It is a great pleasure to join President Gutmann in congratulating Penn’s two newly appointed deans, Prof. Vijay Kumar in the School of Engineering and Applied Science and Prof. Ted Ruger in the Law School, who both begin their terms on July 1. Many of you have already worked with them and share our confidence that they will be continue to be dynamic and substantive leaders of the Penn community in the years ahead. It is a tribute to Penn’s eminence that both searches attracted so many outstanding candidates from around the world – and that, in the end, we named two remarkable leaders already here at Penn. We are most grateful to Prof. Eduardo Glandt for his extraordinary 17-year tenure as Dean of SEAS and to Prof. Wendell Pritchett for his exemplary service this year as Interim Dean of the Law School. We will have numerous opportunities to thank and honor them before the end of the semester.

Over spring break, I led a delegation, including eight deans and dozens of distinguished faculty members, to launch the Penn Wharton China Center in Beijing’s Central Business District. The launch was a tremendous success, engaging hundreds of Penn alumni and leaders of business and higher education in China in two days of stimulating discussions and research presentations. The Center will now host several months of events, featuring all twelve Penn Schools, followed by a visit in September by President Gutmann, who will host a gala opening celebration on the theme “Knowledge for a Global Future.” It was inspiring to see the high level of interest and excitement in Beijing about this long-term partnership with Penn. The Center will provide a vibrant hub for the exchange of knowledge with China, including new opportunities here on campus which I hope will engage many of you in the years ahead.

Next month, Penn will participate in the highly important campus climate survey about sexual misconduct sponsored by the Association of American Universities. This survey is designed to provide data across a wide range of universities on the frequency and characteristics of campus sexual assault and sexual harassment. On April 2, all students will receive an email with a unique link to an anonymous survey, which will be open until April 23. Participation by all our students – both graduate and undergraduate – is critically important, and we strongly encourage all students not only to participate but also to encourage all your friends and constituents to participate. Aggregate results will be reported in September and will help us learn more about the campus climate and best practices at peer universities and shape our future policies in this significant area.

I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful break and is looking forward to a productive and stimulating second half of the semester.

Vincent Price
Provost