

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of University Council
From: Wendell Pritchett, Interim President
Date: February 23, 2022
Subject: Report to the University Council

I am grateful for your diligence and care as we continue to guard against COVID. Thanks to your excellent work in decreasing campus positivity rates, we gladly announced that temporary restrictions on social gatherings are now lifted. I also encourage you to get the word out about ongoing competitions for testing and documentation participation for both [undergraduate](#) and [graduate/professional](#) students that will run through the end of this month. Keep up the great work!

The Penn community bade a very fond farewell to former President Amy Gutmann, who resigned on February 8 to assume her new duties as U.S. Ambassador to Germany. We look forward with great pride to the service she will render our country in this new role. We also look forward with excitement to the next bright chapter in Penn's future, especially with the announcement of Amy's successor, Liz Magill, who will assume the role of president on July 1. We move into Penn's future in a position of enormous strength and will continue making strides on the highest priorities we hold dear.

Here are just a few recent examples among countless others that really capture our momentum.

Penn Nursing received a spectacular \$125 million gift from esteemed alumnus and Trustee Emeritus Leonard Lauder. The largest gift ever for an American nursing school, these generous funds will launch the Leonard A. Lauder Community Care Nurse Practitioner Program. Two years into the COVID pandemic, we have seen twin healthcare crises thrown into ever sharper relief: a crisis in both the number and support of nurses and a crisis of high-quality healthcare and access in underserved communities. This transformational gift seeks to address both. The gift will also establish the Leonard A. Lauder Community Care Nurse Practitioner Professorship as well as provide support for community partner sites.

We were also thrilled to announce the appointment of Dr. Lance Freeman as the 29th Penn Integrates Knowledge University Professor. A renowned scholar of urban housing and gentrification, Dr. Freeman will hold the James W. Efron University Professorship with appointments in the Stuart Weitzman School of Design and in SAS. As we continue to confront historical and continuing inequity in society, Dr. Freeman's scholarship takes on ever-increasing importance in helping provide knowledge- and evidence-based solutions in oftentimes fractious debates over community development and housing policy.

We also applaud Penn's latest faculty members to receive prestigious Sloan Fellowships: Yuxin Chen of Wharton and Deep Jariwala from Penn Engineering.

Thank you for your service to Council and all you do across campus.

PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council

February 23, 2022

I would like to begin by thanking former President Amy Gutmann and Interim President Wendell Pritchett for their extraordinary service to Penn. We are all in their debt for the vision, leadership, and devotion to Penn that have sustained us through the pandemic and toward what we hope will be better days ahead. Along these lines, we are very pleased at the [positive trends](#) seen in this week's data on campus COVID testing and positivity rates, and we have launched friendly competitions to further encourage [undergraduate](#) and [graduate/professional students](#) to upload COVID booster shot information, upload flu vaccine information, and complete COVID surveillance tests by February 28. We look forward to the results of these challenges – and to celebrating other great spring events together in the months to come.

I am very pleased to welcome Prof. [Sydney Freeman](#) as the Provost's Visiting Scholar this semester. Prof. Freeman comes to us from the University of Idaho, where is a Professor in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. He will be working closely with Vice Provost for Faculty Laura Perna and colleagues across the university to assess existing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives for Penn faculty and to help us think about the most important and impactful potential initiatives for the future. In particular, he will be helping us to develop a symposium specifically for the needs of mid-career faculty of color at Penn. This symposium would form part of our coordinated initiatives to advance leadership development and cross-university collaborations for mid-career faculty, including the [Penn Fellows](#) Program, first launched in 2009, and the [Mellon Fellows](#) Program, which supports leadership development for mid-career faculty from humanities and arts disciplines.

Finally, I want to make sure that everyone knows about a [landmark agreement](#) just signed by our Penn Libraries with Cambridge University Press. Any member of the Penn community who publishes an article in one of more than 400 academic journals published by Cambridge University Press can now make it available for open access at no cost. This agreement is a major step forward in our commitment to [open access initiatives](#), in which Penn Libraries is a longtime leader, especially through the innovation of "Read and Publish" agreements, which enable open access without any associated fees for either authors or readers.

I look forward to working together as we head into the second half of the semester.

Beth A. Winkelstein
Interim Provost



University of Pennsylvania Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA)

Constituency Status Report for University Council – February 23, 2022

We convey our deepest appreciation to Dr. Amy Gutmann for her amazing presidency in supporting and improving the Penn community and beyond; and wish her the very best in her next step as the US Ambassador to Germany.

- Policy/Advocacy:
 - The COVID Policy and Support subcommittee is currently working with Student Health Services and Procurement to obtain masks for our constituents, supplementing the University supply to help improve compliance to masking requirements.
 - On comments by Professor Amy Wax, GAPSA is working on a resolution detailing our constituent's concerns and recommended actions for consideration by the Faculty Senate
 - The GAPSA Wellness Committee is working closely with the G12 student governments to discern the state of student wellness in each school, accounting for the widely varying culture of workload, program expectations, resources, and wellness needs, et cetera.
 - GAPSA is supporting the Undergraduate Assembly with the academic calendar change proposal to institutionalize a break for election day to help promote voter turnout.
 - GAPSA is advocating for the financial security and support for our constituents, particularly in this challenging ongoing COVID climate and severe nationwide economic inflation.

We seek partnership, collaboration, guidance, and support from the University and your groups on these topics to help improve the Penn experience for all our community members.

- Our Programming division remains strong and adaptable with plans for COVID policy-compliant and safe activities such as virtual mixology class series, Penn Interdisciplinary (PI) talks, ice cream tasting, yoga/meditation, professional headshots, and so much more! We are also planning larger scale events such as Beyond Penn and Spring Olympiad, but contingent and adaptable to the evolving COVID policies. Details will be publicized on our channels ([website](#), facebook, instagram, and newsletter) as they are finalized.
- Please reach out to collaborate and engage with us – our council, committee, and general assembly meetings are open to all. Meeting details, agendas, and approved minutes can be found [here](#).

Thank you very much for reading! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions/comments.
Respectfully submitted,

Paradorn (Joe) Rummaneethorn, *President*
gapsa.president@gapsa.upenn.edu

Website: <https://www.gapsa.upenn.edu/>

Contact us: <https://www.gapsa.upenn.edu/contact-us>



Weekly Paid Professional Staff Assembly Status Report

- WPPSA collaborated with Restorative Practices @ Penn offering staff a 1-hour training focused on the basics of the Restorative philosophy along with some key communication, conflict skills and techniques with an emphasis on “managing up” and email communication. More Information [here](#).
- **Job openings:** We are still looking to fill two new positions including: Outreach Specialist and Digital Platform Specialist. Both positions will work in tandem with the Communications Deputy and oversight by the WPPSA Chair. If interested, staff should fill out the [contact us form](#).
- Our next **general meeting** will be March 23, 2022 at noon. Our guest will be The Office of Human Resources will discuss benefits and open enrollment. Additional information, agenda and minutes can be found on our [website](#).

Website: <https://wppsa.upenn.edu>

Contact Us: [HERE](#)



Best,

Amber Banayat, Chair of WPPSA

Cynthia Di Loretto, Co-Chair of WPPSA