



June 3, 2021

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students:

I write to share with you some important news regarding the School of Arts & Sciences.

Dr. Patrice Rankine, dean of the School of Arts & Sciences, will step down from his appointment, effective July 1, to assume the position of tenured professor in the Department of Classics in the Division of the Humanities at the University of Chicago.

Dean Rankine has been an ardent advocate for and leader of the School of Arts & Sciences and of the University. He has attracted and nurtured a vibrant faculty, developed new academic programs and departments, and fostered student success. He has played an important role in helping the University address the challenges of COVID-19. And he has maintained an important voice in pressing national issues and debates in his field.

During his tenure as dean, Dr. Rankine made a priority of building a thriving and inclusive community; prioritizing stewardship in a changing world; and supporting academic excellence, collaboration, and faculty recruitment and development. He initiated a yearly State of the School Address; launched the Dean's Digest newsletter; energized A&S Next; initiated a pilot diversity position in A&S; and restructured staff in the dean's office, including an improved financial operations position, which led to better support in the divisions. Collaboration efforts centered on a strategic plan for the school, called Concept 30, new shared governance structures, establishment of the Health Studies department and the Africana Studies interdisciplinary academic program of study, and initiating the restructuring of the Modlin mission. More than three dozen new faculty were hired and more than fifty faculty members were tenured and promoted while he served as dean.

Dr. Daniel Palazzolo, associate dean in the School of Arts & Sciences and professor of political science, has agreed to serve as the interim dean. Plans to search for a new dean are in development and will be announced later this summer.

I know that you join me in extending our thanks and wishing Patrice the very best in all his future plans.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Legro
Executive Vice President and Provost