

## MEMORANDUM

**To: Members of University Council**  
**From: Amy Gutmann, President**  
**Date: September 11, 2019**  
**Subject: Report to the University Council**

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Welcome to the 280th year of the University of Pennsylvania and a very warm welcome back to University Council.

**I update my report to Council today to acknowledge the tragic passing of Gregory Eells, executive director of CAPS. The Penn community grieves the loss of Dr. Eells, and we have his family in our hearts and prayers. CAPS and Penn's other health and wellness resources continue to be available. I, Provost Pritchett, our leadership team, all the deans and faculty, and every level of this university are absolutely committed to ensuring students have the support they need. If you or anybody you know needs help of any kind, do not hesitate to reach out. We must look out for one another. As leaders in the University community, all of you on Council play a special role in spreading the word even further about available resources and our caring for one another. Thank you.**

At the start of the academic year, the Provost and I were thrilled to officially welcome the great Class of 2023 and transfers on College Green. Hats off to Dean Eric Furda and his Admissions team for yet another fantastic Class.

We announced the reappointment of Steven J. Fluharty as Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences. This is an important inflection point for the liberal arts and sciences, and we believe that Dean Fluharty is exceptionally well-positioned to lead SAS through a period characterized by great opportunity and change. Dean Fluharty is a thoughtful, principled, proven leader, and we are delighted to recommend to the Trustees his reappointment as dean of SAS for a second term.

We recently celebrated the official naming of New College House. This stunning building and the tight-knit student community that calls it home will now and forever be known as Lauder College House. In a fun-filled and historic ceremony, members of the Lauder family joined with the University community as we revealed the new name as well as a commemorative plaque that commends the historic generosity and game-changing vision of the Lauders.

Soon after, the entire Penn community cheered the news that *U.S. News and World Report* named the University of Pennsylvania number 6 among the nation's top universities, up two spots from previous years. At the same time, the *Times Higher Education/Wall Street Journal* named Penn number 4 among all the nation's colleges and universities, and number 1 among all large universities. What a wonderful and well-earned testament to our passionately engaged Penn community. Yet, exciting as this news is, growing inclusion, sparking innovation, and accelerating impact are the true measure of our University's work in the world. Even though we have achieved great good, we will never stop striving for greater good still – together, as one Penn community.

In support of our community, last month I wrote both of Pennsylvania's U.S. Senators and the entire Pennsylvania Congressional delegation to express our great concern with changes to immigration policies and practices which have had a deleterious impact on our international students and scholars, particularly those from China. Greater numbers of international students are having their visa applications sent for administrative processing review and those reviews are taking considerably longer. Specialty occupation visa applications are likewise being delayed and are experiencing greater numbers of denials. Optional Practical Training for F-1 students to work in the U.S. shortly before returning to their home or a third country are also experiencing detrimental delays. Penn will also join many of our peers in signing a letter from the American Council on Education urging Congress to pass legislation as soon as possible to protect our Dreamers. Penn stands proud as a welcome and open university that embraces immigration and international exchange as a vital source of new ideas, new experiences, and new opportunities. America is at its best when it does the same.

Finally, I call on all seniors to consider competing for this year's President's Engagement Prize and President's Innovation Prize. Unmatched in size and scope anywhere in higher education, these Prizes provide a graduating Penn senior or team of graduating seniors with up to \$100,000 and a generous living stipend to undertake transformative projects that make a real difference in the world. You can visit the Prizes' websites to learn more about previous winners and to find information sessions to attend this fall.

Welcome to another year of outstanding promise at the University of Pennsylvania. I look forward to all we will accomplish together.

## PROVOST'S STATUS REPORT

University Council

September 2019

It is a pleasure to welcome everyone back for another wonderful year at Penn. In particular, I encourage you to join me in welcoming several new members of our community. On July 1, Martine Haas, Professor of Management at Wharton, succeeded Prof. Mauro Guillén as the Anthony L. Davis Director of the Lauder Institute for Management and International Studies. Prof. Haas is a distinguished scholar of new approaches to global business practices, especially the importance of collaboration and global teamwork across multinational organizations. She will be the ideal leader to chart the future of this vital interdisciplinary program, founded in 1983, in which students earn an MA in International Studies from SAS along with an MBA from Wharton or a JD from the Law School.

Mary Francis arrives this month as the new Director of Penn Press, following the retirement of Eric Halpern after two decades in this role. Mary is a national leader in the university press community who serves on the Board of Directors of the Association of University Presses and has been a pioneer of new forms of media and Open Access at both University of Michigan Press and University of California Press. And Maureen O'Leary began in July as our new Executive Director of Environmental Health and Radiation Safety, following the retirement of Matt Finucane. The recent President of the American Biosafety Association, Maureen comes to us from Dartmouth and has extensive additional experience in non-profit biosafety and biosecurity work, including at the Kazakhstan Central Reference Laboratory.

In the Provost's Office, Gary Purpura started in June as Executive Director for Education and Academic Planning. Many of you know Gary from his previous role as Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. From this work – and as a Penn PhD and lecturer in Philosophy – he is highly knowledgeable about all aspects of graduate and undergraduate education at Penn, and he will also be managing our upcoming reaccreditation process. And we are delighted to welcome Joy De Jesús back to Penn as Chief Financial Officer for Penn Athletics. Joy is a Wharton MBA who served as Associate Vice President of Finance and Administration at Temple since 2013.

Two of our most exciting new programs will also be ramping up this semester. The Paideia Program, as President Gutmann has noted, will start this semester as the focus of our emphasis on civic education at Penn. Building on new interdisciplinary courses, it strongly reaffirms our commitment to wellness, service, and citizenship as core components of the Penn experience. At the same time, the Penn First Plus Program, in its second year, will be expanding its invaluable work for our first-generation and/or low-income students. Construction will soon begin on the Program's permanent home on the ground floor of College Hall, which we expect to be fully operational in time for next school year. Executive Director Marc Lo and Faculty Co-Directors Camille Charles and Rob Ghrist continue to work closely with students and members of the Penn community to ensure that the Program provides the most useful support and resources for our students going forward. Along these same lines, it has also brought on board its first full-time staff member, Hatef Alavi, who will work closely with Toyce Holmes, the first full-time staff member in the First-Generation Low-Income Center.

I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead.

Wendell Pritchett  
Provost



**Status Report – Penn Professional Staff Assembly  
August 30, 2019**

*The theme for the PPSA is **Connect @ Penn**.* The board has decided to use this as a continuing theme for the years to come.

- PPSA held its annual elections in May. We have a new Chair-Elect, Kris Forrest. Four new board members were elected, and seventeen representatives have been appointed to sit on the University Council Committees.
- PPSA hosted its annual Tree Tour with arborist Bob Wells from the Morris Arboretum on June 26, 2019. The event attracted more than 60 participants.
- PPSA hosted its annual event *Penn Libraries: Lightning Talks* on July 17, 2019. The event was very successful, attracting close to 80 participants.
- The PPSA Board and Committee Members met on July 24, 2019 to hold our 2019-2020 planning retreat. We discussed plans for the year and met the new board members and committee representatives.
- On August 28, 2019, PPSA hosted the first annual PPSA Alumni Event for current and past PPSA Board Members and Committee Members. The evening event was held at the Penn Museum, during their “Summer Concert” series.
- This Fall, PPSA together with Jack Heuer, Vice President of Human Resources, will continue the small group discussions platform known as “Chats with Jack.” Three to four staff members are invited to meet with the Vice President to create lines of communication and foster open dialogue around issues of staff concern.
- This year marks the fifth year of the PPSA Connection program, a free networking program that provides monthly random matching for staff members to connect with colleagues across campus. This is one of our most popular programs as there is continued demand by Penn employees to connect across schools and centers.
- PPSA will be continuing its member-led book club initiative this year. This summer, members read *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* and will be discussing this book at our next meeting on September 10, 2019 at Van Pelt Library.
- On September 20, 2019, PPSA is hosting a tour of the rare books collection at the Fisher Fine Arts Library. This event is another in a series of collaborations with the Penn Libraries.
- On October 1, 2019, PPSA will co-host the Annual Employment Resource Fair in partnership with the WPPSA. The fair will host external and internal vendors. We anticipate 1,000 employees to attend the fair.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadir Sharif  
Chair, PPSA

Stephanie S. Yee  
Past Chair, PPSA

Kris Forrest  
Chair Elect, PPSA

## WPPSA Status Report

We may have some new faces, so a quick introduction, my name is Thalia Mangan from the Office of Student Affairs and I am the 2019 Chair of WPPSA. I have a few quick updates before I introduce my wonderful colleague and new Chair-Elect, Cydnee Bryant, who has some updates to share also. My priority this year is ensure weekly paid professionals are gaining visibility appropriately and are connected to opportunities to further their careers at Penn. With that being said, I selected my executive board, piloted a program with Jack Heuer titled *Voices of Staff* (previously Chat & Chews) to provide an opportunity to the community to bring up questions to Jack and it was a success. We both would like to continue the program. Cydnee and I also have partnered with HR to see to it that there is an increased number of nominations for Weekly Paid Professionals in the Models of Excellence Program this year. Without further ado, I would like Cydnee to finish up with updates.

### Highlights:

- Priority: Ensure weekly paid professionals are gaining visibility and connected to opportunities to further their professional development and career here at Penn.
- Appointed Executive Board for 2019
- Piloted the *Voices of Staff* program and it was a major success
- Met with HR to collaborate on ways to increase nominations for Models of Excellence