commonwealth campuses in order to create a vibrant cultural destination in the center region of Pennsylvania. ***[Use livestreaming to extend UP arts programming to Commonwealth campuses and track viewership (as was done with “Julius Caesar”); consider opportunities for engaging campus audiences through touring live performances (as was done with “Blood at the Root”); identify and pursue opportunities to engage Commonwealth campus faculty in arts research (as in EPA-funded Green Infrastructures and NSF-funded Origami Project), creating a target for such collaborations; explore opportunities for collaboration on curriculum initiatives, building on recently conducted consultation for courses and programs in arts administration, digital media, arts entrepreneurship, and arts in healthcare.]***

### SUPPORTING GOAL 3 Engage Communities Through Research, Curricula, and Arts Presentation

*We are visual and performing artists, design practitioners and researchers, humanists and curators, and social and environmental scientists. Our research and creative practices generate new knowledge through narratives, objects, exhibitions, images, movements, sounds, landscapes, performances, structures, and texts. We create meaning and recognize patterns. We interpret the past, make sense of the present, and shape the future. Our work is crucial to the university’s mission as a research-intensive, public, land-grant university, and we will continue to pursue and support research and creative activity of the highest quality and impact across the diverse range of our disciplines.*

*The arts and design disciplines will play a crucial role as the University positions itself as a key component in economic development for Pennsylvania. The 2012 report of Americans for the Arts, Arts & Economic Prosperity IV in the State of Pennsylvania (which includes Penn State arts organizations) demonstrates that “the nonprofit arts and culture are a $2.55 billion industry in the State of Pennsylvania—one that supports 81,061 full-time equivalent jobs and generates $360 million in local and state government revenue. Nonprofit arts and culture organizations, which spend $1.47 billion annually, leverage a remarkable $1.07 billion in additional spending by arts and culture audiences—spending that pumps vital revenue into local restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and parking garages, and other businesses.” In fact, communities that support the arts and culture “are investing in an industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue, and is a cornerstone of tourism.” In other words, “the arts mean business” (*[*Arts & Economic Prosperity in PA 2012*](http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1102230218064-103/PA_StateOfPennsylvania_AEP4_FinalReport.pdf)*.)*

*A particular point of focus during this planning period will be community-engaged research and creative practice in close alignment with teaching and presentation. The arts and design disciplines offer a compelling site for exploring complex economic, political, social, and cultural issues. Moreover, engaged learning is in the DNA of arts education, which often requires students to perform and design for community audiences. Therefore, the college is well positioned to play an important role in meaningful and transformative public engagement, which lies at the heart of the land-grant mission in the 21st century. In order to do so, we will:*

**3.1** Actively pursue opportunities to play a significant role in university-wide research initiatives with community impact on regional, national, and international scales, and when possible take on a leading role in such opportunities. ***[Establish the Arts & Design Research Incubator as a catalyst for interdisciplinary arts research and track impact based on number of collaborative projects, submissions, ROI, scholarly / creative accomplishments (exhibitions, performances, publications, etc.), attendance at events, etc.; create working group of A&A center directors in order to strategically pursue major sponsored research funding, tracking impact in terms of submissions and success rate; more effectively integrate A&A faculty into PSU research institutes, especially PSIEE, MRI, Rock Ethics Institute, and Sustainability Institute, through affiliate status and joint hires; establish Borland Project Space to promote research A&A research culture, tracking number of projects and events, number of visitors, resultant grants and collaborations, and scholarly / creative accomplishments.]***

**3.2** Leverage our considerable expertise in communication and expression to assist a range of university partners in translating and disseminating scientific and social science research to a broad public. In an iterative process, understanding and measuring the effects of such dissemination will feed back into arts and design practices and research. ***[Collaborate with PSIEE and others on a proposed scientific communication initiative; establish (with many other PSU partners) a Center for Imaging Innovation.]***

**3.3** Create arts presentation programming that addresses important contemporary issues and problems, and seek curricular and co-curricular partners from across the university in order to create opportunities for broad, campus-wide and community engagement. ***[Hire Assistant to the Dean for Student and Community Engagement; build on very successful partnerships created through Marcellus Documentary Project (2014), Classical Music Project (2013-present), and the Nile Project (2015), undertaking five such projects by 2020; measure impact through surveys of faculty and students, tracking attendance at performances and participation in residency programs, and seek feedback from participating artists and partners.]***

**3.4** Support and grow research and creative practice that explores core behaviors in arts and design disciplines—including creativity, innovation, risk-taking, self-expression, and interpersonal communication—that have the possibility of transforming professional fields such as health care, law, and business. ***[Pursue development of an “Arts in Healthcare” initiative in collaboration with Hershey Medical School, Mt. Nittany Medical Center, and UP partners, with strands connected to curriculum (for Hershey and UP students), research, and arts programming; explore feasibility of possible collaborations with the Smeal College of Business and the Law School.]***

**3.5** Maintain and enhance our leadership role at Penn State and beyond in research, teaching, and outreach that engages with sustainability. ***[Support and showcase the many sustainability initiatives in the Departments of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, including the new faculty collective, “Water X Design” in Landscape Architecture, the Sustainability Research Cluster in Architecture, and the Energy Efficient Housing Research Group; work with institute directors to identify opportunities for, and encourage, increased faculty collaboration with PSIEE, Sustainability Institute, etc.; play an active role in the new Water Institute; encourage continued and expanded faculty and student research and creative practice that engages with issues of sustainability; evaluate and institute changes in arts infrastructure that would result in energy and cost savings, such as use of LED bulbs in exhibition and performance venues; adopt business and operational processes aimed at reducing resource consumption.]***

**3.6** Employ arts entrepreneurship to further President Barron’s “Invent Penn State” initiative and of using the arts as a means to spur economic development and investment in the Centre region and the Commonwealth. ***[Incubate and track student start-ups; engage with existing student entrepreneurship infrastructure; explore feasibility of creating a student run-arts venture; create A&A faculty working group to foster entrepreneurial activity.]***

### SUPPORTING GOAL 4 Lead in Technology in the Arts and Design Disciplines

*Information technology is essential to arts and design pedagogy, research and creative practice, and presentation. While recognizing the reality of limited budgets and the need to identify additional resources, we will be aggressive in incorporating leading-edge technology in our activities, and will do so without losing sight of the value of traditional media, materials, tools, and experiences. We will aspire to a position of IT leadership at Penn State and nationally among peer institutions of arts and design. With these aims in mind, we will:*

**4.1** Make certain that our students, faculty, and staff have access to, training in, and ample opportunities for exploration with and training in leading-edge technologies relevant to their fields of study and professional goals. ***[Secure stable internal and external forms of funding (not simply one-time or startup funds) to ensure that our programs, people, and the technology remain current; maintain regular replacement plan for studio and classroom technology; design and implement innovative technology rich programs in targeted areas of strength and demand, such as BA in Music with concentration in Music Technology, online Bachelor of Design (B.Des.) in Digital Media Design, and online M.P.S. in Geodesign, tracking enrollments and placement rates; continue to create opportunities for student engagement in A&A research centers and create assessment mechanisms to evaluate; Explore and implement the most effective strategies for supporting the IT research needs of faculty and students; establish a service catalog that defines ownership of various services and clarifies training resources.]***

**4.2** Link technology-centric teaching, research, and arts presentation initiatives and infrastructures across the College so as to maximize impact, create efficiencies, and identify gaps and opportunities. In the process, we will strengthen connections between college technology initiatives and university-wide ones. ***[Create working group of A&A center directors to enable and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration within and beyond A&A; charge A&A Faculty Council Committee on Educational Resources, Information Systems, and Technology with administering a teaching, research, and outreach grants program, and track the impact; explore creation of a university-wide Center for Imaging Innovation, and if created, track its impact; collaborate with the Center for Humanities and Information, PSU Libraries, and other partners to identify and explore areas of shared interest in digital scholarship across the humanities; evaluate the creation of position of AAIT Associate Director for Research; develop a prioritized plan to improve the quality and flexibility of IT infrastructure, learning settings and instructional technologies in order to enhance quality in curriculum, research, and outreach; identify, consolidate, and share resource services, facilities, and workspaces that contribute to ‘maker communities’ within the college and across the campus; support collaborative projects such as publicly accessible online databases that feature the strategic deployment of technology to meet outreach goals.]***

**4.3** Develop interconnections at the college level between e-learning, web design and communication, information technology, and research so as to strengthen each of these functions. ***[Establish a leadership team from eLearning Institute, Communication Office, and AAIT that meets on a regular basis to share information and coordinate efforts; charge directors of AAIT and the eLearning Institute with building and adapting IT infrastructure to allow for exploration into new methods for teaching and research.]***

**4.4** Through the activities of our eLearning Institute, maintain our position of leadership in on-line teaching and learning at Penn State and extend this leadership nationally. ***[Expand and continue to co-host annual Designs on eLearning conference (the only conference dedicated exclusively to online and technology for teaching and learning in the arts and design disciplines), adding 5 additional institutional partners and growing attendance by 15% per year through 2020; present papers at one international and two national conferences per year; continuously enhance our award-winning course technology platform, used by multiple colleges across PSU.]***

**4.5** Exert a greater influence at the university level in order have a hand in shaping technology

policy, particularly as it relates to teaching and research. ***[Ensure active A&A representation on University wide committees and initiatives such as the Advisory Group for Research Computing Governance, and the Information Technology Leadership Council, and effective information flow from and to College and unit committees and leaders.]***

### A Note on Outcomes Assessment of Student Learning

Although outcomes assessment of student learning is not mentioned in the narrative of our plan, it is a matter that the college continues to monitor and address. In addition to meeting the standards of seven disciplinary accrediting organizations that review programs in the college, our academic units also continue to work on plans for assessment of student learning objectives as required by the university, but are encouraged to develop strategies that support reporting expectations of both the campus assessment committee and accreditation review boards. Some units are choosing to assess proficiency with skills and knowledge gained in foundation courses, other are developing initiatives around cumulative experiences gained within a year or as part of capstone projects, using portfolio reviews, exhibitions and/or juried presentations.