



## NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

A private university in the public service

### Office of the Provost

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**David W. McLaughlin** *Provost*

September 22, 2010

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

The beginning of the academic year always brings a special air of excitement, energy and vibrancy across the University community. I am very pleased at this time to greet our returning faculty and to welcome the new faculty who are joining New York University. I also welcome this opportunity to bring your attention to some of the recent academic developments and initiatives at NYU.

**An outstanding group of new faculty colleagues are joining our schools and departments this fall.** Our [new tenured and tenure track faculty](#) come from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of research interests. A good number of these faculty have been hired as part of our multi-year investment in the arts and science core supported with generous contributions from our "Partner" Trustees. Since the inception of the Partners Plan, we have exceeded our goals, hiring more than 250 faculty members and increasing the size of the faculty by 20%. An important focus and investment in the immediate future will be the natural sciences, which (because of space and start-up needs) were planned to be recruited at a slower pace than in other disciplines.

**It is a wonderful challenge to describe the scope and vibrancy of academic life at NYU Washington Square.** In this past year in particular, a number of our [faculty were honored](#) to receive the most distinguished "near Nobel" awards that recognize scholars at the pinnacle of their fields.

- *David Levering Lewis*, a University and Silver Professor in the Department of History, and *Philippe de Montebello*, the Fiske Kimball Professor in the History and Culture of Museums at the Institute of Fine Arts were among eight recipients of the 2009 National Humanities Medals presented by President Obama at the White House.
- Senior Vice Provost *Paul Horn*, with former colleagues from IBM, received the National Medal of Technology and Innovation for having brought supercomputing technology back to the United States from Japan with their work on Blue Gene.
- Chemistry Professor *Nadrian Seeman* received the 2010 Kavli Prize in Nanoscience – given in three disciplines every two years for "outstanding research and seminal advances."

- Politics Professor *Adam Przeworski* received the 2010 Johan Skytte Prize, given annually by the Johan Skytte Foundation of Uppsala University to the scholar who has made the most valuable contribution to political science.
- Courant Institute's *Subhash Khot* received the National Science Foundation's Alan T. Waterman Award, awarded annually to one outstanding young researcher.
- *Timothy Bromage* at the College of Dentistry received the 2010 Max Planck Research Award, awarded annually to one researcher in Germany and one researcher abroad.
- *J. Anthony Movshon*, director of the Center for Neural Science, received the 2010 António Champalimaud Vision Award.
- Professor of Mathematics *Louis Nirenberg* was the first recipient of the International Congress of Mathematicians Chern Medal for lifelong outstanding achievements.
- Mathematician *Mikhail Gromov* received the 2009 Abel Prize and became the third Courant mathematician to win the prize in the last five years, along with *Srinivasa S. R. Varadhan* and *Peter Lax*.

Many more faculty were elected to the National Academies, received career awards and prestigious foundation fellowships, were elected to senior leadership positions in professional associations and scholarly journals, and received major multi-year research and training grants. I am sure you join me in congratulating them all.

At NYU, help in jumpstarting faculty research and curriculum projects is available from institutional 'seed funds.' They include [NYU - Polytechnic Institute Seed Grants for Collaborative Research](#), which support joint research projects; the [University Research Challenge Fund](#); [Humanities Initiative Fellowships](#); [Visual Arts Initiative Awards](#); [Whitehead Fellowships for Junior Faculty in Biomedical and Biological Sciences](#); and the [Curricular Development Challenge Fund](#). New this year is the [NYU Technology Venture Competition](#) – a joint initiative of the Stern School's Berkley Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and the new NYU Innovation Venture Fund that was established to spur the commercialization of select technologies developed at NYU and provide early funding for startup companies based on those technologies.

With respect to our community of students, **new and returning enrollments are right on target**. Undergraduate enrollment is steady across the University relative to goal. We received over 38,000 freshman undergraduate applications for approximately 3,600 spaces in our four-year programs. We continue to invest in financial aid in an effort to help students find their way to NYU. With respect to graduate enrollment, we anticipate being on target and we expect to modestly surpass our goals for professional school enrollment. We welcome our new and returning students and will continue to monitor our registration and student retention throughout the year.

As a university located within one of the world's international capitals, NYU is committed to diversity in academic programming, curriculum, student life, community projects, and recruitment and hiring. The [NYU Postdoctoral and Transition Program for Academic Diversity](#), a joint initiative of the Council of School Deans and the Office of the Provost, strengthens the presence of scholars who are traditionally underrepresented in academia, supporting promising scholars and educators from different backgrounds,

racess, ethnic groups, and other groups whose life experiences, research experiences, and employment backgrounds will contribute significantly to academic excellence at NYU. As an important component of campus [diversity programs, opportunities, and activities](#), a University-wide faculty panel serves as the [Provost's Task Force on Diversity](#), with a broad mission of developing and implementing strategies for promoting diversity on campus. The [NYU ADVANCE Partnership](#) program, administered by the FAS Dean for Science, aims to increase participation and advancement of women scientists. In addition, the University's [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) helps advance NYU's commitment to diversity in the workplace, including faculty diversity.

At a large and diverse institution like NYU, **we need to be ever vigilant to insure that our students receive quality services** within and outside the classroom, and that they are treated in a friendly, caring and respectful manner. Last year, Executive Vice President Michael Alfano and I charged the [Quality Service Task Force](#) to make recommendations to improve the quality of services that students receive in their interactions with the University. The task force has submitted its report, and many of its process recommendations— including improved transcript request process, expedited student payroll, and electronic mail delivery system in select residence halls— have already been implemented. Other recommendations, including improved on-line course registration, web-based grading, additional on-line processes for services wherever possible, and other broad commitments to quality service, will be put in place over the next two years.

In a related undertaking **to strengthen academic advising services**, a new initiative is underway to coordinate and connect University support services and resources. NYU's [Opportunity Programs](#), the Arts and Science [College Learning Center](#), and a new advising service center for cross-school navigation will be clustered in a new University Academic Resource Center. The new Center, with space for advising, tutoring, and classrooms, will be built in a central location in the campus core on Washington Place (the former location of the [University Bookstore](#), which moved into a new facility at 726 Broadway). In addition, this fall, the College of Arts and Science is intensifying its advising and mentoring programs for juniors and seniors, with program improvements designed, developed, and implemented by the departments for their majors, some of which involve enhanced use of technology such as social networks.

In all these academic endeavors we have benefited from the keen and **energetic leadership of our Deans** in building faculty and departments, improving and developing new undergraduate and graduate programs, and developing strategies for partnership with NYU's global network. This year, we are continuing the search for a new dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, while Jess Benhabib continues as Interim Dean and Malcolm Semple has assumed the role of Acting Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Science. We are also undertaking a search for a new dean of the undergraduate college at the Stern School of Business, while Fred Choi serves as Interim Dean. All members of the NYU community are invited to submit nominations to the Chairs of the Dean's Selection Committees: [Professor Sylvain Cappell](#), who chairs the FAS committee, and [Professor Bruce Buchanan](#) who chairs the Stern committee. Additional information about the Deans of all schools, as well as the members of the

Provost's Office, who make up the University's leadership in enrollment management and the administration of research, science and technology, academics, and undergraduate and graduate life, is available [here](#) .

A number of [major capital projects](#) to build and improve our academic spaces have recently been completed. New spaces, in addition to the NYU Bookstore mentioned above include: academic spaces for the Law School's Centers for Law at 22 Washington Square North and its Wilf Hall at 139 MacDougal; studios for the Tisch School of the Arts Department of Drama and the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program (715-719 Broadway and 113 Second Avenue); the Steinhardt School's Music Technology Program in the Education Building; new classrooms for the Stern School Kaufman Management Center; and a home for the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute at 19 Washington Square North. As part of the University's multi-year classroom capital improvement plan, University classrooms in 25 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street and the Silver Complex were refurbished this summer; since this initiative began three years ago, the University has completely renovated, refurbished, or newly constructed 96 classrooms (55% of our total classroom inventory).

A number of other major projects are under way: The [Center for Genomics and Systems Biology](#), housing a collaborative group of geneticists, bioinformaticians, systematists, and evolutionary biologists, will open on Waverly Place within months. The Center for Academic and Spiritual Life, providing a communal home for students' religious and spiritual lives as well as academic spaces, is under construction on a site adjacent to the Kimmel Center, scheduled for occupancy in spring 2012. A [consolidated home for the School of Continuing and Professional Studies](#) is in construction at 7 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street. In [Bobst Library](#), floors four and five are being transformed this fall into a research commons for graduate students, with suitable technology, equipment, and furnishings.

**NYU continues to develop as a [Global Network University](#)** – the foundation of NYU's future as a research university. The comprehensive campus in Abu Dhabi welcomes its first freshman class this fall– 150 students with outstanding student accomplishments and credentials and coming from 39 countries, more than a third from the United States. With this entering world-class student body and with the recruitment of [superb faculty](#) for this year-- 25 standing and 20 'affiliated' (NYUNY) faculty-- the first comprehensive American liberal arts college in the region is on its way to becoming the "[world's honors college](#)".

Research at NYUAD has been underway for two years now, primarily at the [NYUAD Research Institute](#) and fully integrated into the Global Network. During this initial two-year period, the Institute has hosted some 65 research conferences, workshops and lectures, under the excellent leadership of Philip Kennedy, from the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies here at NYUNY on temporary assignment in Abu Dhabi. The first set of research groups are now in place, with the announcement last spring of the selection of [three lead-off research projects](#) to establish a library of Arabic Literature (Professor *Philip Kennedy*), a neuroscience of language laboratory (Professors *Alec Marantz*, *Liina Pyykkänen*, *David Poeppel*), and a technology center for

rural development (Professors *Yaw Nyarko, Lakshminarayanan Subramanian*). In a few weeks, we will announce the next set of researchers to be supported at the Institute for work beginning as early as this spring. An [additional round](#) of proposals and pre-proposals was submitted August 1 and is currently under review.

**With NYUNY and NYUAD, we have two comprehensive (or full) campuses, offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degrees.** Currently, NYU is in discussions with the City of Shanghai, the Pudong Area and East China Normal University about the possibility of **a third NYU comprehensive campus, in Shanghai.** These discussions should lead to a decision late this Fall as to whether to proceed or not with this project. Should we decide to proceed, NYU-Shanghai would be created as a full campus, with the curriculum taught in English. We expect to have a majority Chinese student body with a minority of international and American students. In our target timetable, the first freshman class would enter in Fall 2013; executive education, professional masters programs, and research programs would begin earlier. The exciting and important possibility of a third comprehensive campus, NYU-Shanghai, will be the topic of much further discussion at NYU this semester.

At our [“study-away” centers](#), we have focused on improving our facilities. Berlin has a new location; in Paris and Tel Aviv, site expansions/renovations are being explored; in London, NYU is close to a lease agreement to double our space at Bedford Square; in Washington DC, the site will soon be under construction; and in Sydney, we are developing plans to open a new site. We work closely with NYU faculty with expertise in these locations and areas to strengthen NYU's global centers, and to allow them to seamlessly connect their research and teaching here in New York to our locations abroad. Taken together, these site improvements will provide much needed space for our students and faculty, for both study and research.

For the Global Network University to be a reality, people and ideas must flow seamlessly through the network. Both faculty and students must use the entire network, in an effortless manner. Today, this flow is possible for undergraduate students; however, much work is needed to create a similar fluidity for faculty and graduate students. There needs to be greater research, graduate, and conferencing capacity at the sites. In addition, the sites, working closely with departments at the Square, need increasingly to develop distinct academic identities. We are now in the process of developing plans for increasing the capacities and better defining the academic orientation of the sites, and for developing programs that will give our faculty more ready access to them. In the coming weeks, a set of new University-wide programs will be announced, with the first set designed in particular to enable research activities at the sites, undertaken by our faculty in collaboration with colleagues abroad.

In addition, **new methods of interaction and course delivery will be essential for the success of the Global Network University.** The Office of the Provost has initiated an effort, led by Dalton Conley, Senior Vice Provost and FAS Dean of Social Science, to analyze existing tools and to work with faculty to implement new web-based methods of delivery, such as [“open courseware”](#) -- emphasizing the creative use of these tools for higher education in the Global Network. These hybrid approaches blend new and

traditional styles that will allow for multi-site, on-line and in-person teaching as well as cross-campus collaboration and peer-to-peer learning.

**Looking ahead**, we face important challenges and exciting opportunities in developing NYU as a global network university of research and education; developing our campus facilities to meet immediate needs and our long term planning goals for [NYU2031](#); strengthening our resources for science, technology and the arts; exploiting technologies to improve pedagogy; establishing an ongoing environment of quality student services on campus; and bringing together and integrating our incredibly rich mosaic of faculties, colleges, programs and departments.

It will be my pleasure and privilege to work with our University community as we move forward in developing NYU as one Global Network **University**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David W. McLaughlin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David W. McLaughlin  
Provost