President's Report to University Council
February 28, 2007

We mourn the passing of two great and beloved Penn scholars. Shortly before the winter break, we lost Bob Lucid, who had been the Faculty Master of Gregory House and a mainstay of Penn’s English Department for more than 40 years. Bob defied all categories. He was a biographer and close friend of Norman Mailer and a great advocate for undergraduate education. He chaired the Faculty Senate, Penn’s Collegiate Planning Board, and the Council of Undergraduate Deans. But he will always be remembered as the most inspiring of mentors to thousands of students, and as the guiding light behind Writers House. Bob will be missed.

We also lost Penn Chemistry Professor Alan MacDiarmid. He was a pre-eminent chemist and scientist whose path-breaking work on polymers had a revolutionary impact on technology and on chemistry, physics, and materials science. Alan was also a loyal friend of Penn, a beloved colleague, and enthusiastic teacher of freshmen and grad students alike. As important, he was a wonderfully modest and gracious colleague, even as a winner of the Nobel Prize. We will hold a memorial service for Alan MacDiarmid on March 2.

PIK Appointments.

I last reported that Penn had recruited a trio of Penn Integrates Knowledge professors. Our trio has become a quintet with the appointments of Philippe Bourgois, a medical anthropologist from the University of California, San Francisco; and Adrian Raine, a professor of psychology and neuroscience at the University of Southern California.

Dr. Raine is internationally renowned for his integration of biological and social perspectives on the prediction and explanation of violent behavior. He will hold appointments in the Department of Criminology of the School of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Psychiatry of the School of Medicine.

Dr. Bourgois has earned international acclaim for cross-disciplinary research with inner-city drug abusers. He will hold appointments in the Department of Anthropology in the School of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Family Practice and Community Medicine in the School of Medicine.
**Admissions Update**

We are attracting ever more talented and more diverse undergraduates to Penn. We experienced a 10 percent increase in applications for the Class of 2011— the largest in the Ivy League this year – to reach an all-time record of 22,500, beating last year’s mark by 2,100 applications.

This number includes a 20% increase in Black/African American applications, an 18% increase in Hispanic applications, and an 8% increase in Native American applications over last year. We also saw a 19% increase in the number of international applications.

**Environmental Sustainability Commitment**

Penn continues to be a University of firsts. Now, we are the first Ivy League University to become a signatory to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. Global warming is a defining issue of the 21st century, and Penn will be defined by our ability to develop a sustainability plan that achieves climate neutrality by 2009. This includes completing a comprehensive inventory of all our greenhouse gas emissions; purchasing at least 15 percent of our electricity from renewable sources; adopting an energy efficient appliance purchasing program; committing to a policy that new construction be built to the U.S. Green Building Council LEED Silver standards, or equivalent; and providing access to public transit for faculty, students and staff. Also, Penn will link climate neutrality and sustainability as part of our curriculum and student life activities, while also reporting on progress being made.

**Developments at Penn Vet**

Researchers at Penn Vet’s New Bolton Center have been able to replace an organ in mice by using “single-parent” stem cells (from either sperm or eggs alone.) If these exciting results can be translated into human studies, this procedure could significantly advance the alleviation of human disease while avoiding some of the ethical issues that currently surround embryonic stem cell science.
We were saddened that the race horse Barbaro lost his battle against laminitis at New Bolton Center last month and had to be euthanized. But the battle against this devastating equine disease is far from lost. Barbaro’s owners Roy and Gretchen Jackson have given a $3 million gift to Penn Vet to endow the Dean W. Richardson chair in honor of Barbaro’s surgeon. The chair marks a major new Penn Vet initiative to fight laminitis that will include training programs and research toward new treatments of equine diseases.

Administrative Update

Finally, I am pleased to report the newest addition to our leadership team, Vice President and Chief of Staff Greg Rost. Mr. Rost serves as a senior policy advisor to the President, working closely with deans and senior administrators, with the Office of Government and Community Affairs, and with the Secretary’s Office on trustee and overseer initiatives. He also will manage financial and administrative functions for the Office of the President.

Greg Rost most recently was Chief of Staff to the President of Temple University. He served eight years in the administration of former Philadelphia Mayor Edward G. Rendell, including three years as his Chief of Staff. Prior to that time, Mr. Rost was deputy director of Penn’s Fels Center of Government from 1989 to 1992. He received an M.G.A. degree in 1989 from Penn.