Purpose

The College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) is arguably the most diverse College at the ANU, bringing together more than 20 disciplines, from Philosophy to Music, Anthropology to Arabic and Political Science to Ancient History. CASS has restructured into two Research Schools (Research School of Humanities and the Arts and Research School of Social Sciences) and the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute (ADSRI), with 12 disciplinary and interdisciplinary clusters that constitute the core of the College’s research and education activity. This strategic plan reflects the College’s diversity, as well as the fact that integration is still ongoing.

Vision

• To lead Australia in fundamental, strategic and applied research and education in the humanities, social sciences and the creative arts.
• To produce internationally outstanding research in our disciplines and interdisciplinary fields.
• To generate work which has a significant impact on political, cultural and social debate in Australian society, in particular by contributing to areas of national priority.

Mission

• To conduct world class research in selected fields by building critical mass in selected areas excelling in theoretical, empirical and applied research.
• To strengthen the quantity and quality of research performance in order to increase the impact of the college’s work on national and international scholarly debates.
• To produce outstanding work addressing key social, human and cultural issues for Australia and, thus, play a key part in the re-invigorated strategic relationship between the ANU and the Australian Government.
• To extend knowledge through specific themes and capabilities by fostering a culture of collaboration across disciplinary areas, and across the academic community, both national and international.
• To further develop innovative research practices and networks, particularly by becoming a global leader in the use of digital technology in research.
• To play a leading role in the transfer of intellectual capital through both research intensive education, throughout the spectrum of undergraduate and graduate programs, and a strong culture of community outreach and engagement.
CAPABILITY

The College has three core strengths:

- the range and depth of its disciplines;
- the capacity to draw on these disciplines, to conduct vibrant, innovative, interdisciplinary research that address the social, economic and human issues facing Australia;
- major research centres, with active engagement with governments, and NGOs, who have a record of applied research.

The College has 286 equivalent full-time academic staff. It has the largest cohort of undergraduate students (n=2,459) and a significant number of higher degree by research students (n=300). It is highly complex with some disciplines that are largely practice-based, such as Visual Arts and Music, and others which are much more theoretical, such as Philosophy. These clusters have sufficient critical mass to sustain educational and research quality in the following disciplines:

- Anthropology and Archaeology
- Art
- Cultural Inquiry (including Classics and Literature)
- Demographic and Social Research
- History
- Languages and Linguistics
- Music
- Philosophy
- Politics and International Relations
- Sociology

Four centres are smaller, but with a focus on a distinct and important area:

- Aboriginal and Economic Research
- Arabic and Islamic Studies
- Policy Innovation
- Educational Research

The College budget has largely been driven by undergraduate enrolments, with 52% of the recurrent budget coming from HECS/CGS. Of the current budget (excluding Q accounts), 21% is from external grants/consultancies. Since 2002, the College has held 3 Federation Fellows, hosted 1 Centre of Excellence and has had involvement in 1 other. The College secured four ARC Future Fellowships in the scheme’s first round; a success rate of double the national average for arts and social sciences.

Research in the College covers a large number of disciplines reflecting the need to provide students with a diverse and intellectually challenging degree. There are a number of areas of disciplinary excellence, which the College will retain and grow. However, the future strength of the College’s research also depends crucially on the contribution of the enabling disciplines to interdisciplinary research focused on areas of national priority. At present, the College focuses on 7 key interdisciplinary themes:
✓ Comparative Public Policy, Government and International Relations
✓ Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time
✓ Globalisation and Population Dynamics of Australia
✓ Indigenous Societies, Art and Culture
✓ Lives, Literature, Languages
✓ Practice-Led Research
✓ Public and Private Reasoning

These themes are not intended to be permanent; rather they will change over time, to reflect emerging disciplinary debates, changing national priorities and the strengths of our enabling disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas.

The College also has a significant role in policy development and has major outreach into the broader national and international community. This is reflected by the large number of media mentions by staff working in the College.

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

The College has a strong reputation based largely on the quality of its staff. In addition, we benefit significantly from our location in Canberra and the excellent links that have developed over time with government, NGOs, national cultural institutions and embassies.

However, there are a number of both internal and external strategic challenges.

*External Challenges*

The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) initiative represents a major shift in the way universities in Australia will measure and assess research performance. Currently, funding from government is focused on a quantum of research grant income, HDR completions and the number of publications. In response the University has rewarded the constituent parts of the College for attracting increased research funds from external sources and for producing more publications. The metrics-driven ERA will place more emphasis on the quality of publications, measured largely in terms of a ranking of journals.

While innovative research is increasingly interdisciplinary and undertaken in teams, the ERA is strongly discipline focused. We will address this potential problem in two main ways. First, we will build critical mass in core disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas, recognizing that, as a result of disciplinary and area performance reviews, we may need to redeploy resources and funding from areas that are not outstanding in research and education to either areas of identified strength or emerging ‘new’ areas. However, we will also encourage additional interdisciplinary work through the College themes. This will be achieved by a strategic fund to support theme coordinators and interdisciplinary projects.

*Internal challenges*

A quarter of the College staff (in the Visual Arts, Music and Drama) have historically been engaged in practice-led education in which the emphasis has been on
performance and professional practice, rather than on traditional research outcomes. However, the recognition of creative practice outcomes in the ERA provides the Schools of Art and Music with opportunities to position themselves as national leaders in Creative Arts research. This repositioning will require cultural change and staff development, which will be achieved through performance review and mentoring. The School of Music recently securing an ARC Future Fellowship has exemplified this shift.

The nature of research and education is being transformed by digital technology. Building core IT infrastructure and capacity in digital technology will be essential if the college is to excel in all of its key areas of strength. This will require a significant deployment of resources to the college’s under-funded IT infrastructure and support capability. We will achieve this through utilizing 50% of RIBG funds to support IT infrastructure.

Increasing the number of postgraduate students is a priority for the University. Attracting and retaining such students will require the college to focus on the links between the undergraduate and postgraduate research programs. This will be achieved through exposing students to our leading researchers through guest lectures and supervision of PhD students, highlighting our research excellence to students in their undergraduate curriculum, and targeting PhD students in third year for retention into the PhD program.

The College’s physical infrastructure will be a significant factor in achieving effective integration and attracting and retaining HDR students. Co-location of staff from the same academic units and the provision of high quality graduate accommodation and learning spaces are essential.

A significant challenge, confronting the higher education sector more broadly, is the planning of succession of academic staff who are nearing the end of their careers. We will need to engage in a process of renewal that is targeted in our areas of strength and strategic priority. This will involve targeted external recruitment, mentoring of our early career researchers and supporting and developing the talent of our mid range staff for future leadership roles across the college.

**Sustainability**

Sustainability will be based on first indentifying excellence, strategic funding priorities and outreach activity.

- Excellence will identified through:
  - Membership of the IAS;
  - Benchmarking our disciplines and interdisciplinary areas against national and international competitors;
  - Conducting discipline-specific and school reviews;
  - Developing operational plans in 2010 at the AOU level within the new Research Schools and in ADSRI.

- Strategic funding priorities will be driven through a number of College strategic funds to: facilitate digital research and publishing; promote
interdisciplinary work; and maintain international linkages through a strong visitors program.

- An outreach operational plan will be formalized during 2010 by the Outreach Sub-Committee of CASS Research Committee. This will include:
  - Performance indicators for outreach activity, including: public seminars/lectures/exhibitions and concerts; hosting conferences in areas of strategic strength; and securing external sponsorship for outreach activity;
  - Increased engagement with graduates through the alumni via representation of the college at university alumni events. We will hold one alumni event per year;
  - Increased engagement with the Australian Government, through: public lectures in areas of national priority; maintaining membership of Australia and New Zealand School Of Government (ANZSOG); tendering for consultancy in the disciplinary areas of excellence.

- Future undergraduate and postgraduate education programs will be built around existing research excellence and strategic future directions.

The CASS Executive and the CASS Research and Education Committees will ensure the development of a culture that emphasizes high levels of performance in all areas of the College. To this end, the CASS Executive will develop and use defined metrics, appropriate for each discipline, to evaluate performance.

The College will encourage higher levels of performance by: funding competitive internal seeding grants; mentoring; and peer-reviewing potential grant applications. The aim is to build a diversified funding portfolio in support of research and education programs.

In 2010, CASS will implement costing and pricing models currently being worked on to ensure the sustainability of research. The models will cover research, outreach and engagement and research consultancies.

The College is committed to research-intensive education; a principle that will inform all future decisions about all education programs.

**Strategies and actions**

To achieve the CASS vision, six major strategies will be pursued and annually reviewed. These strategies are:

1. *Maintaining and Building Research Excellence*
2. *Driving Quality Performance*
3. *Developing Innovative Research Practices and Networks*
4. *Linking High Quality Research and Education*
5. *Active Program of Engagement and Outreach*
6. *Making Infrastructure More Productive*

These strategies underpin our research vision. They are supported by a range of actions. The linkage between vision, strategy and action is visually represented in Figure 1.
Figure 1: Alignment of College Research Vision, Strategies and Actions

**Vision**
To lead Australia in fundamental, strategic and applied research and education in the humanities, social sciences and creative arts.

**Research Strategies**
1. Maintaining and Building Research Excellence
2. Developing Innovative Research Practices and Networks
3. Driving Quality Performance

**Actions**
- Building critical mass
- Identifying strategic priorities
- Research and education performance
- Recruiting and retaining talent
- Encouraging early career researchers

**Enabling Strategies**
5. Linking High Quality Research and Education
6. Making IT infrastructure More Productive

**To produce internationally outstanding scholars in our disciplines and interdisciplinary fields.**

**4. Active program of Engagement and Outreach**
- Develop criteria to assess impact, engagement and outreach activity
- Integrate the CASS website
- Engage in media and public lectures
- Host key conferences

**To generate work which has a significant impact on political, cultural and social debate in Australian society, in particular contributing to areas of national priority.**

5. Linking High Quality Research and Education
6. Making IT infrastructure More Productive
1. Maintaining and Building Research Excellence

**Aims**

To complete the integration process and ensure that this contributes to maintaining and building research excellence.

To build research excellence at the highest international standards we need to identify and maintain existing areas of research excellence, identify strategic areas that require targeted investment and anticipate emerging areas for future development.

**Actions**

a) Five of the restructured discipline (Schools) involve a blending of different departments and programs, which will require significant cultural adjustment during 2010. The Directors of the Research Schools will closely monitor the transition and work with the new heads of the AOU's to ensure this is successful. Co-location will be critical to their success.

b) We have critical mass in our key disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas, but, progressively, we shall establish research priorities. Planning forums and strategic reviews in the areas of History, Sociology, Political Science and IR, Philosophy, have been completed. Outcomes from these forums will strongly influence future appointments in these disciplines. In the next phase Anthropology and Archaeology, Drama, Linguistics, Languages, Literature and Art History will be reviewed.

c) As Australia’s national university, a major focus of our research activity will remain on Australia in historical, regional and global contexts. Within this we will:

- retain and develop our strong focus on Indigenous Studies, particularly through the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), the Australian Centre for Indigenous History and Anthropology, as well as enhance our strong links to the Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Charles Darwin University.

- retain and develop our strong focus on Australia through:
  - our centres of disciplinary excellence in Political Science, History, Sociology, Demography, Literature, Art History and Anthropology;
  - our links to the national cultural institutions including the National Museum, the National Gallery and the National Library, through the Masters of Liberal Arts, the Visual and Creative arts and Digital Humanities scholarship;  
  - developing virtual institutes in identified areas of national priority like the National Institute for Regional and Regional Australia;  
  - maintaining our links with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

- retain and develop our focus on the Asia Pacific region and our links to the College of Asia and Pacific, particularly through joint masters programs.
• retain and develop our focus on the study and research of European languages, social, cultural, political and historical institutions and events.
• develop our emerging strengths in Latin America through supporting ANCLAS.
• strengthen our focus on environmental issues, in part through co-operation with other areas of the University, notably the Fenner School.

These priorities will play a role in informing appointments.

We will review existing college research themes and consider new themes in the first half of 2010. To encourage and support interdisciplinary activity through the College’s Research Themes, a fund of $150,000 per annum will be established: initially $10,000 will be made available to each Research Theme to fund their activity, while the other $80,000 will be available to the Chair of the Research Committee to provide seed funding for collaborative interdisciplinary research projects related to the Themes.

We will build and maintain relationships with external bodies and the CASS Research Office will continue to play a facilitating role in this process, for example, through ARC Linkage projects involving a diverse range of external partners.

2. Driving Quality Performance

Aim

The College aims to have more scholars who are leaders in their fields and to develop early career researchers as the next generation of leaders.

It is crucial to attract, appoint and retain high quality, innovative researchers if the college is to maintain its national and international reputation. In an increasingly competitive employment environment, this will be a significant challenge.

2.1 General Performance

Actions

a) During 2010 CASS will develop discipline-specific performance targets for our academic units. These will cover: the number and quality of publications; research income; and HDR supervision and completion. These targets will recognise the differing contributions of individuals and units within the College.

b) All individual performance agreements will be revised to reflect the agreed performance criteria for their discipline. This will be implemented in 2010/2011 as part of the University’s biennial performance review cycle.

c) CASS will retain and ensure a strategic focus in the Visiting Fellowship program to sustain and enhance the quality of our research profile, our national and international links and our research culture. The College will allocate $300,000 annually across both Research Schools to support this activity.
d) The College will support the emerging area of practice-led research as part of the integration of the Schools of Art and Music into the Research School of Humanities and the Arts. The first step has been undertaken with the creation of the Institute for Professional Practice in Heritage and the Arts.

e) Building on its recent successes, the College seeks to improve its record of securing external funding from the ARC and other bodies. The College Research Office will play a key role in this process. Our Research Office staff will continue to collaborate closely with academic colleagues and assist them in identifying funding opportunities and developing high-quality project proposals in strategic areas. Applicants will be offered internal peer reviews and on-going support over the life of a grant and beyond.

2.2 Recruiting and Retaining Talent

Actions

a) The College will develop appropriate incentives to support and reward high achieving research staff. This will be reflected in workload allocation and in providing a fund to support research activity from 50% of the RIBG earned by the college.

b) In order to support future excellent appointments, vacant positions (through resignation or retirement) will revert to the college and will be allocated largely on the basis of research performance and planning.

c) Directors of Research Schools and ADSRI and the Chair of the CASS Research Committee will identify and proactively encourage outstanding researchers to apply for the ARC’s Future Fellowship scheme. There will be a target of two applications annually.

d) Research Schools and ADSRI will take account of the need to balance the staff career profile when making recruitment decisions. In addition, those staff nearing the end of careers will be encouraged to discuss with their supervisors their role, their discipline and how they engage with the University

2.3 Encouraging Early Career Researchers

Actions

a) Directors of the Research Schools and ADSRI will ask senior staff to identify strategic collaborative opportunities with ECRs, as part of the performance review process.

b) The Research Office will continue to support the recruitment of ECRs through externally funded grants. A panel of College academics with significant experience of successful grant applications to advise ECRs will be established in 2010.

c) The Research Schools will participate in the College’s Mentoring Program for ECRs. The College will contribute an annual allocation of at least $5000 towards the program which will commence in 2010.

d) ECRs who apply for promotion will be mentored by a senior academic who will advise on their application.
3. Developing Innovative Research Practices and Networks

**Aims**

Establishing the College as a leader in the use of digital technology.
Developing and supporting virtual Centres in key strategic areas.

3.1. Actions in Relation to Digital Technology

i) Innovation

a) The College has established a Digital Humanities Research Hub, with recurrent funding of $400,000 to generate innovative E-Research and Digital Scholarship projects and to support existing projects.

b) To increase visibility of research through digital scholarship the College will allocate $100,000 over 3 years to support e-publishing.

ii) Awareness

We will organize a one-day forum in 2010 to showcase work from projects that have applied for funding in the 2009 Digital Scholarship and E-Research round and also other major relevant initiatives across CASS.

iii) Capacity-Building

a) We will establish a college-wide training and mentoring program through short orientation courses on key conceptual and methodological aspects of digital scholarship.

b) We will more effectively market courses already on offer at RSH and ADSRI through redesigning the college website in 2010 and undertaking a detailed analysis of source countries for courses to inform a targeted recruitment strategy for the next 3 years.

c) We will continue to support the Education Design Studio through funding of an educational design specialist and an IT technologist.

iv) Intersections

We will ensure that all CASS research themes have a digital scholarship component.

v) Partnerships

We will provide seed funding of $100,000 annually for internal competitive grants to foster new and developing partnerships across the college’s disciplinary areas of strengths.

vi) Dissemination

a) We will encourage staff to publish or co-badge publications through ANU E-Press. The College will provide additional resources of $100,000 to E-Publishing for 2010-2012.

b) We will encourage staff to lodge all publications with the ANU’s open repository. The research office will provide an on-going education campaign
across the college as to the benefits of maximizing impact of individual research through open repositories.

c) We will ensure that supervision at all levels includes raising awareness of staff and graduate students to the benefits of e-publishing in addition to publishing through more conventional academic presses. As part of this initiative, we will allocate a prize of $5,000 to the best PhD in CASS for an award to support publication through ANU E-Press.

3.2 Actions in Relation to Virtual Centres:

a) Virtual centres will be required to have a strategic plan, to report on their activities to the CASS Research Committee on an annual basis.

b) Virtual centres must conform to college policies and procedures and be linked to strategic research and educational priority areas.

c) Key virtual centres established in 2009 were the Institute of Professional Practice in Heritage and the Arts and the National Institute for Regional and Rural Australia.

d) A Centre for Rock Art and Cultural Practice will be established in 2010. We will also explore the possibilities of a War Studies Centre and a National Institute for Legislative Studies in association with CAP in 2010.

4. Linking High Quality Research and Education

Aim

The College will ensure that its education programs are shaped and informed by its research excellence, are flexibly delivered and that its students are trained to conduct inquiry-based and/or applied research in order to reinforce the University's distinctive position as Australia's leading research University.

The College will increase its postgraduate load to reach the University target. It is acknowledged that this will necessitate an increase in the number of scholarships.

Actions

a) The College will capitalize on the integration of the Faculty of Arts and its Research Schools to ensure that all leading researchers are engaged with education. We will achieve this through leading researchers providing guest lectures into the undergraduate program, engaging in intensive teaching in post-graduate training, and assisting with the supervision of PhD students in their areas of expertise.

b) The Associate Dean (HDR) will immediately review over-time PhD students and put in place actions to address the issue.

c) The Associate Dean (HDR) will immediately review levels of PhD supervision across the College. The target within three years for all staff with IAS status will be a minimum of 3 PhD students for whom they are the primary supervisor. This will be reflected in performance agreements, although there will be recognition that achieving this target is easier in some areas than in others.
d) The College will make available each year a minimum of 5 PhD scholarships.

e) The number of leading researchers engaged in undergraduate supervision of Honours theses and PhB Advanced Studies Courses will be increased, in recognition of the fact that these programs are integral to the college’s research training strategies. All PhB graduates will be offered scholarships in the college PhD program.

f) The College will develop a number of specialist coursework Masters programs that reflect its position within the nation’s capital, the key interests of the Australian public service, national priority areas and the University’s emerging Institutes in public policy and national security. In 2010-11 these Masters programs will include: MA in Legislative Studies; MA in European Studies; MA in Applied Linguistics; and MA in Translation. The “Racial Hatred and Bigotry” and “Creative Writing” Courses and the MA of Liberal Arts will also be developed.

g) In 2010 the College will map out a suite of Masters modules to be offered through GSS – these will include courses in Latin American Studies; Crime and Justice; Language and Culture; and Regional and Rural Studies.

h) All Masters courses will be flexibly delivered to meet the needs of students in fulltime employment. To promote flexible delivery and provide incentives for staff to develop courses, the College will establish a competitive fund of $100,000 to be jointly administered by the Chair of the CASS Education Committee and the Chair of the CASS Research Committee.

i) Training in research skills and methodologies will be strengthened in the College’s academic programs to ensure the smoother progression of students to a higher degree by research. Throughout 2010 the College will consolidate and develop generic research skills courses in the social sciences and humanities, which will become a formal requirement for completion of a PhD in the college from 2011. The Chair of the CASS Research Committee will work with the Directors of the Research Schools and ADSRI and the Chair of the CASS Education Committee to develop this program.

The College will increase opportunities for its students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, to undertake applied research, responsive to national needs by utilising and developing its partnerships with the national institutions located in Canberra. It is crucial that the College prepares its graduates for their future professional lives. The College will achieve this through maintaining its existing EFTS load in to Australian National Interns Program (ANIP), and its existing undergraduate internship programs in political science and art history. We will increase our postgraduate internship programs in our coursework masters programs by 2% a year.

5. Maintaining an Active Program of Outreach and Engagement

Aims

The College will continue to undertake and disseminate research that benefits the community through the application of expertise and broader engagement with issues of national and international significance.
The College will play a key role in the leadership of our academic disciplines in Australia.

**Actions**

a) Outreach and engagement will be encouraged, documented and rewarded in the performance review process, with a flexible approach to demonstrating activity in this area through both qualitative and quantitative evidence. We have established a set of criteria to assess the level and impact of our engagement with the broader community, including: the number and quality of policy reports for Government; submissions to Senate Committees and Government Tribunals; and engagement by staff with NGOs through boards and advisory committees.

b) The College will continue to manage the VC’s ANU poll in 2010, subject to funding.

c) The College will continue to maintain its already high public profile through on-going media engagement and public lectures.

d) The college will selectively host key conferences over the next 5 years, including: the 2009 Australian Sociological Association Conference; the 2010 Australian Political Science Association Conference; the CHCI 2012 Annual Meeting and Conference; and a conference marking the 2015 centenary of the landing of Australian troops at Gallipoli in 1915. The College will establish a fund of $100,000 to support conference proposals.

6 Making Infrastructure More Productive

6.1 Making IT Infrastructure More Productive

**Aim**

To ensure our IT infrastructure supports our research activities as part of the College’s commitment to digital scholarship and research.

**Actions**

a) The College will continue its commitment to the centralisation of its inherited disparate IT infrastructure throughout 2010. There has been an initial allocation of $1million, 50% from RIBG funding and 50% from CASS central savings. The 2010 budget will include money for an IT infrastructure upgrade, and this will remain an ongoing commitment in the college budget.

b) The College recognises that its website is the portal through which prospective students and staff will seek information. Throughout 2010 the website will be developed to be more accessible to internal and external stakeholders and will be integrated to have a common look and feel.

c) The College will develop, use and promote its intranet site to communicate with staff in order to increase the efficiency of the college administration, the management of committee processes, the capturing of research performance data and enhancing research collaboration.
6.2. Developing the College’s Physical Infrastructure

Aims
To ensure the physical infrastructure of the College is adequate to support the diverse range of research practices and to enable areas with the capacity to increase HDR numbers to resource the expected intake increase properly.

Actions
a) The College will assess existing accommodation and infrastructure and prioritise the most cost-effective means of improving resources which will enhance research and recruitment capacity;

b) The College will develop a five-year Strategic Plan in order to develop plans for capital expenditure to remedy the most problematic existing resource circumstances; and

c) The College will develop plans for refurbishment and reallocation of resources in response to the College restructure.

6.3 Improving the University’s Library System for the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

Aim
To ensure a high quality library service for researchers by providing easy access to materials and adequate funding for acquisitions and IT.

Action
a) The College will stress to the University Executive the importance of a properly funded University Library for our research disciplines.

January 2010.