It is a pleasure to welcome Daniel Polsky, Professor of Medicine in the Perelman School of Medicine, as the new Executive Director of the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics. Prof. Polsky, who received his PhD in Economics from Penn in 1996, has been Director of Research at the LDI since 2008. His important interdisciplinary research in health economics – including his recent service on President Obama’s Council of Economic Advisors – makes him the ideal director to sustain the great strides that the LDI has made, during the past fourteen years, under the dynamic leadership of David Asch.

I am equally pleased to join President Gutmann in welcoming Penn’s new Presidential Term Professors. Enrique G. Mendoza, who will begin his appointment in January as Presidential Term Professor of Economics in the School of Arts & Sciences, brings to Penn great expertise in global macroeconomics and public policy, two of the most vital areas of contemporary economics. Chyke Doubeni, who came to Penn this summer as Presidential Term Associate Professor-Clinician Educator in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health of the Perelman School of Medicine, is an expert on racial disparities in health care, especially the effectiveness of screening tests in reducing cancer risks among low-income populations.

Presidential Term Professors, supported in part by a $2 million grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, are a key element of the Action Plan for Faculty Diversity and Excellence that President Gutmann and I published last year. Along these same lines, we initiated last year the first-ever survey of the standing faculty, to learn more about faculty perceptions of diversity and other components of their lives at Penn. The aggregate results of the survey can now be viewed at: http://www.upenn.edu/ir/Faculty2011.html. I thank the faculty members who took the time to complete this important instrument, and the results – from 73.5% of the faculty – indicate a strong level of overall satisfaction. At the same time, the survey helps suggest areas for future initiatives, which Vice Provost for Faculty Lynn Lees, working closely with the Deans, the Faculty Senate, and other university leaders, will work to identify as we move forward.

I encourage all members of the Penn community to visit the new Penn Global website: http://global.upenn.edu. This site provides a comprehensive overview of all of Penn’s global activities, with resources from Study Abroad and International Student and Scholar Services; to Global Support Services, risk management, and the Global Activities Registry; to our wide range of faculty research, global alumni clubs, and internship and research opportunities. It is exciting to see Penn’s diverse global engagements in one place, and I hope that everyone will have an opportunity to visit, bookmark, and use this valuable resource in the years ahead.

Vincent Price
Provost