Three Professors to Endowed Chairs in SAS

Carol and Michael Lowenstein Endowed Term Professor
Dr. Cristina Bicchieri has been named the first Carol and Michael Lowenstein Endowed Term Professor. Dr. Bicchieri is a member of the department of philosophy, the Psychology Graduate Group and the legal studies department in the Wharton School. She is the director of the Philosophy, Politics and Economics Program. Her research is at the borders of philosophy, psychology and behavioral economics. She works in behavioral decision making as applied to understanding pro-social behavior, the nature and dynamics of social norms, and the epistemic foundations of game theory. Her most recent book, The Grammar of Society: The Nature and Dynamics of Social Norms, was published in 2005 by Cambridge University Press. She has been awarded fellowships from Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Institute for Advanced Studies) and the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences. Dr. Bicchieri received her Ph.D. from Cambridge University.

This chair was established by Carol Bassok Lowenstein and Michael Lowenstein in 2005 to recognize the achievements of a faculty member in the field of behavioral economics. Mr. Lowenstein, C ’80, is a partner and co-founder of Kensico Capital Management. Mrs. Lowenstein, W ’80, is a former trader on Wall Street.

Ronald S. Lauder Endowed Term Associate Professor of History
Dr. Benjamin Nathans has been named the Ronald S. Lauder Endowed Term Associate Professor of History.

Dr. Nathans’ work focuses on imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, Russian intellectual history and modern Jewish history. His book Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter With Late Imperial Russia won the Koret Prize in Jewish History; the Vucinich Prize in Russian, Eurasian and East European Studies; and the Lincoln Prize in Russian History and was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award in History. He is a member of the Jewish Studies Program, the Graduate Group in Comparative Literature, and the Graduate Group in Germanic Languages and Literatures.

The Ronald Lauder Endowed Term Chair was established in 1991 by Ronald S. Lauder, W ’65. Mr. Lauder is the current chairman of Clinique Laboratories, LLC. He is former U.S. ambassador to Austria and has also served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for European and NATO affairs. He is the non-executive chairman of the board of directors of Central European Media Enterprises Ltd. and the former chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art.

Dr. Robert Weiss Professorship in Music
Dr. James Primosch has been appointed to the Dr. Robert Weiss Professorship in Music.

Dr. Primosch is a composer whose works have been performed by a long list of prestigious orchestras and soloists, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and soprano Dawn Upshaw. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, two prizes from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, Dr. Primosch is currently working on his second commission from the Chicago Symphony. Recordings of his music have appeared on eight commercially released compact discs.

The Dr. Robert Weiss Professorship in Music was created in 1994 by George A. Weiss, W ’65, in memory of his father, who earned doctorates in chemistry and music from the University of Vienna and was a research chemist and concert pianist. Mr. Weiss is president of George A. Weiss Associates Inc., a money management firm based in Hartford, CT. He is the chair of the University Committee for Undergraduate Financial Aid and a member of the Board of Trustees.

Hosting Professional Middle Eastern Women for Legal/Business Fellowship Program at Penn

The University of Pennsylvania Law School, Penn’s Wharton School and the National Council for International Visitors are working with America-Mideast Educational and Training Services Inc. to implement the Legal and Business Fellowship Program. The LBFP is funded by the U.S. Department of State Middle East Partnership Initiative.

The LBFP brings 41 leading young female leaders in business and law to campus from March 18 through April 13 for a four-week executive education program either at Wharton or Penn Law, depending on each woman’s professional experience. Upon completion, the participants will be placed in five-month internships with large companies and top-tier law firms across the United States.

The LBFP is open to 22- and 23-year-old professional women from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza and Yemen. Acceptance into the program is based on leadership potential, commitment to professional growth in the business and legal sectors of local economies and knowledge of English.

“The LBFP is intended to provide talented young women working in business and law with opportunities to learn management, business and legal skills while working in the U.S. business and legal environments,” President Amy Gutmann said. “As home to both an eminent law school and business school, Penn is uniquely situated to host these women for the educational portion of their program. This exceptional opportunity will enable our guests to experience the academic rigor of one of the world’s finest institutions in one of the greatest cities in the country.”

“The Middle East Partnership Initiative supports the aspirations of people in the region seeking greater freedom and opportunity,” Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Scott Carpenter said. “This impressive group of women embodies these aspirations, and we are happy to stand with them as they develop new business and legal skills to help their communities flourish.”

“Wharton and Penn Law are looking forward to working with this diverse group of women,” Sandhya Karpe, senior director of executive education at Wharton, said. “Gathering such a large group of women from a wide variety of countries will encourage information sharing, networking and bridge building among the participants and faculty. It is from such unique opportunities that great ideas—and change—can emerge.”

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Changing the World?—Webcast and Audio Downloads

The Faculty Senate is pleased to announce the broadcast and audio downloads of the Faculty Senate Symposium: Changing the World? Penn Confronts Global Challenges. The broadcast can be accessed on the Faculty Senate website announcements page: www.upenn.edu/facultySenate/announcements.html. In addition, there are audio downloads of the Symposium on the same website for those who might wish to download these files on their iPod or portable mp3 player for listening "on the go."

GAPSA-Provost’s Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation: April 16

Provost Ronald Daniels and GAPSA Chair Lee Shaker are pleased to announce a second year of funding for graduate and professional student-conceived interdisciplinary projects. The GAPSA-Provost’s Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation encourages the collaborative effort of student scholars from different University departments and/or schools and includes a summer fellowship, jointly funded by GAPSA and the Office of the Provost, for a select group of students.

“Last year, the Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation provided a tremendous opportunity for students to engage in cutting edge research and build bridges of collaboration across Penn’s campus. The results were exciting from both local and global perspectives, and we believe the Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation truly embodies the spirit of the Penn Compact,” said the GAPSA Chair Lee Shaker. “This program is a wonderful opportunity for students and an exhilarating step towards unknown but fertile future research horizons.”

“These grants reinforce a number of Penn’s most cherished values,” said Provost Daniels. “They support graduate students in significant summer research, and they promote an integration of knowledge across disciplines. Both are vital to the future of academic scholarship. It is our further hope that these fellowships will contribute to an enhanced sense of collaboration and cooperation among Penn’s many scholars and schools.”

Interdisciplinary study, research, and work provide valuable contributions to the academy and have the power to address some of society’s most pressing needs, but graduate and professional student-originated ideas for such endeavors are often abandoned due to lack of funding.

In spring 2005, GAPSA initiated the idea for graduate and professional student fellowships focused on interdisciplinary collaborative projects and brought it to Provost Daniels upon his arrival. As a result, a partnership between GAPSA and the Office of the Provost led to the creation of the Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation. The Award program will enable graduate and professional students to integrate knowledge across academic disciplines and engage in a project of their own design to explore, research, and act on critical societal issues. To overcome the barrier of financial support, students will be selected, based on the quality of their application and their funding status, to receive a $2,000 monthly fellowship from June through August for this work. This funding will be awarded to the Project Manager in each instance but can be dispersed among project team members.

GAPSA and the Office of the Provost have worked together to develop the award program and define the application process, criteria for selection, and other related details. “We [GAPSA] continue to be thrilled with the Provost’s commitment to nourishing the academic environment at Penn and are pleased to work with him in this endeavor,” said Mr. Shaker.

The Award application as well as details regarding eligible projects, fellowship funding, and composition of project teams are available on the GAPSA-Provost’s Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation website, www.gapsa.upenn.edu/funding/fellowships. The deadline for completed applications is Monday, April 16, 2007. All applicants will receive final notification of the status of their application by May 14, 2007.

Provost’s Interdisciplinary Seminar Fund: May 1

The Provost announces the FY 2007 seminar fund to stimulate the creation of interdisciplinary discussions and connections that could grow into lasting cooperative intellectual efforts and programs. The opportunity is intended to support the Penn Compact’s emphasis on the integration of knowledge. This fund will provide financial support for up to three years for seminars and is designed to support initiation of new seminar series that emphasize interdisciplinary research and scholarship. To be eligible for funding, seminars must draw on faculty scholars from at least two schools. Seminars that include Penn graduate or undergraduate students will be particularly welcome as will seminars with participation from the non-academic community outside the University. The fund will provide each seminar with approximately $10,000 a year (depending on documented need) for up to three years. Funding in the second and third years is subject to success in the previous year(s). To receive continued funding, a report is due May 1, 2007. Success is defined as growing attendance, publications, general visibility and other evidence of intellectual progress. Each proposal must contain criteria by which the seminar’s success can be judged.

Applications to the Provost’s Interdisciplinary Seminar Fund should contain:

i. A seminar title.

ii. A brief (no more than five pages) description of the intellectual area of the seminar and of how the suggested new connections will advance the subject.

iii. The names and affiliations of the principal faculty (no more than four) proposing the seminar with a two-page CV on each.

iv. The names and affiliations of other individuals who will be major participants in the seminar.

v. A suggested set of criteria or goals by which success of the seminar program can be evaluated.

vi. A detailed proposed budget for the first year of the seminar. The budget may be dedicated to personnel costs, travel, and other directly associated expenses, but entertainment should be kept to a minimum. Also, co-funding from departments, schools or other sources should be documented and will increase the credibility of the application.

The application should be sent electronically as one MS Word or PDF document without images to Irene Soroka, sorokai@pobox.upenn.edu by Friday, May 1, 2007. A committee will review the applications and funded proposals will be announced June

—Steven J. Flaharty, Vice Provost for Research

Agenda for
University Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 2007, 4 p.m.
Bodek Lounge, Houston Hall

I. Approval of the minutes of February 28, 2007. 1 minute

II. Follow-up comments or questions on Status Reports. 5 minutes

III. Reports by the President, Provost and other administrators on budgets and plans for the next academic year. Presentation 45 minutes, discussion 20 minutes

IV. Open Forum

A. Campus Blood Donations and the University’s Non-Discrimination Policy. 3 minutes

To place an item on the agenda for the next Open Forum, submit it to Vinnie Price, Steering Committee Chair, senate@pobox.upenn.edu by April 4, 2007.

V. Adjournment.

Penn ProWomen’s Event: March 26

The Penn Professional Women’s Network (Penn ProWomen) welcomes new and current members to attend its Spring Forum on Monday, March 26 from 3:30-5 p.m., in the Benjamin Franklin Room, Houston Hall. Dr. Janice Bellace, Deputy Provost will bring an “Overcoming Challenges in Building a Work Environment in Which Women Can Compete.” Refreshments will be served.

Penn ProWomen provides opportunities for women faculty and administrators to meet for intellectual exchange, to advocate policies and processes that support the advancement of women, to give recognition to the distinguished accomplishments of women and to provide opportunities for women students to meet accomplished women on the campus.

Since the group’s founding in 1948, they have worked to improve the status of women on campus and to provide assistance to women who have suffered gender discrimination. In 2004, the group changed its name from Association of Women Faculty, Staff and Administrators to Penn Professional Women’s Network, or Penn ProWomen. Membership is open to all Penn faculty and staff. For additional information see www.upenn.edu/pwc/prowomen/index.html.

Addendum to Penn-made Presidents

In addition to the Penn-made presidents in the recent issue (Almanac February 20), Dr. Lawrence M. Schall, J.D. ‘78, Ed.D. ’03, former co-director of Penn’s Executive Doctorate Program and adjunct faculty member of Penn’s GSE, was named president of Oglethorpe University, in Atlanta, GA, in 2005.

Another Penn-educated person has recently been named a president—Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, earned her B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in English, at Penn, and has been Chancellor at the University of Alaska at Anchorage since 2004, will become the president of Governors State University in University Park, IL, on July 1, 2007.

For a list, see www.upenn.edu/almanac/v471/n22/presidents.html which was compiled by the years by Almanac, with input from others. Another list, “Penn-Trained Presidents: A Selected Roster of Alumni, Faculty, Staff and Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania Who Have Served As Chief Executive Officers of Institutions of Higher Education,” arranged alphabetically by surname, was compiled and presented by the University Archives in 2003. It is on their website, www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/notables/highered/pennunleady.html.
Federal Budget

FY 2007

Congress recently passed, and the President signed on February 15, a continuing resolution solution for FY 2007. This legislation funds government programs and agencies for the remainder of FY 2007, which ends September 30, 2007. This legislation was necessary as Congress only approved two of the annual spending bills for FY 2007 (Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security) prior to adjourning the 109th Congress.

This legislation essentially holds funding for federal discretionary funding at FY 2006 levels, although there were some funding increases provided for medical and scientific research. For example, the National Institutes of Health will receive $28.9 billion, an increase of $619.5 million, or about 2.2 percent. The National Science Foundation’s research account will receive $4.7 billion, an increase of $335 million, or 7.7 percent, in order to fund innovation and competitiveness programs. Total NSF funding would be $5.9 billion, an increase of 6 percent over FY 06. In addition, the Department of Energy’s Office of Science, again a key scientific research agency, will receive $3.8 billion, an increase of $200 million, or 5.6 percent. Further, this legislation also includes an increase of $260 for the maximum Pell Grant, bringing the maximum grant level to $4,310.

FY 2008 Budget

On February 5, the President presented the Administration’s budget request for FY 2008 to Congress. This spending blueprint requests $2.9 trillion for federal government programs and agencies for FY 2008. Below is a brief summary of some of the key agencies and initiatives outlined in the budget package:

NIH—the budget request for this agency is $28.62 billion for FY 08, which represents an increase of $232 million over what was estimated to be the final funding level for FY 07. However, the final funding level for FY 07 which was just approved would provide NIH with a funding level of $28.83 billion (net of transfers and programmatic adjustments). As such, it is our understanding that when all factors are considered, FY 08 funding for the NIH would represent a reduction of approximately $500 million below the final FY 07 level.

NSF—the budget request for the National Science Foundation for FY 08 is $6.4 billion. This represents an increase of $409 million, or 6.8 percent, above the FY 07 budget request. Of this amount, $5.13 billion is requested for NSF’s Research and Related Activities account, which represents an increase of $366 million, or 7.7 percent, over the FY 07 budget request. When compared to the FY 07 funding resolution levels, overall NSF funding would see an increase of 8.7 percent, while the R&RA account would be increased by 10.0 percent.

DOE—the Department of Energy’s Office of Science would be funded at a level of $5.4 billion under the Administration’s proposal. This represents an increase of $296 million, or 7.2 percent, above the FY 07 request. In comparison to the final FY 07 CR funding level, this Office of Science would see an increase of approximately $600 million, or 15.8 percent.

Department of Education—the budget proposal would provide $90.4 billion for federal student financial aid, an increase of $7.3 billion, or 8.8 percent, over FY 07. However, the budget also recommends the elimination of 44 programs, including the Perkins Loan program, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), and the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnerships (LEAP). The budget proposal also calls for a 4.7 percent increase in the maximum Pell Grant of $4,100 in FY 08, and increases of $200 per year until it reaches $5,400 in 2012. (The recently approved funding resolution increased the Pell Grant to $4,310 for FY 07.) In addition, the budget proposal would level-fund the GAANN and Javits programs at $30.1 million and $9.8 million, respectively, and would provide $826 million for TRIO programs, the same as the FY 07 funding level. Further, the budget contains a number of proposals that would modify existing federal student loan policies, such as increasing the annual borrowing limits of third and fourth year students by $2,000 to a level of $7,500 and increasing aggregate loan limits for all students.

Department of Defense—the request would provide $1.43 billion for Defense Basic Research (6.1) programs. This represents a reduction of approximately $135 million, or 8.7 percent, from the FY 07 funding level but is $6 million more than was requested in FY 07. For Applied Research (6.2), the budget proposes a funding level of $4.36 billion, a reduction of $972 million, or 18.2 percent, from FY 07. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is proposed to receive $3.09 billion in FY 08, a decrease of approximately $49 million, or 1.6 percent, from FY 07 level. Of this amount, approximately $153 million would be directed toward research in the Defense Research and Engineering (DAR) account, representing an increase of about $7.4 million, or 5.1 percent, over the previous year.

NASA—the overall funding request for this agency for FY 08 is $17.3 billion, which represents an increase of 3 percent, or approximately $517 million over the FY 07 request (and is a 6.5 percent increase over the FY 07 funding resolution total). The requested level of funding for the Science, Aeronautics and Exploration (SAE) account is approximately $10.5 billion for FY 08, a decrease of $167 million, or about 1.6 percent, below the FY 07 request, (however, it also represents an increase of about 4.1 percent over the FY 07 funding resolution level). Of this amount, the Science Mission directorate would be funded at a level of $3.5 billion, an increase of $49 million, or one percent, over the FY 07 requested level (but an increase of 5 percent over the final FY 07 level); the Aeronautics Research Mission directorate funding level would be $554 million, an increase of about $25 million, or 4.7 percent over the FY 07 request but a decrease of approximately 38 percent from the FY 07 funding resolution total; and, the Exploration Systems Mission directorate would be funded at a level of $3.9 billion, a decrease of $228 million, or 0.5 percent, below the FY 07 request (but about a 15.4 percent increase over the FY 07 funding resolution amount).

NEH—the proposed funding level for the National Endowment for the Humanities for FY 08 is $141 million, which represents an increase of approximately $400,000 over the FY 07 request. Of this amount, the We the People program would receive $152 million, the same level of funding as the FY 07 request.

It should be noted that the Administration’s budget submission to Congress marks the beginning of the process whereby Congress will evaluate the President’s funding request and determine funding priorities for the coming fiscal year during the appropriations process.

Office of Federal Affairs: Staff Changes

The Office of Government and Community Affairs is pleased to announce that Larry Bertuola has been named the new Director of Federal Affairs for the University. In this capacity, he will participate in the advocacy efforts of Penn’s Office of Federal Affairs in Washington, DC, and will also be available as a resource on campus. Mr. Bertuola has previously served the University as the Associate Director of Federal Relations.

Last summer, as Penn’s Office of Federal Affairs moved to D.C., Bill Andresen joined the University as Associate Vice President of Federal Affairs after serving in a variety of leadership positions in government and the private sector in Washington, DC. Mr. Andresen started his Capitol Hill career as Chief of Staff to Mel Levine, whom he had previously served in the California State Assembly. Mr. Andresen was named “One of the 50 Most Influential Congressional Staffers” by Roll Call, a Capitol Hill newspaper, on three occasions. He has a bachelor’s degree in international relations from the University of Southern California. He sits on the Board of Directors for the Center for Excellence in Education and is a Senior Advisor to Third Way, a non-profit public policy organization.

City Budget

City of Philadelphia

Mayor John F. Street delivered his final budget address to City Council on February 22, 2007, outlining a $3.9 billion budget for fiscal year 2008 and a five-year spending plan that drastically reduces the surplus and fails to deliver any new tax cuts.

Public safety, crime prevention, neighborhood development, and children’s programs were all winners in the Mayor's farewell budget, as he strives to strengthen his legacy. There’s $1 million for emergency management, and $2 million for demolitions as part of Street’s signature anti-blight program.

On the chopping block: the budget proposes a reversal of the $1 million increase Mayor Street bestowed on the Community College of Philadelphia last year. Funding is also set to expire in FY 09 for a $5 million marketing program, and $2 million for demolitions as part of Street’s signature anti-blight program.

It should be noted that the Administration’s budget submission to Congress marks the beginning of the process whereby Congress will evaluate the President’s funding request and determine funding priorities for the coming fiscal year during the appropriations process.

Vanda McMurtry,
Vice President for Government and Community Affairs
Dr. Ira Harkavy, the University of Pennsylvania’s associate vice president and director of the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) spoke last month at a hearing on Mentoring and Community-Based Solutions to Delinquency and Youth Violence—on February 19, 2007—giving the following testimony to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, of which Senator Arlen Specter is a ranking member. Dr. Harkavy, CCP’s founding director, was one of the panelists who testified at the hearing which was held at the Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

Two Decades of Collaboration Between Penn and the Community: Solving Strategic, Real-World, Complex Problems and Advancing the Public Good

Ira Harkavy

Truly democratic partnerships between universities and schools are a powerful strategy for changing communities, schools, and higher education itself—and for reducing youth violence. The partnerships described below represent the fruits of over two decades of collaboration between the University of Pennsylvania (Penn), community organizations, and the public schools in West Philadelphia. Penn’s Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) together with community partners have created university-assisted community schools that are centers of education and engagement that provide a range of services for students, their parents, and other community members. This approach works toward tapping, integrating, mobilizing, and galvanizing the resources of communities, including colleges and universities, to improve the community, the school, and the education of students.

Somewhat more specifically, the strategy assumes that like colleges and universities, public schools can function as environment-changing institutions and can become the strategic centers of broad-based partnerships that genuinely engage and coordinate a wide variety of community organizations and institutions. Public schools “belong” to all members of the community. They are particularly well suited, therefore, to function as neighborhood “hubs” or “nodes” around which local partnerships and youth programs can be generated and formed. When they play that role, schools function as community institutions par excellence; they then provide a decentralized, democratic, community-based response to significant community problems and help young people make positive contributions to the community and learn better (and at increasingly higher levels) through action-oriented, collaborative, community-based problem-solving.

Begun in 1985 by Penn and its school and community partners, the university-assisted community schools program now involves over 6,000 children and youth, parents, and community members each year at its six primary sites in West Philadelphia. Additional school day, after school, family and community programming reach several thousand more individuals. Through collaboration between school, university, and community partners, each university-assisted community school site has a variety of locally determined activities and partnerships, often with a focus on health, environment, or arts and culture. The programs engage students (K-16+) in real world, hands on, community problem solving that is integrated into the school curriculum as well as through extended day, weekend, and summer programs.

Young people at each of these schools are engaged in creative work designed to advance their skills, abilities and personal and social development through service to their school, families and community. At Penn, students and faculty are also engaged in service learning that entails the development and application of knowledge to solve local problems along with critical reflection on the impact of their work. Currently, over 150 such courses have been offered (57 in the 2006-07 academic year), engaging more than 60 faculty members from an array of disciplines. More than 1400 students participated in academically based community service (i.e., problem solving service learning) courses in the 2005-2006 academic year. Penn students support all aspects of the university-assisted community school program by assisting in its evening, weekend, extended-day, and school day programs.

The Sayre High School-Penn University-Assisted Community School Initiative

The Sayre High School-Penn university-assisted community school initiative provides an example of how these principles have been put into practice. The principal of Sayre School first approached Penn’s Center for Community Partnerships with the idea that having a health center on site would be a boon to the students and the community. How to galvanize the necessary resources was a major hurdle. Then, in the spring and summer of 2002, a group of Penn undergraduates in an academically based community service (ABCS) seminar focused their efforts on helping to solve the healthcare crisis in West Philadelphia. The students’ research and work with the community led them to propose establishment of a community health promotion and disease prevention program at a public school in West Philadelphia, the Sayre Middle School. Their research proved to be so compelling that it led to the development of a school-based Community Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Program at Sayre Middle School. (In 2006-2007, Sayre completed a three-year transition and became a high school.)

The school-based Community Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Program at the Sayre School was formally launched in January of 2003. It functions as the central component of a university-assisted community school designed both to advance student learning and democratic development, as well as to help strengthen families and institutions within the community. The multidisciplinary character of the Sayre Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Program (SHPDPP) enables it to be integrated into the curriculum and co-curriculum of both the public school and the university, assuring an educational focus as well as sustainability of the program. To support this aim, Penn faculty and students from across the University now work at Sayre through new and existing courses, internships, and research projects. As an outcome of the integration of health promotion and service activities in the curriculum, Sayre students serve as agents of healthcare change in the Sayre neighborhood.

A considerable number and variety of Penn academically-based community service courses provide the resources and support that make it possible to operate, sustain, and develop the SHPDPP. Literally hundreds of Penn students (professional, graduate and undergraduate) and some twenty faculty members, from a wide range of Penn schools and departments, work at Sayre. Since they are performing community service while engaged in academic research, teaching and learning, they are simultaneously practicing their specialized skills and developing, to some extent at least, their moral and civic consciousness and democratic character. And since they are engaged in a highly integrated common project, they are also learning how to communicate, interact, and collaborate with each other in unprecedented ways, which have broadened their academic horizons.

In spring of 2004, the SHPDPP established a community board to apply to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for funding to create a federally qualified health center. The application was successful, and the Sayre health clinic opened in 2006 to serve students, their families, and other community members.

The Dean of Penn Medicine, Arthur Rubenstein, recognized the potential of the SHPDPP when he appointed Barnett L. Johnson, Jr., M.D. to the (continues on next page)
newly created position of Senior Associate Dean for Diversity and Community Outreach in the School of Medicine. Dr. Johnson, a Professor of Dermatology and the Senior Medical Officer of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, had played the key role in engaging the Medical School with the Sayre project, recruiting students, residents, house staff, and faculty to contribute to various health education and health promotion activities.

For example, Sayre eleventh graders in an Intake Medical Procedures course work with Penn students learning how to perform the basics of intake medical procedures (blood pressure, height and weight, glucose, reflex, vision, etc.). Sayre students also learn about prominent community health concerns (hypertension, obesity, diabetes, etc.) and will gain clinical experience by operating an after school health monitoring clinic. When the health clinic opens its permanent facility in Summer 2007, Sayre students will work with Penn doctors and nurses, health professional students, and community members to provide basic intake services, medical information, and referrals.

The Sayre-Penn model extends student learning and positive youth development into out of school time as well—the time when crimes by youth are most often committed. With Sayre as a site for a city-funded Beacon and a 21st Century Community Learning Center (21C-CLC), the building is open to students of all ages to participate in a myriad of academic, enrichment, and fitness activities, carrying the school day health focus into after school programs, offering a safe space to youth of all ages. A Community Advisory Board oversees the Beacon/21C-CLC, and staff from Penn’s Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) coordinate the activities. Sayre represents a unique and highly effective integration of city, community, and university resources that aim to enhance the educational, recreational, health related opportunities, and improve the overall quality of life of the students at Sayre High School, its feeder schools, and the surrounding community. Examples of program activities include:

• The 9-12 Grade After School Program combines elements of academic support, college and career mentoring, real-world job experience/training, and extracurricular activities. These programs engage over one hundred high school students and their families. Several activities are highlighted below:
  o Early College Planning (ECP): Penn undergraduates mentor 9th and 10th graders to plan for a successful high school career and beyond.
  o Let’s Get Ready! assists 11th graders with the college process and preparing for the SATs.
  o Youth Job Corps employs over thirty Sayre students as peer health educators, after school instructors for K-8 program, and in community organizing and asset mapping.

• The Sayre’s evening community programming includes Family Fitness Nights, run by Penn staff and students twice a week. Nearby 100 community members participate in recreational, self-improvement, education, and health classes at no charge to them.

• The Saturday Basketball League (boys and girls age thirteen and under) is led by Penn undergraduates. The league also holds practices and tutoring sessions Mondays through Fridays after school.

• The Sayre Beacon Pride Summer Camp involves over 120 community children age five to twelve in educational, recreational, and enrichment activities five days a week, as well as high school youth as camp counselors.

Most recently, as issues of youth violence have flared in Philadelphia, the Sayre-Penn university-assisted community school has begun to address these issues more directly. The following are several examples of recent developments:

• CCP is working closely with the District Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell to coordinate and implement a Safe Corridors program to be staffed by community volunteers. The Beacon Youth Council (12 Sayre student leaders) is also working with Penn students, using GIS technology, to map local “safe havens.”

• The community school staff is organizing parents, community leaders and local groups to assist in efforts to address neighborhood violence.

• The District Attorney’s Office, DHS, the School District, the City, and the University are supporting anti-truancy initiatives, through the REACH (Real Every Day Alternatives—Choices and Help) program.

• The preceding examples illustrate some of the ways in which Penn’s CCP has coordinated University-wide efforts in partnership with the community in order to create and develop community school programs. The Sayre program, which is very much in its early days, is the most ambitious project. It aims to become a university-assisted community school with a comprehensive community problem solving curriculum and community-wide program that is fully integrated across both the Sayre curriculum and the curriculum of a number of Penn’s schools. The work at Sayre demonstrates that higher education can become a permanent anchor for revitalizing schools and communities and advancing student learning and development if the vast resources it possesses, particularly its faculty, students, and staff, are brought to bear in a coordinated fashion. The Penn-Sayre project further demonstrates that when universities such as Penn—give very high priority to actively solving strategic, real-world, complex problems in and with their local community, a much greater likelihood exists that they will significantly advance the public good and realize their own potential.

Conclusion

In summary, university-assisted community schools serve, educate, and activate students, their families, and other local residents. Students not only learn by doing, but also learn by and for service. Simultaneously, the university benefits from the unique, critical opportunities community schools provide for learning, research, civic consciousness, outreach, and program development. Putting this theory into practice, the Sayre-Penn university-assisted community school initiative appears to hold promise for West Philadelphia, Penn, and other communities and universities across the country. (Penn’s University-Assisted Community School Replication Project, to date, has included twenty-two colleges and universities and their school and community partners; teams from an additional seventy-five higher education institutions have been trained on the model.) To speed and advance the development of university-assisted community schools as a vehicle to make our schools and communities safer for students, teachers, parents, neighbors and businesses, the Federal government could:

1. Develop and apply innovative funding strategies that provide support to broad-based local coalitions designed to develop and sustain university-assisted community schools.

2. Create a multi-agency federal commission designed to advance and implement university-assisted community schools.

3. Strengthen and expand community-based work-study to engage more college students with local public schools.

I want to applaud Senator Specter and the Senate Judiciary Committee for holding these most important hearings. Thank you for your time and interest.

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University Presidential Perspectives from William Rainey Harper to Amy Gutmann

Through the school system, the character of which, in spite of itself, the university determines and in a large measure controls . . . through the school system every family in this entire broad land of ours is brought into touch with the university; for from it proceeds the teachers or the teachers’ teachers.

—William Rainey Harper, The University and Democracy (1899)

We prepare teachers for the public schools, and we admit their students. So it is our problem just as much as theirs.


. . . It is my firm conviction that the great universities of the 21st century will be judged by their ability to help solve our most urgent social problems.

—William R. Greiner, President, SUNY, Buffalo Universities and Community Schools (1994)

To be a great university, we must first be a great local university.

—Shirley Strum Kenny, President, SUNY, Stony Brook New York Times (August 18, 1999)

No one mistakes Penn for an ivory tower. And no one ever will. Through our collaborative engagement with communities all over the world, Penn is poised—and I think uniquely poised—to advance the central values of democracy in a great urban city: life, liberty, opportunity, and mutual respect.

Effective engagement of these values begins right here at home. We cherish our relations with our neighbors, relationships that have strengthened Penn academically and . . . have strengthened the vitality of West Philadelphia. . . .

—Amy Gutmann, President, University of Pennsylvania Inaugural Address, “The Penn Compact,” (October 2004)
Human Resources: Upcoming Programs

Baby Prep 101: Preparing for a Baby

If you’re planning to start a family or add to your existing family, please join us for the Spring 2007 health series Baby Prep 101: Preparing for a Baby in Your Life. Experts from Penn and the University of Pennsylvania Health System will present helpful information and field your questions at these free lunchtime sessions. For more information or to register, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/quality/workshop.asp, or contact Human Resources at (215) 898-5116 or suszsmith@hr.upenn.edu.

Pregnancy, the Right Start; April 4; noon to 1 p.m.; free. All the good advice in the world still won’t fully prepare you for having a baby, but there is information that can help. This workshop will give you many tips and help you prepare your body and your mind for this life-changing experience. Emphasis will be on pre-pregnancy issues, including how to prepare your body to become pregnant and steps you can take to have a healthy pregnancy and delivery. You should leave the workshop feeling better equipped to deal with the process of bringing a new child into the world.

Work-Life Balance Workshops

Dealing with the demands of work and personal life can be tough. That’s why we offer a variety of free workshops led by experts from Penn’s Employee Assistance Program and Work & Family Benefit provider, Penn Behavioral Health, to offer support for your personal and professional life challenges. Note that each workshop listed below will include an optional Q&A period from 12:30 to 1 p.m. For more information and/or to pre-register, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/quality/workshop.asp or call (215) 573-2471.

Tips for Working with Team Members for Better Results; April 4; 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; free. Work moves quickly these days, with more to do and seemingly less time to do it. Co-workers are finding it more difficult than ever to jeopardize the power of building good working relationships and fostering respectful interactions. Participants will learn how to create goals of teambuilding, initiate teambuilding, and identify potential problems while teambuilding.

Stress Management; April 17; 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; free. Learn to identify when you are relaxed, how to manage it, and how to use it to improve your quality of life. Participants will discover the physical and mental signs of relaxation, and specific relaxation exercises and techniques.

Model Supervisor Award Finalists

Human Resources is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2007 Model Supervisor Award. This is the first year for this new component of the Models of Excellence Program. The 2007 finalists are: Joann Desiderio, Wharton Executive Education, the Wharton School Pamela Lampitt, Conference Services, Business Services Division Rosemary Lombardi, Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital, the Ryan Veterinary Medicine

They were selected as finalists based on their superior embodiment of the behaviors developed to reflect the University’s standards for a “Model” Supervisor. For a complete listing of the Model Supervisor behaviors, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/quality/models/model_supervisor_award.asp.

We will announce the award winner at the Models of Excellence Award Ceremony which is scheduled for April 19, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Annenberg Center. This is a wonderful celebration of staff member and supervisor contributions to the University. Please save this date and time on your calendar and encourage others to attend. For more info: QOWL@hr.upenn.edu or call (215) 573-2471.

Division of Human Resources

Professional and Personal Development

Take advantage of the many development opportunities provided by Human Resources! Simply pre-register for programs by visiting the online Course Catalog at www.hr.upenn.edu (click on Course Catalog at the top of the page), or contact Learning and Education at www.hr.upenn.edu/learning or (215) 898-5116. Tuition Benefit Information Session; April 4; noon to 1 p.m.; free. At this session, you’ll learn more about the Tuition Assistance programs, see a demonstration of the online tuition management system for the Direct Grant Program, and have the opportunity to ask any questions you have about tuition benefits. If you’re using the benefit for yourself or your dependents already or are planning to in the future, this will be a good opportunity to learn more.

Brown Bag Matinee—It’s So Simple; April 11; noon to 1 p.m.; free. This video shows how to trust, respect and support among co-workers will increase productivity and retention and improve customer service and growth. It all happens by giving employees the freedom to do their jobs well, the freedom to learn from mistakes, and the freedom to love their work!

Writing Efficient Email; April 12; 9 a.m. to noon; $60. In this class you will learn the components of good writing as they pertain to writing emails that is clear, concise, active, and well-organized. Find out what makes email writing and etiquette different from any other format of business writing. An integral part of the class will be learning how to revise your own work, including micro- and macro-editing skills.

Career Focus Brown Bag—Business Etiquette: How to Get Ahead; April 17; noon to 1 p.m.; free. Have you ever been embarrassed or unsure about how to appear at work? Learn how to dress, speak, and act appropriately both at work and with co-workers when outside of work. Learn practical tips that will aid in your development as a professional. This session will include the top ten career killers and how to avoid them, and will provide useful techniques for communicating your professionalism.

Career Focus Brown Bag—Mentors@Penn Information Session; April 27; noon to 1 p.m.; free. Mentoring provides many benefits and opportunities, whether you are a mentor or mentee. Through a mentoring relationship, you can learn and grow, increase your own job satisfaction, and focus on your professional and career goals. At this information session, you’ll learn more about the program and find out how to apply.

Career and Life Strategies for Baby Boomers

Career and Life Strategies for Baby Boomers includes monthly lunchtime sessions on topics generally relevant to Penn staff within 2-10 years of retirement. Even if you attended some of these sessions when we ran the program last year, you may want to take another look because several NEW topics have been added: how to find a job that is right for you, ensure that the freedom to learn from mistakes, and the freedom to love their work!

Opening on March 26 at the Burison Gallery is a photographic exhibit, Faces and Abstractions, by Max Buten. A reception will be held on Friday, March 30 from 6-8 p.m. The exhibit runs through April 27.

Dramatic Impressions: Japanese Theatre Prints from the Gilbert Luber Collection, at the Arthur Ross Gallery, displays works of Natori Shunsen, a designer of woodblock portraits of kabuki theatre actors, produced between 1916 and 1929. On Saturday, March 31 a symposium will be held in conjunction with the exhibit in room 17, Logan Hall. Register at nirley@sas.upenn.edu.

WPSA Nominations: April 9

All weekly-paid employees are invited to self-nominate or submit names to become a member of the WPSA Board or an officer for 2007-2008. Contact Candice C. Milbourne Cozart; e-mail: cdenerv@pobox.upenn.edu or phone (215) 898-6993 no later than Monday, April 9, 2007. Who is eligible? Any full-time non-union weekly-paid employee is eligible to vote and run for office in the assembly.

Executive Board Members: 20 positions are available. The Executive Board Members participate in Executive Board meetings, and can serve on other University committees. From the membership of the Executive Board: the following positions will be selected for 2007-2008.

Chair: The Chairperson shall be the primary advisor to the Board or an officer for 2007-2008. Candice C. Milbourne Cozart; e-mail: cdenerv@pobox.upenn.edu or phone (215) 898-6993.

Vice-Chair: The Vice-Chairperson shall be the primary advisor to the Chairperson in University matters. In the temporary absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume all duties and responsibilities otherwise handled by the Chairperson.

Vice-Chairperson Elect: In the temporary absence of the Vice-Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson Elect shall assume all duties and responsibilities otherwise handled by the Vice-Chairperson. After one year of service, the Vice-Chairperson Elect shall serve as Vice-Chairperson.

Secretary: The Secretary is responsible for all routine correspondence of the Board. The Secretary acts as chief communications officer for the WPSA.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be held accountable and responsible for handling the finances and maintaining all financial records of the Board. Such records should be made available for audit upon request from the Board.

The home department and campus extension of the nominee should be included along with a brief bio (position, length of service, etc.). A supporting statement can be submitted, if desired. The current Executive Board will compile the names and contact the nominees. A list of candidates will be prepared and distributed to the WPSA membership prior to the election on April 19, 2007 from noon-2 p.m. in the Bishop White Room, 2nd floor, Houston Hall.

—Candice C. Milbourne Cozart, Chair, WPSA
RESEARCH
Postmenopausal Women Needed for Endocrine Study. The University of Pennsylvania Health System/Division of Endocrinology seeks non-diabetic women 50 to 79 years old. Eligible volunteers will receive free medical exams and blood test results. Participants will be compensated. Contact Dr. Pa-
tel at (215) 614-0579 for more information.

Calling All Bones: African-American men ages 61-78 AND Caucasian men ages 61-78 invited to take part in a research study. You will not be required to take any medications. We will evaluate the health and strength of your bones. You will receive results of your bone test. You will be compensated for your time. Call (215) 590-0499.

Would you like to lose weight? The University of Pennsylvania's Center for Weight and Eating Disor-
der is offering a 1-year weight loss research study that combines diet and exercise along with the use of an investigational weight loss medication or pla-
cebo (sugar pill). You may be eligible if you are between the ages of 18 and 65 year old, a non-smok-
er, overweight (at least 30% over recommended weight), in good overall health and are able to at-
tend behavior modification group sessions. Particip-
ants will be compensated for their time and travel.

For more information, call (215) 746-8810.

University of Pennsylvania is seeking wom-

The University of Pennsylvania Police Department
Community Crime Report

About the Crime Report: Below are all Crimes Against Persons and Crimes Against Society from the cam-
pus report for March 5-11, 2007. Also reported were 8 Crimes Against Property (8 thefts). Full reports are avail-
able at: www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v53/v53r26opportun.html

The University of Pennsylvania Police Department
MUSIC
26 Instant Composers Pool Orchestra; 8 p.m.;
Bodeck Lounge, Houston Hall (Ars Nova Workshop).

READING
20 Harold Gullan-Jumping Through Hoops;
5:30 p.m.; Penn Bookstore (Bookstore).

TALKS
26 Women’s Health in War Zones; Richard Gar-
field, nursing; 12:30 p.m.; rm. 110, Claire M. Fagan Hall (Nursing).

Library of Conscience: The Attack on Equal
Respect; Martha Nussbaum, University of Chicago;
1:30 p.m.; auditorium, BRB ; register: www.
mindreligion.com (Nuclear Medicine).

27 Roger Williams and the Foundations of the
Fairness Tradition; Martha Nussbaum, University of Chicago;
12:30 p.m.; auditorium, BRB ; register:
www:mindreligion.com (Nuclear Medicine).

Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil;
John Glaizvmin, Andrew Mellon Post-Doctoral
Fellow in the Humanities; 5:30 p.m.; Penn Hu-
manities Forum (PHF).

28 Fearing Strangers; Martha Nussbaum, Uni-
versity of Chicago; noon; auditorium, BRB ; regis-
ter: www:mindreligion.com (Nuclear Medicine).

Discussion Panel–Liberty of Conscience: In
Defense of America's Tradition of Religious Equal-
ity; 3 p.m.; Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center, 2nd
Floor, Class of ’55 Room; register: www:mindrel-
gion.com (Nuclear Medicine).

What Penn (Nursing) Has Done, Is Doing and
Should Do for World Health Globality; Patricia
D'Antonio, Loretta Sweet Jemmott, William Mc-
Cool, nursing; 4 p.m.; rm. 110, Claire M. Fagan Hall (Nursing).

CLASSIFIEDS—PERSONAL

HOUSe FOR scALE
4254 Regent Square; Attractive, three-story row on trek-
ed, family oriented street. Ten minutes from Penn. In
Penn Alexander Public School catchment zone. Access to public transit. Features: historically rebuff; four bedrooms, two baths, modern kitchen, dining and living rooms; working fireplace; central air; new hot wa-
ter heater; new roof. Asking $499,500. Contact Brian at
byach@bcj.com or (215) 386-2062 after 6 p.m.

FOR RENT
OCNJ Beachblock (Gardens): 20% Penn dis-
count, 2.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, sleeps six, all conve-
iences, parking, garage, laundry, A/C, premium cable,
Steve (610) 565-1312.

18th District Report
8 incidents with 2 arrests (including 5 aggravated assaults and 3 robberies) were reported between
March 5-11, 2007 by the 18th District covering the Schuylkill River to 49 th St. & Market St. to Woodland Ave.

03/06/07 4:04 PM 3000 Walnut St
Male wanted on warrant

03/07/07 9:55 AM 3900 Market St
Complainant harassed by offender/Assault

03/09/07 5:24 PM 4131 Chestnut St
Complainant robbed/vehicle taken/Assault

03/10/07 1:37 AM 200 Hollenback Dr
Offender cited for disorderly conduct

03/10/07 6:56 PM 3800 Chestnut St
Offender cited for city code violation

03/11/07 7:55 PM 38th St
Offender operating vehicle while intoxicated/Assault

Penn's Depression Research Unit is conducting re-
search into alternative, herbal treatments of anx-
xiety. Symptoms of anxiety may include: nervous-
ess, tension, difficulty relaxing, excessive worry-

Penn’s Depression Research Unit is conducting re-
search into non-hormonal, herbal treatments for peri
and post menopausal anxiety symptoms.

Symptoms of non-menopausal anxiety, tension, sleep difficulty, concentration problems, mood
changes and hot flashes. Those who qualify will re-
ceive an initial evaluation and may take part in a re-
search study with Black Cohosh for up to 3 months.

For more information call the DRU at (215) 662-3462.

SAVE THE DATE
Global Health Career Day: Presentations, panels and discussions regarding career opportunities and
academic programs. For more information call
SOM Global Health Programs. RSPV globhealth@ mail.med.upenn.edu required for this free event.

Saturday, March 31, 7:30-9 PM in All Au-
ditorium. More information: www.med.upenn.edu/
globalhealth/globalhealthcareerday.shtml.

Almanac is not responsible for contents of classified ad material.

Submissions for classified ads are due every Thursday for the following Tuesday’s issue.

For information call (215) 898-5274 or visit www.upenn.edu/almanac/faqs.html#ad

Police Searching for Gift Card Trio
Three women caught on the CCTV camera recording shown on Action News on 3/14/07, may be
linked to credit card thefts in the University City area. The Penn Police, in conjunction with Philadel-
phia Police, and other local law enforcement agen-
cies, are coordinating their efforts in order to address this issue. Anyone with information should im-
mediately notify the UPPD detective bureau at (215) 898-
4485. For a link to the video see Almanac’s website.

The University of Pennsylvania Police Department
8 incidents with 2 arrests (including 5 aggravated assaults and 3 robberies) were reported between
March 5-11, 2007 by the 18th District covering the Schuylkill River to 49 th St. & Market St. to Woodland Ave.

03/05/07 3:04 PM 5100 Market St
Aggravated Assault

03/08/07 2:23 PM 4300 Walnut St
Aggravated Assault

03/08/07 6:00 PM 5145 Pine St
Aggravated Assault

03/08/07 6:30 PM 4512 Locust St
Robbery

03/08/07 4:40 PM 4600 Ludlow St
Aggravated Assault

03/09/07 5:22 PM 4113 Chestnut St
Robbery/Assault

03/10/07 8:40 AM 4946 Sansom St
Aggravated Assault

03/11/07 1:28 AM 4200 Chester Ave
Aggravated Assault/Assault

CLASSIFIEDS—UNIVERSITY

March 20, 2007

ALMANAC  March AT PENN www.upenn.edu/almanac
Communication is the cornerstone of education. This truth is perhaps self-evident, but it provides a starting point for wrestling with many of the important issues in 21st century education. How do the communication needs of today’s student differ from previous generations? Despite modern technology, what aspects of traditional educational communication remain intact? How can modern technology help or hurt teacher-student communication?

Arguably, our students are, as a whole, better prepared than ever for college-level work. However, I also find that our students have a broader distribution of preparation than ever. Some of our entering students have sophisticated knowledge from advanced high school and college courses, while others come to college with limited or no exposure to certain disciplines. This broad range of preparation makes for a heightened communication challenge. How can we catch students up, while providing a stimulating environment for everyone?

Getting to know what the students know, and mixing remediation with advanced material, are vital course activities, particularly in introductory courses. In my estimation, there is no substitute for discussion and question and answer sessions during course meetings and office hours. For example, calculus is a prerequisite for Chemistry 101, but some students have not learned it or last studied it several years ago. Accordingly, some early-semester office hours discussions are dedicated to forming strategies for how students can master the calculus skills they need in time to use them for chemical understanding.

One area where high technology can make a significant difference is catching up students whose preparation is weak or rusty. Major publishers now provide significant on-line resources that enable students to teach or re-teach themselves basic concepts, with a motivating and useful set of images, ideas, and hints. It is an interesting balancing act to present participation in these resources as important (bordering on required) so that the students who need the help participate, while excelling well-prepared students from an exercise that will yield little additional knowledge. For Chemistry 101, I found that making the on-line material “required” and “graded” but “not counting toward the final grade” struck the right balance.

The modern professor needs to convey genuine enthusiasm both for the subject matter, and for interacting with the students. I think that students can easily detect professorial interest, and the students respond to these perceptions. It could be argued that students should be self-motivated learners. But as emphasized above in relation to preparation, the breadth of the student distribution of motivation, maturity, and seriousness of purpose is wider than ever. Some students realize that their career prospects hinge on mastering material provided by their college instructors, while others are waiting for the professor to look away in order to send a text message. How can we keep students interested in course material?

Modern education has revealed that students have a range of preferred ways of learning, and that each student will be more or less effective at learning depending on how s/he is approached. For example, some students are “auditory learners,” learning by hearing and speaking about ideas, while others are “visual learners,” absorbing material best that is accompanied by visual aids. Some students have become self-aware in this regard, explicitly seeking educational venues that meet their needs. Other students are not as fortunate, flourishing only in appropriate conditions without clear awareness of the issue. Clearly one key to keeping students learning is offering a range of learning styles.

Professors can adapt to this challenge by broadening the range of communication styles they adopt. In foundational introductory science courses, there is a huge up-side opportunity for converting lectures into lecture/discussion sessions. The new trend of problem-solving learning can interest and engage students in ways that more traditional presentations of material cannot. And while professors cannot and probably should not mimic the stroboscopic presentation of images and ideas found in 21st century media, students can handle and welcome some nonlinearity of presentation. Some breaks in cognitive flow to present disparate intellectual threads that are then woven together later (perhaps by the students in discussion or other exercises) can better maintain student focus.

Here are two simple ways that I adapt to multiple learning styles in a large introductory course. I use an “overhead camera” to project images from our textbook to a screen overhead. This way, students can see vibrant, relevant images while we are discussing course material, and they know that they (and I!) don’t need to transcribe these images since they can note the page number and view them at home as they study. In addition, I have instituted “active learning” in a few key areas of freshman chemistry. For example, my students recently ran around the auditorium exchanging packets of energy (slips of paper actually) and achieved a Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution.

Another area where technology plays a crucial role is in student-teacher communication outside of class. The modern student yearns for intellectual connection with his/her instructors, and this is often conveyed through emails or discussion board postings. In private discussions with professors, a wide range of views are expressed. Some professors see this as a positive development, while others see 24-hour a day email as an intrusion and a burden. I would advocate an idealistic view. Generating genuine enthusiasm for subject matter is something we as instructors work to do. Correspondence from students is an indication of interest. To some extent, even emails of complaint indicate that the student cares enough to remain engaged in discussion. I try to view even these questions as “teachable moments.” When professors perform and expect high standards of conduct and achievement through their communications, mixed with compassion and understanding, dialog with the students becomes a continuing set of opportunities to shape and improve the course climate.

The students of the new century enter college with skills and expectations that differ from past generations of students. But I feel growing optimism that an understanding of our students’ backgrounds and approaches, mixed with an array of communication techniques can enable professors to engage our students, meet their educational needs, motivate them, and elevate their understanding.

Andrew M. Rappe is professor of chemistry in SAS and a recipient of the 1999 Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award.

This essay continues the series that began in the fall of 1994 as the joint creation of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Lindback Society for Distinguished Teaching.

See www.upenn.edu/almanac/teach/teachall.html for the previous essays.