

## Investing in Academic Excellence

### To the Penn Community:

Over the last several months we—together with the Council of Deans, the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, and others—have been examining the University's planning goals for the next five years and beyond. The result of those discussions follows in draft form for your review. Please send your comments directly to either of us.



*Sheldon Hackney, President*



*Thomas Ehrlich, Provost*

## Investing in Academic Excellence

All who choose the academy as a way of life celebrate its enduring values. There is, in and about a great university, a feeling of shared purpose and dedication, derived from both our common commitment to intellectual inquiry and our recognition that as scholars and teachers we learn first and foremost from each other and from our students.

This sense of shared purpose makes the planning and management of a university difficult as well as rewarding. As the University evolves, it must maintain a framework within which to choose between competing needs. Good planning means building on strengths and opportunities—comparative advantages. Good management means matching resources with ambitions in order to provide faculty and students the freedom to pursue scholarly interests. In the decade ahead, demand for these resources will become greater than ever before. The 1990s will witness intensifying competition for students, research funding, philanthropic support—and particularly for the limited supply of scholars and teachers who can provide research leadership to their disciplines and educational leadership to the faculties they join.

To excel, therefore, Penn must:

- recruit and promote younger faculty of great promise;
- reward and retain its most distinguished and productive faculty; and
- attract established faculty who can provide important leadership to research and instructional programs.

The initial funds for these investments can be provided by the University's operating budget, but Penn cannot achieve its goals without a substantial and permanent increase in resources. Hence, in establishing Penn's goals for the 1990s, we propose, within the framework of a balanced budget, to:

1. Launch a major breakthrough campaign that will supply the resources necessary for Penn to expand its role as an international center of scholarship and increase its capacity to provide quality education.
2. Increase Penn's research and instructional support for the faculty at large, through
  - a) a substantial enhancement of the Research Foundation for support of current Penn faculty, including support in the form of travel grants, released time, and funds for research materials;
  - b) additional allocations for graduate fellowships;
  - c) funding of the Research Facilities Development Fund and the Undergraduate Education Fund.
3. Augment Penn's current faculty by recruiting major scholars in the prime of their careers to provide critical leadership to research and teaching in developing fields and additional strength in those fields in which the University now holds a preeminent position.

As Penn plans for the future, it must accommodate major changes in both its internal and external environments. The scholarly world is itself in a state of flux. There has been an explosion of new research largely made possible by the rapid introduction of new technologies to laboratories and computer centers and, more recently, to libraries,

archives, recording studios, and centers for the visual and performing arts. The long-promised information revolution is at hand, affecting not only the ways that universities conduct research, but also how scholars communicate their results and teach their students. The universities, and faculties, that learn first and best to invent and apply rapidly changing technologies will gain a comparative advantage that lasts well into the next century.

These changes in the basic techniques and instrumentation of research and teaching coincide with the upcoming retirement of the extraordinary generation of scholars that came of age during and just after World War II. At Penn, between now and 1995, more than 200 members of the standing faculty will reach the normal retirement age. Their departure will be followed by an even more dramatic wave of retirement lasting into the next century. The leadership of these faculty members will be missed all the more since the pool from which Penn must recruit their replacements has been limited by the depressed academic market of the 1970s and 1980s. Those who warned of an impending shortage of high-quality junior faculty have been proven right. Competition must inevitably intensify for both junior and senior scholars capable of making a real difference to the faculties they join.

As these changes take place, no university—Penn included—will be able to rest on its laurels. Indeed, for the first time in nearly three decades, there is a genuine likelihood that the rankings of the nation's principal universities will shift. The cost of competing for faculty, the uncertainty of the directions of future research, the challenge and expense of integrating new technologies into well-established research and instructional programs—all will reduce the number of institutions of truly national and international standing. Some top-rated universities will inevitably lose ground, their places taken by institutions that, by husbanding their resources, are able to invest imaginatively and purposefully in academic programs.

Penn enters this era with an important set of advantages. Increasingly, it is being celebrated as an institution of first choice for faculty, students, and staff. Penn is talked about often, in terms that convey a sense of selectivity and excellence. We are being told that Penn is "a school whose time has come," that the University's comparative advantage lies in its ability to link the liberal arts and the professions, to bring together scholars and scientists across disciplinary boundaries, and to draw on the cultural resources of the City of Philadelphia as well as the wider institutional and research support available along the Boston-Washington corridor.

An additional strength is the University's planning process, and the sustained commitment made to it by Penn's key leaders, particularly its deans. Together we have defined priorities in ways that enable targeted investments in educational and research programs. Each of Penn's Schools has published or will soon publish its draft plan for comment by the University community. The success of these efforts demonstrates that good planning involves a continuous process of review and adjustment, including ongoing faculty and student involvement, and a willingness to be explicit about goals and priorities, to create internal savings for investment in those priorities, and to establish measures by which to gauge the effectiveness of investments.

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## The Breakthrough Campaign

The focus of Penn's breakthrough campaign will be a sustained investment in academic excellence. The campaign's first priority will be faculty. Funds will be sought for a broad range of endowed chairs to retain and reward distinguished faculty, to recruit equally distinguished scholars and teachers to join us, and to enhance academic interactions across disciplines as well as within departments and Schools. Working with the dean and faculty of each School, we have begun to define the broad goals of the campaign. Our first task is to draw a specific list of academic needs from each School's five-year plan, requests to Capital Council for major construction projects, proposals to search for new faculty at both the junior and senior levels, and other planning documents. Working with the Trustees and the Academic Planning and Budget Committee we will, over the course of the next eighteen months, refine these preliminary definitions of University needs and test their feasibility as goals for the proposed campaign.

Penn's twelve Schools are rich in their diversity, combining on a single campus the perspectives of the professions with the disciplines of the liberal arts and sciences. Together, they create an atmosphere in which cross-disciplinary efforts flourish and enhance the strengths of individual programs and departments. At Penn there is remarkable balance among diverse pursuits—the focused learning that leads to professional degrees, the basic research that characterizes graduate education leading to the Ph.D., and the personal and intellectual discovery that is the hallmark of the best programs of undergraduate education. In the proposed campaign we expect to further the balanced diversity that gives Penn its special character. The campaign will reaffirm the enduring importance of all of the University's Schools and the contributions they make to their students, the communities they serve, and to Penn as a whole.

Within this campaign, Arts and Sciences—currently the School with the greatest need for sustained external investment—will be a special priority. To a considerable extent, the disciplinary rankings of Arts and Science's departments and graduate programs define Penn's broad standing as a major research university. Penn has a long and distinguished history of individual achievement and innovation in the arts and sciences, but not until the 1970s was a unified School established, giving a collective voice to the aspirations of 28 separate departments. The School's faculty has now developed a comprehensive strategy for enriching the arts and sciences at Penn by bringing greater focus to the School's research programs and new coherence to its educational offerings. In support of its efforts, up to half of the total campaign proceeds will be sought for SAS.

Penn will not be alone in seeking the special support of private benefactors, corporations, and foundations. Most major research universities, public as well as private, are now planning similar campaigns for securing the truly discretionary funds that only private philanthropy can provide. Those that succeed will do so because of their ability to draw on past strengths and to make targeted investments in key educational programs and research initiatives. Penn will succeed by drawing on the resources and support of the entire University community, by making explicit the links between academic planning and the definition of University needs and campaign goals, and by continuing to focus attention and discretionary funds on University priorities.

## Reaffirming Priorities

This strategic plan represents both a continuation and an acceleration of Penn's current investment program. Over the past five years, the University's largest single investment of discretionary funds has been in faculty salaries—ensuring real growth in faculty incomes, supporting substantial raises for faculty promoted to tenure and to full professor, and providing incentives for Penn's most distinguished faculty to remain at the University.

Significant investments have also been made in undergraduate education, research excellence, and student financial aid. In the coming years, Penn will maintain its commitment to these priorities.

**1. Undergraduate Education.** The University can best increase its competitiveness as a national institution by investing directly in the academic quality of its programs of undergraduate education. What attracts most students to Penn is the quality and diversity of its faculty, its commitment to teaching and research, and the opportunity it provides to explore a wide spectrum of educational opportunities. In working with the deans and their faculties, we will continue to emphasize that Penn's prestige and stature are functions of both its scholarly distinction and the quality of its undergraduate programs. Over the next five years, the University will employ its new Undergraduate Education Fund to invest \$2 million annually in strengthening the undergraduate curriculum. More than half of this Fund currently supports standing faculty in the development of new undergraduate courses. At the same time, in recruiting new faculty to the University, we will stress the importance of active involvement in the undergraduate program.

**2. Research Excellence.** In recent years, the University has made major investments in support of faculty research. The new Research Fund, now merged with the Research Foundation (which has been newly endowed with over \$3 million), has awarded just over \$1.7 million in research grants to the faculty since 1985. University support for graduate fellowships has more than tripled, from \$1 million for the 1980-81 academic year to \$3.5 million for the 1986-87 academic year. Another \$2.1 million in University funds is being used this academic year to help pay the tuition of research assistants partially supported by the faculty's external grants and contracts. Beginning this year, the new Research Facilities Development Fund is providing \$2 million annually for the modernization of individual laboratories and other research-related renovations, including animal handling facilities.

As a University, Penn is also making substantial capital investments in new facilities. Already in use is the \$5.3 million Mudd Plant Sciences building. Scheduled to be completed over the next three years are the School of Medicine's \$53.8 million Clinical Research Building, a \$104.4 million addition to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, an \$8.5 million addition to the School of Engineering and Applied Science for its Computer and Cognitive Science programs, a \$23.1 million complex to house the Wharton School's Executive Education Center, a \$3.6 million facility for the Lauder Institute and Fischer Real Estate Center, and a \$5.2 million modernization of Arts and Science's Chemistry facilities. Other recent and upcoming capital investments include over \$1 million for the Laboratory for Research on the Structure of Matter, about \$2.5 million for basic laboratory renovations in the School of Veterinary Medicine, and approximately \$2 million for computers in Arts and Sciences.

The University is also investing more than \$11 million in its campus-wide computer communications network. This network will greatly enhance Penn's ability to apply effectively the new technologies shaping research and instruction in the laboratory, the library, and the field. It will also link the University's faculty to the world-wide scholarly networks of data and shared research now being developed.

To preserve and strengthen Penn's standing as a major research university, broad and sustained support for Penn's faculty is required. Penn must, in particular, be able to provide salaries competitive with those offered by the dozen or so other major institutions that dominate the market for the best faculty. Just as important, it must provide research support, including funds for graduate assistants, released time, travel grants for field research and for attending international meetings, purchase of research materials and publications, and modernization of research space. The University will continue to augment School investments in research through the Research Facilities Development Fund, the Research Foundation, support for graduate students through University fellowships, and one-half tuition support to graduate students partially supported by external grants.

**3. Student Financial Assistance.** The University will continue its "need blind" admissions policy to Penn's undergraduate Schools and will expand and adapt the Penn Plan to meet the changing circumstances of the University's students and their families, taking account of possible changes in federal and state funding for financial aid as well as changes in the federal tax code.

### Next Steps

Building on these priorities, Penn will, over the next five years:

1. Complete and consolidate its investment in new facilities and major renovations. The University needs to absorb the resulting net increase of more than one-million square feet in new space.
2. Complete the development of a master physical plan for the University, paying particular attention to academic priorities, residential and recreational space for students, the development of retail zones adjacent to the campus, and the University's relationship to its West Philadelphia neighbors and to the City in general.
3. Increase its ability to generate operating reserves to accommodate unforeseen problems and provide a source of internal financing for key academic investments.
4. Heighten the quality and diversity of the informal curriculum, developing comprehensive plans to improve advising, strengthen the University's residential system, expand recreational spaces, and enhance Penn's performing arts facilities and programs.

Most important, the University will build upon and extend the strengths of its current faculty. Indeed, it is the collective reputation of Penn's faculty, the strength of its scholarship and its tradition of both formal and informal collaboration, that will make it possible for the University to compete successfully for the teachers and researchers who will help shape the scholarly world of tomorrow. Our goal is to establish a minimum of 100 endowed chairs—roughly half to reward and retain outstanding faculty now at Penn, and half to recruit new distinguished scholars.

One immediate task is to begin to identify and recruit these distinguished scholars to augment and extend Penn's scholarly excellence. This initiative will not increase the size of the faculty. Schools will use their own funds and faculty vacancies occurring over the next five years to create positions; University funds will be used to enhance compensation and other resources, including research support, facilities, and graduate students. In some cases, the School or benefiting department may wish to offer one or more collateral appointments in order to help attract a particular scholar. Approximately half of these jointly funded appointments will be in the School of Arts and Sciences; the remaining half will be distributed among the other Schools.

These distinguished scholars will be internationally recruited, and affirmative action efforts will be made to ensure that new Black, Hispanic, and women scholars join our faculty. Appointees in Schools with undergraduate programs, and Schools that offer significant numbers of undergraduate courses, will be expected to teach undergraduate as well as graduate students. Some appointments should create cross-disciplinary links between both departments and Schools. We will designate positions for these purposes if these goals are not being achieved.

Because these appointments will be jointly funded by the Schools and the University at large, candidates will be identified, recruited, and appointed through a cooperative process involving the provost, the deans, and relevant School and departmental committees. The following steps will help ensure collegiality, consensus, and the academic quality of the appointments.

A. The School will derive from its plan proposals identifying the fields that offer the most potential for enhancing Penn's academic stature. Proposals may be brief and informal, but each should describe the selected field and explain why it was chosen, list the exemplary scholar/teachers within the field, and designate a search process to be responsible for identifying candidates. Search committees should include experts from outside the department, and in some cases the School. Search committees for cross-disciplinary appointments should include representatives from each relevant School.

B. Proposals will be reviewed by the provost for their academic merit. He will confer with the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, the Provost's Staff Conference, and external experts as appropriate.

C. The School (or joint School) search committee will identify suitable candidates. The standard appointment procedures—departmental and School personnel committee review, and solicitation of external letters—will be included in this process. When a consensus has been built around the recruitment of a specific candidate, the dean and department chair will consult with the provost, who may call upon external experts for advice as appropriate. In recruiting the agreed-upon candidate, speed will be of the essence, as will be the direct involvement of the president, the provost, and distinguished Penn scholars in related fields.

These appointments will benefit the University in several key ways. They will, for example, sustain current strengths and elevate more of Penn's departments and programs into positions of leadership in their disciplines and fields. In the most recent national ranking of Ph.D. programs, five of Penn's graduate programs ranked among the top five in their disciplines, six ranked sixth to tenth, and ten ranked eleventh through twentieth. Other programs have achieved equal distinction in fields for which national rankings are not available. Most of Penn's professional Schools are similarly accorded top rank by their peers. These departments and Schools have demonstrated their ability to recruit and retain truly distinguished scholars of the highest caliber.

We also expect these appointments to encourage collaboration among departments and Schools. The success of the Mellon-sponsored seminars on the integration of the social sciences suggests a potential for making appointments that enhance clusters of related departments. Opportunities for such appointments exist both within Schools (among, for example, the departments that contribute to the University's strengths in comparative literature and historical analysis) and across Schools (in bio-medical research, for instance, and in the area of organizational behavior, which links management and sociology).

One of Penn's comparative advantages among major research universities is the close proximity of its Schools to each other and its climate of natural and informal collaboration. The emergence of a major program in cognitive science, currently linking faculty from Computer Science, Linguistics, Philosophy, and Psychology demonstrates the possibilities of informal collaboration. The Laboratory for Research on the Structure of Matter—which draws key faculty from Chemistry, Engineering, and Physics—exemplifies how cross-disciplinary research can be developed in the natural sciences.

### Beginning the Campaign

We propose that, initially, the University's support for the 50 external appointments be derived from a special \$10 million solicitation of and by the Trustees, and that the appointees be appropriately known as Trustee Professors. An additional \$2.5 million will be similarly solicited in support of the Research Foundation. The \$12.5 million will be a priority of the campaign's nucleus fund, and will be secured before the public announcement of the campaign—tentatively scheduled for late 1989.

Permanent funding for the 50 new professorships will be part of the campaign's goal of establishing at least 100 endowed chairs. Until this goal is reached, funds used to recruit the external appointees will be derived through a partnership between the University and its Schools.

We are about to test the mettle of our University. We will know that we invested wisely if, a decade from now, we find that we have fostered a University community that is rewarding to gifted scholars—teachers and students, both those currently a part of the Penn family and those who will join us. We will also know we have succeeded if the efficiencies we achieve through careful management result in demonstrably enhanced academic programs. We must develop increased budget discipline while making targeted investments in academic excellence. Then we can say with confidence: Penn is a University worthy of extraordinary resources.