It is a pleasure to welcome everyone back to University Council. We begin the year with an infusion of new energy in Penn’s senior leadership. I join President Gutmann in welcoming Deans Geoffrey Garrett at the Wharton School, John Jackson at the School of Social Policy and Practice, and Antonia Villarruel at the School of Nursing, all of whom took office this summer—along with Presidential Professor Wendell Pritchett, who has graciously agreed to serve this year as Interim Dean of Penn Law School. They are already bringing a wonderful dynamism and collegiality to campus and have received warm welcomes across their Schools and the Penn community. I trust that you will all come to know them well in the year ahead. In the Division of Recreation and Intercollegiate Athletics, Grace Calhoun has gotten off to an equally energetic start as the new Director, concluding the national search for a Head Coach of Wrestling and meeting with a wide range of students, coaches, and overseers to learn more about their perspectives on athletics and recreation at Penn.

We also begin the year with important enhancements across some major services for students. College Houses and Academic Services has created new leadership positions to address the needs of students in on-campus housing: one will concentrate specifically on first-year houses, one on four-year houses, and one on the high-rises. These new leaders, who begin their positions in October, will bring expertise and focus to these specific areas, learning more about the needs of our students at the differing stages of their Penn experience and helping to keep Penn ahead of best practices and national trends in on-campus housing. In the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, a new leadership position will now be dedicated exclusively to fellowships— including the Rhodes, Marshall, and Fulbright—helping to address the ever-growing interest of our students in these invaluable research opportunities.

Finally, we are pleased to begin the semester with the Chaplain’s Office relocated to Houston Hall. This central campus location will help further the essential work of this office and the Spiritual and Religious Life Center. This space previously housed the Family Resource Center, which has in turn relocated to the Graduate Student Center, where it will continue to serve as a significant resource for our students with children, allowing them to care for their families on campus and create cross-campus networks of support with other families. The Graduate Student Center and Family Resource Center welcome all members of the Penn community to an Open House at this new location (3615 Locust Walk), on October 9 from 3-5 PM.

I look forward to working together in the year ahead.

Vincent Price
Provost