PROVOST’S STATUS REPORT
University Council, September 2011

It is a pleasure to welcome everyone back to campus. I extend a special welcome to the newest member of the leadership team in the Provost’s Office: Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, the thirteenth Penn Integrates Knowledge Professor and the new Vice Provost for Global Initiatives. Our creation of this high-level position speaks to the increasing centrality of global engagement at the heart of Penn’s mission. Dr. Emanuel is a world-leading bioethicist who served most recently as Special Advisor for Health Policy to the Director of the White House Office of Management and as the founding Chair of the Department of Bioethics at The Clinical Center of the National Institutes of Health. At Penn, in addition to his role as Vice Provost, he will chair the new Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy in the Perelman School of Medicine.

At the end of last academic year, President Gutmann and I were proud to issue an Action Plan for Faculty Diversity and Excellence, which resulted from numerous discussions across the university, including at University Council. I hope that you will read it closely, and you will see that its next phase calls on each School to develop a plan for faculty diversification by May 2012. Other central elements include: Presidential Term Professorships, which will recruit scholars, across all levels and disciplines, who will advance faculty excellence and diversity; an Eminence and Innovation Fund, which will provide resources for scholarship and curricular initiatives related to inclusion, equity, and diversity; and Graduate and Dissertation Fellows, who will help mentor graduate students and advance the pipeline of outstanding future leaders for the benefit of all academic institutions.

In the coming year, we will bid farewell to two outstanding arts and culture leaders. Claudia Gould, the director of the Institute of Contemporary Art for the past twelve years, will leave Penn next month to become the Director of the Jewish Museum in New York City. Richard Hodges, the director of the Penn Museum, will complete his five-year term in June 2012 and then return to Europe to assume an academic leadership position. Richard and Claudia have been dynamic, visionary leaders, who have raised the profile of their institutions here at home and around the world. I am finalizing plans for the consultative committees to advise me on both appointments, and I will have more details in the weeks to come.

Finally, we congratulate the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships on its tenth anniversary, which will be celebrated this Tuesday, September 20, beginning at 5 PM, with an open house, reception, and evening of programs. CURF has played a vital role in enhancing undergraduate research at Penn, and we anticipate many years of growth in the future.

I look forward to working closely together in the year ahead.

Vincent Price
Provost