MEMORANDUM

To: Members of University Council
From: Amy Gutmann, President
Date: December 4, 2013
Subject: Report to the University Council

Welcome back from what I hope was an enjoyable Thanksgiving break. Early in November, Penn celebrated the groundbreaking for our New College House. We enjoyed an excellent turnout on Hill Field as our honored guests, the Lauder family and Steve and Barbara Heyman, officially kicked off the construction process. From its impeccable design to the dynamic community it will foster, the New College House will set a high, lasting standard for the residential experience at Penn.

Also in November, we dedicated Penn Libraries’ new Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts. Thanks to the generosity of Jay and Jean Kislak, the 5th and 6th floors of Van Pelt are now a state-of-the-art center for exploring and preserving Penn’s outstanding collection. The Kislak Center is also home to our important digital archiving initiative, which is making Penn’s collection of rare books and manuscripts accessible online to scholars around the world.

The Class of 2018 is starting to take shape thanks to the hard work of Admissions Dean Eric Furda and his outstanding staff. Dean Furda reported 5,133 Early Decision applications, a 6.6 percent increase over last year’s count. The pool is very strong, with increases in academic quality and diversity. The pool also represents a very broad-based increase across all geographic regions of the U.S., as well as internationally.

Seven Penn professors were recently elected to the prestigious Institute of Medicine. The new Penn IOM members represent a full 10 percent of this year’s total inductees, a great honor for our entire University and an outstanding accomplishment for these faculty:

- Dr. Charles Bosk, professor of sociology in SAS and professor of anesthesiology and critical care.
- Dr. Phyllis Dennery, professor of pediatrics and director of Newborn Services.
- Dr. Jeffrey Drebin, John Rhea Barton Professor of Surgery and chair of the department of surgery.
- Dr. Gideon Dreyfuss, Isaac Norris Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics and Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator.
- Dr. Karen Glanz, George A. Weiss University Professor, professor of epidemiology and nursing and director of the Center for Health Behavior Research.
- Dr. Joan O’Brien, George E. de Schweinitz and William F. Norris Professor of Ophthalmology, chair of the department of ophthalmology, and director of the Scheie Eye Institute.
- Dr. George Shaw, professor of medicine and microbiology.

As we conclude the semester and prepare for the holiday season, I want to thank you for your service to the University Council. I wish you all great success in the last few weeks of classes and exams, and a pleasant, safe winter break.