This is the thirty-second annual report of the Steering Committee of the University Council, prepared in accordance with a requirement in the Council Bylaws that the Steering Committee publish an annual report to the University community that reviews the previous year’s Council deliberations and highlights “both significant discussions and the formal votes taken on matters of substance.”

SEPTEMBER MEETING

With the advice of the Steering Committee for University Council, President Gutmann appointed Dr. Reed Pyeritz as moderator for the 2009-2010 academic year. In addition, she announced that, through consultation with the Steering Committee, Mark Frazier Lloyd was reappointed as parliamentarian for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Filling in for Chair Harvey Rubin, Past Chair of the Steering Committee Professor Sherri Adams advised Council that Steering drew on discussions held at the April 2009 Steering and Council meetings to create the following list (which had been distributed to Council members in advance) of six focus issues for the 2009-2010 academic year:

- Discussion of Penn’s “response system” to communicable diseases, particularly in the context of the possible spread of the H1N1 virus
- Discussion of Arts and Cultural Coursework, Programming and Resources at Penn as Part of the 2009-2010 Theme of Arts and the City Year
- Comprehensive overview of IT initiatives, outlining current and future projects
- Broad review of the current and prospective effects of the economy on the University and all of its constituents
- Discussion of health and work-life resources at Penn including review of resources for parents and childcare opportunities for graduate students, faculty and staff
- Discussion of student affairs concerning:
  - Recent undergraduate curriculum changes and discussion of changes that are currently being considered, recognizing that these changes are made at the School level
  - Presentation on survey instruments used by the University, highlighting the data that is being collected and how it is being used including a follow-up conversation on the PULSE (Perception of Undergraduate Life and Student Experience) survey

Council reviewed the committee charges for the 2009-2010 academic year, and Professor Adams reminded Council that there would be two Open Forum sessions, one at the December meeting and one at the March meeting.

Provost Vincent Price began the discussion of the first focus issue of the year: Penn’s “response system” to communicable diseases, particularly in the context of the possible spread of the H1N1 virus. He stated that the University created a Crisis Management Plan, which included the establishment of an Incidence Management Team (IMT) to prepare for a possible H1N1 outbreak.
He then turned the presentation over to Dr. Evelyn Wiener, Director of Student Health Services, and Dr. Patrick J. Brennan, Chief Medical Officer for the Penn Health System.

Dr. Wiener’s presentation covered how Penn approaches communicable diseases in general and summarized the questions that health care professionals must address when treating a patient with a transmissible disease.

Dr. Brennan gave an overview of pandemic flu and provided some recent examples, including the emergence of HIV and the H5N1 virus (avian flu). He stated that while the H1N1 virus was not virulent, it was highly transmissible. He explained that the rapid emergence of the H1N1 virus and the constant changes in locations and rates of outbreaks meant that Penn and Philadelphia had to be flexible in approaching the disease, focusing on the stockpiling of protective devices, anti-viral medication and vaccines, as well as mitigation strategies.

**OCTOBER MEETING**

In accordance with the Bylaws, the President, Provost and other administrators presented extended reports covering the State of the University. President Gutmann’s portion focused on Penn’s efforts to “better” integrate knowledge. She remarked that the Penn Integrates Knowledge Program now consisted of 12 faculty members, two of whom addressed Council at the October meeting. She introduced Professor Robert Ghrist, the Andrea Mitchell University Professor in the Departments of Mathematics and Electrical and Systems Engineering, and Professor Phillipe Bourgois, the Richard Perry University Professor of Anthropology and Family and Community Medicine.

Professor Ghrist advised Council that much of his research involves building new calculi for “sensor networks,” such as those in cell phones, thermostats, motion detectors, IPods and computers. He explained that, contrary to popular belief, mathematics is not a stagnant work, but a field which is constantly evolving and progressing, much like the field of engineering, also noting that there is “communication” between science and mathematics which underlies the difficult problems seen across many of the scientific fields.

Professor Bourgois stated that his research analyzes the negative health effects of social inequality, with a focus on substance abuse and HIV, and commented that “life chances” are limited by the larger political, economic and socio-cultural structures. He noted that over the past 25 years he had been conducting participant observation ethnographic fieldwork, and studying the dramatic class and ethnic segregation in major U.S. cities.

President Gutmann thanked Professors Ghrist and Bourgois for their presentations and called on David Hollenberg, the University Architect, and Anne Papageorge, Vice President for Facilities and Real Estate Services, to update Council on the status of construction projects on campus, adding that despite the economic downturn, all major construction projects that were already underway were continuing as planned.

Mr. Hollenberg stated that Penn was undergoing a transformation that was unlike any in its history, attracting design talent from around the globe. He advised that, although Penn did not embrace any particular style of architecture, it aimed to construct the very best buildings at any particular moment in time. He then highlighted several recently completed construction jobs and renovations as well as several projects which were currently under construction. Ms. Papageorge added that a
sequence of projects moving eastward from the Music Building to Weiss Pavilion to Penn Park will extend Penn’s “wonderfully green, pedestrian campus” towards the river.

Following the President, Provost Price provided his portion of the State of the University address. He advised that he was conducting half-day visits to Penn’s 12 schools, meeting with deans, chairs and faculty members and touring facilities to assess Penn’s strengths and weaknesses. He highlighted some of the goals and initiatives to strengthen Penn in the areas of faculty affairs, research, student life and global and local engagement.

Council then turned to a discussion of the second focus issue of the year dealing with the *Arts and the City Year* theme, Penn’s year-long celebration of arts and culture. Provost Price introduced the three presenters who led the discussion:

- Andy Binns, Vice Provost for Education, provided an overview and history of academic theme years at Penn
- David Fox, Associate Director, College Houses and Academic Services, discussed the Penn Reading Project and the academic initiatives related to *Arts & the City Year*
- Ty Furman, Director, University Life Arts Initiatives, reported on student initiatives and local partnerships associated with *Arts & the City Year*

**DECEMBER MEETING**

Council held a discussion of Health and Work-Life Resources at Penn Related to Parenting and Childcare Opportunities for Students, Faculty and Staff, the third focus issue for the year. Moderator Pyeritz introduced the four presenters:

- Marie Witt, Vice President for Business Services, focused on Penn’s commitment to quality childcare facilities for members of the Penn community, highlighting the Penn Children’s Center as well Penn’s partnerships with local area childcare providers such as the Caring Center and the Parent Infant Center.
- Marilyn Kraut, Director of Quality of Work Life Programs in Human Resources, discussed the history of Penn’s Quality of Work Life Programs and highlighted the childcare survey that was administered to faculty and staff several years ago as well as updates to adoption benefits and back-up childcare.
- Lubna Mian, Associate Director for Faculty Affairs, Office of the Provost, presented on how the University views childcare as a faculty recruitment issue along with faculty housing and dual career hiring. She highlighted recent initiatives and family-friendly policies for faculty.
- Anita Mastroieni, Director of the Graduate Student Center, discussed family-friendly policies for Ph.D. students, programs and resources for graduate students with children and the Family Resource Center, which opened in January 2010 and will be available for all students with children.
Finally, Council held its first Open Forum and discussed the following issues:

- Concerns regarding the substantial waste of food and presumed fiscal loss associated with some of Penn’s dining plans
- Proposal for a 24-hour prayer space on campus for the Muslim community
- Penn’s investment in HEI Hotels, which allegedly mistreated its workers
- Suggestion for the addition of an American Sign Language (ASL) minor
- Recommendation that Penn stop purchasing plastic bottles and instead promote the use of reusable containers
- Concerns regarding the current state of the South Asian Studies Department
- Discussion of the PULSE Survey and ongoing efforts to develop a comprehensive campus climate survey
- Exploration of the hiring practices of academic departments and programs in search of the best way to ensure diversity of thought

FEBRUARY MEETING

Provost Price introduced the fourth focus issue: Discussion of Student Affairs Issues, covering recent undergraduate curriculum changes and selected results of the PULSE Survey.

The four undergraduate deans presented on the first portion of this focus issue, each of whom highlighted innovative changes in approaching the curricula at their respective schools and fielded questions about their reports:

- Dennis DeTurck, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (SAS)
- Vijay Kumar, Deputy Dean of Education at the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS)
- Kathleen McCauley, Associate Dean for Academic Programs at the School of Nursing
- Georgette Phillips, Vice Dean of the Undergraduate Division at the Wharton School

Andy Binns, Associate Provost for Education, then introduced the discussion of the PULSE survey, which was administered at Penn and several peer institutions last spring. Dr. Binns gave an overview of the data collected, the development process behind the set of Penn-specific questions and the results of the survey.

Dr. Binns also discussed plans for future surveys, noting that the University was developing a survey for graduate and professional students that was expected to be administered in 2011 or 2012. He added that GAPSA also was developing its own version of a survey for graduate and professional students.

In closing, Dr. Binns emphasized Penn’s commitment to using surveys to gauge student experiences.

MARCH MEETING

Per the Bylaws, a portion of the March meeting was dedicated to reports on “budgets and plans for the next academic year.” Moderator Pyeritz introduced Bonnie Gibson, Vice President of the
Ms. Gibson presented the current fiscal year operating budget and projected student charges for the next academic year. She showed a direct correlation between the unemployment rate and the need for student financial aid and highlighted trends in undergraduate student aid packages resulting from Penn’s new financial aid policies. Ms. Gibson also summarized recent changes in tuition and stipends for graduate and professional students.

Ms. Beck presented on information technology at Penn and identified the best practices for IT planning, especially with regard to University goals and initiatives. She also commented on the Next Generation Student Systems and outlined additional IT initiatives which would be rolled out over time.

Council then held its second Open Forum of the year. Issues discussed included:

- Questions regarding the limits that Penn places on medical savings accounts and the implications of Penn’s policies for employees facing serious illness
- Concerns regarding healthcare coverage for employee parents of children with autism
- Comments on the importance of Penn’s compliance with the recently-passed Act 62 legislation, which requires private insurance companies to cover diagnostic and treatment services for children with autism
- Recommendation to include healthcare coverage for triadic treatment for transgender employees

APRIL MEETING

Council discussed the fifth focus issue of the year, the effects of the economy on Penn and all of its constituents. Craig Carnaroli, Executive Vice President, gave a brief overview of resource allocation and spending at Penn and stated that, while the endowment had fallen by approximately $1 billion and was likely to continue to decline through FY 2014, Penn was doing everything possible to increase revenue and reduce costs. He stated that the Making History Campaign, now in its third year, had reached 75% of its goal and added that faculty members across the University had received $171 million in stimulus funding for 333 research studies. In closing, Mr. Carnaroli summarized some of Penn’s cost-saving measures.

Moderator Pyeritz introduced the chairs of the five standing committees who provided brief overviews of their final reports:

- Professor Michael Topp, Chair of the Committee on Academic and Related Affairs (CARA)
- Professor Phil Nichols, Chair of the Committee on Campus and Community Life
- Professor John Jackson, Chair of the Committee on Diversity and Equity
- Professor Walter Wales, Chair of the Committee on Facilities
- Professor Ingrid Waldron, Chair of the Committee on Personnel Benefits

Professor Robert Hornik, Chair of the Committee on Committees (CoC), reported on the findings of the COC’s evaluation of the Council committees. He stated that there were three themes present
throughout the 2009-2010 academic year: concerns about the breadth of the committee charges, a sense of frustration that the reports are not read and low student attendance at meetings.

Professor Harvey Rubin then led the discussion of potential focus issues for the upcoming year. Topics suggested by Steering, Council and various constituency groups included:

- Discussion of faith-based initiatives and groups on campus led by Chaz Howard, highlighting how students of different backgrounds work together to make Penn a more welcoming environment for students from all walks of life
- Discussion of the programs planned for the 2010-2011 academic theme year: The Year of Water
- Review of Penn’s current approach to “In Loco Parentis.”
- Reexamination of Penn’s relationship with West Philadelphia
- Update and progress report on all of Penn’s sustainability initiatives.
- Assessment of the possibility of expanding discounted programs for faculty and staff with various vendors
- Discussion of how faculty handle diversity issues in the classroom
- Examination of the future of academic programs related to ethnic and cultural diversity
- Presentation on the reopening of the South Street Bridge and how that will affect traffic patterns
- Examination of how Penn can facilitate nontraditional learning on campus

The meeting concluded with Provost Price thanking everyone for their diligent work throughout the year and congratulating constituency leaders who would be rotating off Council.