This is the thirty-fourth 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 Steering and consent of Council, President Amy Gutmann appointed Dr. Reed Pyeritz as moderator and Marjorie Hassen as parliamentarian for the 2011-2012 academic year.

Professor Camille Charles, Chair of the Faculty Senate and Steering Committee of University Council advised that Steering had drawn on discussions held at the April 2011 Steering and Council meetings to create the following list of four focus issues for the 2011-2012 academic year:

- How Penn works with government – on the local, state and federal levels – on behalf of mutual public interest, to engage governmental issues and concerns, while still advancing institutional needs and interests.
- CAPS/Mental Health programs and services across the University. How is CAPS responding to the increasing demand for services and what tools are in place to address all mental health needs?
- In light of the recent Title IX complaint from Yale University students, how does the Penn community create an atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance and how can this be improved?
- Faculty and staff benefits picture: there are strong pressures pushing up these costs, further complicated by the difficult-to-project effects of health care reform and congressional budget conflicts. What is the nature of those pressures, and what can we expect for the future, in terms of sharing of costs and availability of alternatives?

Council reviewed the 2011-2012 committee charges and Professor Charles reminded Council that there would be two Open Forum sessions, one at the November meeting and one at the February meeting.

Provost Price, with Andy Binns, Vice Provost for Education, and David Fox, Associate Director, College Houses and Academic Services, led discussion of the 2011-2012 Academic Theme Year: *The Year of Games*, which serves to foster University-wide analysis and conversation and offers a variety of intellectual and cultural opportunities for students, faculty and staff. The theme for the 2012-2013 academic year will be *The Year of Proof*.

**OCTOBER MEETING**

In accordance with the Bylaws, the President, Provost and other administrators presented extended reports covering the State of the University.
President Gutmann began by stating that Penn had recently reached two significant milestones. The first is reaching the Making History goal of $3.5 billion with 14 months remaining in the campaign. The second milestone is the completion and opening of Penn Park. She then introduced Provost Price for a discussion of the Action Plan for Faculty Diversity and Excellence.

Provost Price noted that the Action Plan enables Penn to look forward and capitalize on every resource available to diversify and further strengthen its faculty. The Provost then introduced Vice Provost for Faculty Lynn Lees. Dr. Lees gave a historical background to the report before outlining some of the challenges that must be addressed in implementing this plan. She then discussed available resources and the strategies for promoting diversity plans within the twelve schools.

President Gutmann then invited Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations John Zeller to report on the Making History campaign. In summarizing results to date, Mr. Zeller noted the extraordinary fact that about $2.967 billion of cash has already been received, which represents 85% of the commitments, and that nearly $1 billion has been added to the endowment against $1.6 plus billion in commitments. Mr. Zeller ended his presentation by stressing that the next 12 to 14 months would see a continued focus on campaign priorities of faculty support, undergraduate, graduate and professional aid and key capital projects and that Penn is on a positive trajectory and the level of engagement has never been higher.

NOVEMBER MEETING

Jeff Cooper, Vice President for Government and Community Affairs spoke on the focus issue “How Penn works with government.” Mr. Cooper indicated that his office is responsible for developing, implementing, and managing strategies that advance Penn’s educational mission and goals of civic engagement, service, and access and to assure a positive and productive relationship between Penn and the federal, state, and local governments as well as Penn’s neighboring communities. Mr. Cooper noted that his office analyzes legislative trends, coordinates advocacy efforts, and conducts direct advocacy with congressmen, senators, and their staffs.

Council held its first Open Forum and discussed the following issues:

- Request for the cessation of the University’s involvement in the use of non-human primates in research and concerns regarding our transparency in this area
- Concerns regarding the coverage gap between short-term and long-term disability for those suffering from a serious medical condition
- Questions on the inclusion of Transgender Health benefits for staff and faculty in University health plans
- University Council’s possible review of the University’s tobacco policy with an eye towards determining the desirability and feasibility of a smoke or tobacco-free campus
- Concerns about PNC Bank's practice of financing mountaintop removal and advocates that the University move to address business relationships and open financial information as a part of its dedication to sustainability and the Climate Action Plan.
- Concerns regarding the lack of public speaking resources at the University and request for the inclusion of public speaking within the College curriculum
JANUARY MEETING

Dr. William Alexander, Director of Penn’s Counseling and Psychological Services, provided an overview of CAPS. The presentation included a review of the trends in counseling today and a summary of the services and programs that CAPS offers, including growth areas of clinical training and prevention, and new initiatives.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Dr. Gutmann began by referencing recent media reports on the 2006 surveillance and monitoring of Muslim students by the New York City Police Department. The University had no awareness of these actions and has been assured that no individual Penn students were subject to surveillance or monitoring. Dr. Gutmann stressed that the idea that police would monitor students solely because of their religious beliefs or national origin is contrary to what Penn stands for.

Sam Starks, Executive Director of the office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, spoke about Penn and Title IX, and ongoing efforts, particularly in light of recent events at Yale University. Mr. Starks began his presentation with background on the federal regulation entitled Title IX. Most commonly Title IX is understood in reference to athletics, because it calls for equity in all intercollegiate and intramural activities. However, the regulation encompasses all students, faculty, and staff. Mr. Starks discussed the resource offices available, such as Penn Police, the Women’s Center and the Office of Student Conduct, and outlined efforts already in place for training and education, such as anti-violence training administered by the Women’s Center.

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

- Concerns about Penn Family Care, HUP, abortion, and sexual practices and ideology promoted by Student Health Services, CAPS, and the Graduate Student Center
- Concerns regarding the state of classrooms at Penn and the need for updated technology and infrastructure
- President Gutmann's reaction to the PennBDS conference and student concerns following the conference, not only about statements made about students involved with BDS, but also threats to their safety
- Concerns regarding the level of attention to LGBT issues in the Action Plan for Faculty Diversity and Excellence
- A statement of principles regarding student rights, with an overview of some of the eight points of the statement (points relate to transparency, democratic decision-making, and student debt), and a request for Council’s consideration of these issues
- Concerns about the need for a case manager for students taking leaves of absence
- Advocating for Penn to host a 2016 Presidential debate
- Concerns regarding mental health issues among Penn students and a proposal for a Penn sponsored wellness retreat

MARCH MEETING

The Moderator indicated that Council bylaws call for reports at its March meeting detailing budgets and plans for the next academic year. He introduced Bonnie Gibson, Vice President of the Office of
Budget and Management Analysis, to present on the academic budget and student charges for 2012-2013.

Ms. Gibson stated that the 3.9% undergraduate tuition increase for 2012-13 places Penn in the mid-range of increases as compared with peer schools. She noted that graduate and professional schools planned increases ranging from zero to 7.6%. The financial aid budget in 2012, including undergraduate, graduate professional aid and graduate stipends, rose to $381 million, a 6.1% increase over the previous year.

The Moderator introduced Andy Binns, Vice Provost for Education, to discuss the upcoming re-accreditation process with the Middle States Council for Higher Education. Dr. Binns indicated that every ten years, every institution of higher education undergoes re-accreditation by its regional accrediting body, using standards established by that body. Preparation for Penn’s 2014 review began many months ago and the decision has been made to undertake a self-study focusing on undergraduate education. Dr. Binns indicated that the Penn Compact would be the starting point for the self-study.

The Moderator thanked Dr. Binns and introduced Jack Heuer, Vice President of Human Resources, and Susan Sproat, Executive Director of Benefits, to speak about the faculty and staff benefits picture for FY13. Mr. Heuer stressed that Penn’s benefits programs are designed to be market competitive and to support the recruitment, retention and development of faculty and staff members. He briefly summarized the major aspects of Penn’s offerings, noting that Penn covers 80% or more of the premiums for medical insurance and is one of only a few employers that contribute to the cost of dental insurance.

Summarizing trends in health care in the United States, he noted U.S. 2009 health care costs were $2.9 trillion or 17.6% of the GNP, though the rate of increase has declined for such costs, with changes in plan design and growing consumerism driving that trend. Ms. Sproat noted Penn’s focus for the coming year will be on wellness and healthy behaviors, and ensuring that everyone takes advantage of all services available through their plans. Plan changes for FY13 include the expansion of women’s preventive care to include contraceptives available without co-pay, the addition of transgender health benefits, a change in the prescription drug vendor from Caremark to Medco, and enhancements to the Penn Faculty Practice Dental Plan, vision plan and life insurance.

APRIL MEETING

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

- Professor Steven Kimbrough, Member of the Committee on Academic and Related Affairs
- Professor Kent Bream, Chair of the Committee on Campus and Community Life
- Professor Judy Shea, Co-Chair of the Committee on Diversity and Equity
- Professor Michael McGarvey, Chair of the Committee on Facilities
- Professor David Pope, Chair of the Committee on Personnel Benefits

Provost Price and Dr. Gutmann thanked the chairs and the committee members for their dedication in exploring the charges assigned to their committees and making recommendations.
Faculty Senate Chair Professor Camille Charles reported on the work of the Council Committee on Committees in 2011-2012, and indicated that the committees overall operated very well. She mentioned that the presence of senior University administrators at the first meeting of each committee to respond to the previous year’s recommendations was very well received.

Student attendance at the meetings, possibly due to conflicting class schedules, remains an issue. Professor Charles hoped Council would work with the UA and GAPSA to resolve this issue and encourage increased student participation in the work of the committees.

Professor Charles then led a discussion of potential focus issues for Council for the 2012-2013 academic year. Topics suggested by Steering, Council and constituencies included:

- Penn Medicine: An update on research and education
- Recent PIK Appointments. A look at and discussion with some of the more recent PIK hires, especially those who teach undergraduates
- Building One University in a decentralized environment
- University Communications and how it works
- First Thursdays and Local Engagement
- Penn as a Public Space/Our Resources and the Community
- State of University-Assisted Schools in the Community
- Preparing future alumni leaders. A look at new initiatives by Alumni Relations to involve undergrads as leaders while at Penn and prepare them for future alumni leadership involvement
- A discussion on the University’s Open Expression Policy
- Tuition costs for the graduate student population
- Activism and Climate of Respect on Campus
- Sexual Assault/Violence on Campus
- Office of Student Conduct
- State of the Climate Action Plan
- Penn Purchasing & Social Responsibility
- Relationships with Space Lessees and other Contract Holders (vetting, social responsibility, small business initiatives, “greenness,” etc.)

The meeting ended with Dr. Gutmann acknowledging the contributions of outgoing participants of Council and thanking them and all University Council members for their participation.