



September 16, 2015

Dear Faculty,

As we begin the new academic year, I am very pleased to greet returning faculty and especially welcome those of you who are joining New York University.

This fall, we are planning for the arrival of NYU's 16<sup>th</sup> president, [Andy Hamilton](#), who will officially assume his duties in January. In order to help ensure a smooth transition, I have agreed to continue to serve as Provost through this academic year, after which I will return to the faculty of the Courant Institute and join the faculty of the Polytechnic School of Engineering and the affiliated faculty of NYU Shanghai.

At this time, it is natural to reflect upon how NYU has evolved in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and take collective pride in its academic accomplishments. [A Recent Academic History of NYU](#) provides an interesting summary.

The University's marked improvement in academic standing reflects the commitment of our faculty. Our faculty are the heart and soul of the University—leading academic initiatives, pioneering new research areas, introducing curricular and pedagogical innovations, and serving on faculty committees that are shaping the future of the University, for example, with respect to NYU's global network, and technology in education.

This year, our schools and departments have recruited a wonderfully strong group of new faculty. Our new full-time faculty are listed [here](#), along with brief profiles of their scholarly interests and backgrounds. Faculty are our most valuable resource; I encourage you to visit this website to learn about your new colleagues and welcome them to NYU.

The scholarly awards and accomplishments of our faculty over the past year are too numerous to list in their entirety. Some examples include the following: *Louis Nirenberg*, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at the Courant Institute, was awarded the 2015 Abel Prize, widely considered the “Nobel Prize” of mathematics; *Anna Deavere Smith*, University Professor and Professor of Performance Studies at Tisch, was selected to deliver the 2015 Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities, one of the highest honors the federal government bestows for distinguished achievement in the humanities; *Julia Wolfe*, Associate Professor of Music at the Steinhardt School, received the Pulitzer Prize for Music for her composition *Anthracite Fields*; *Gregory Pardlo*, an instructor and alumnus of the Creative Writing program, won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for his collection *Digest*; *Greg Grandin*, Professor of History, won the Bancroft Prize, one of the most distinguished honors in the field of American history, for his book *The Empire of*

*Necessity*; and *Thomas Sugrue*, who joined NYU as Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis, was named an Andrew Carnegie Fellow, one of 32 in the inaugural class of this fellowship program. *Rebecca Newberger Goldstein*, who joins NYU as Visiting Professor in the spring, was named a 2014 National Humanities Medal recipient. In addition, seven NYU faculty members were elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, six were awarded Guggenheim Fellowships, two received Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Fellowships, eight were named among the Thomson Reuters Highly Cited Researchers for 2014, four were elected to the American Law Institute (ALI), and four authored books that were named to the *New York Times Book Review's* list of "100 Notable Books of 2014." A full list of faculty awards and accomplishments in 2014-2015 can be viewed [here](#). I also am very pleased to recognize the 2015 recipients of the NYU [Distinguished Teaching Awards](#).

Our faculty includes tenured/tenure track faculty as well as full-time non-tenure track / contract faculty whose contributions through teaching, creative work and scholarship, and service are crucial to the academic missions of the schools and the University. In the past couple of years, the governance rights of this faculty body were approved by the University Trustees, defined in University Bylaws, and memorialized in the [Faculty Handbook](#); the [Full-Time Non-Tenure Track/Contract Faculty Senators Council](#) was established; and [University Guidelines](#) for faculty appointments were promulgated.

Going forward, academic development across New York, Abu Dhabi, and Shanghai and at NYU's study away sites is rooted in connectivity—in curricular planning, faculty recruitment, graduate admissions and training, and research. The [Faculty Committee on the Global Network](#) advises the President and Provost on academic matters related to the network overall, including academic integration; its annual report for 2014-2015 can be viewed [here](#). With respect to the study away sites, New York faculty carry out academic planning and curricular development at the sites through [global academic partnerships and affiliations](#) and working in [site-specific advisory committees](#). A new website for [Faculty in the Global Network](#) provides a guide and information hub for faculty opportunities at NYU's campuses in research, teaching, and program development.

Last year, 93 New York faculty taught at NYU Abu Dhabi and 16 at NYU Shanghai. A new faculty title, [Global Network Professor](#), recommended by the Faculty Committee on the Global Network, designates full-time members of a faculty at one campus who participate in research and teaching activities at a second campus. New York faculty are conducting research under the auspices of [NYU Abu Dhabi Institute](#) (29 faculty served as project Principal Investigators and co-PIs last year) and at [NYU Shanghai](#). The [Global Seed Funds for Collaborative Research](#), with its first round of proposals due October 19, will support faculty research that strengthens collaborations between the faculty of the schools at NYU in New York City and the campuses at NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai. The [Global Research Initiatives](#) (GRI) program supports research-related activities at a select number of NYU sites. In 2014-2015, 27 New York faculty received funding to carry out their research at six sites, and 36 New York faculty were granted a total of \$325,000 for events and projects at 10 sites.

NYU, through its faculty, is developing multiple new programs, many of them cross-disciplinary. Among these are the Institute for the Interdisciplinary Study of Decision-Making; the Center for Data Science—a focal point for University studies in data science and statistics; the Center for Urban Science and Progress and its consortium of academic and industrial partners; and the Bioengineering Institute, linking the Polytechnic School of Engineering with the basic and health sciences, housed since January 2015 in a new home at 433 First Avenue, along with teaching and research facilities for Dentistry and Nursing.

Building on NYU's strength in interdisciplinary collaboration—creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts—the Faculty of Health was created to facilitate innovative research collaborations and strengthen teaching and research in health areas at NYU. The Faculty of Health is made up of the new College of Global Public Health (previously the Global Institute of Public Health), the College of Dentistry, and a newly stand-alone College of Nursing (previously part of NYU's College of Dentistry). The creation of the new Faculty of Health—which altogether will have over 360 faculty members, nearly 4,000 students, and will offer bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees through the three constituent colleges—was recommended by a working group of 26 faculty and deans, and was supported by faculty governance groups and the University Senate prior to approval by the Trustees last June. The Faculty of Health is expected to collaborate closely with virtually all of NYU's other schools.

A wide range of competitive [institutional funding opportunities](#) is available to support faculty, research, teaching, and entrepreneurship. Last year, the [Leslie Entrepreneurs Lab](#) (Leslie eLab) opened its doors as a collaborative space to train, coach, and support entrepreneurs, and as headquarters for the [Entrepreneurial Institute](#) and the [Innovation Venture Fund](#). Support for external research support is available from the offices of [Sponsored Programs](#) (OSP), [University Development and Alumni Relations](#), [Industrial Liaison/Technology Transfer](#), and [Sponsored Programs Administration](#) (SPA), with special support for mega-grant initiatives available from the Provost's Office. The new [UDW + Grants Management Dashboard](#) is proving to be a very useful tool for principal investigators. I urge those of you who are PIs and have not yet used it to take a look. I believe you will find it very helpful.

Going forward, we will continue our work to advance teaching and learning through technological innovations. While virtually all courses taught at NYU use a learning management system and many also use various tools to enable students and instructors to interact and enhance learning, there are also nearly 700 [courses](#) that are delivered either wholly online or in hybrid/blended learning environments (i.e., combining in-person and online components). Support for [instructional technology](#) is available at the schools, with technologists collaborating with NYU IT to help faculty design new courses and programs and enhance existing ones. A team of NYU experts is advising schools on working with external partners to create online programs. And, a standing committee, established as a successor to the ad-hoc [Faculty Committee on the Future of Technology-Enhanced Education](#), is convening this fall to further develop

our vision for using new technology to improve undergraduate learning outcomes, promote student circulation throughout the global network, and expand access to graduate education through online and blended master's programs.

As NYU charts its way forward, we are continuing to ask our schools and departments to strategically plan new academic investments, taking advantage of newly developed dashboards that can track, for example, academic and research targets, monitor student enrollment, and facilitate goal setting. This effort implements recommendations from the 2014 Evaluation Team of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, which charged NYU to “more clearly articulate and demonstrate” the way data are integrated into strategic planning and resource allocation.

Serving as your Provost these last 13 years, while NYU has made such enormous strides as a global leader in higher education, has been a singular honor and privilege. I would like to thank you, my faculty colleagues, for all you have done to improve NYU. As the University enters the next phase of its exciting future under the leadership of President Hamilton, I look forward to working with him to ensure an orderly and effective transition that continues to advance NYU in its academic missions.

With warm wishes for a productive and fulfilling academic year,

David W. McLaughlin  
Provost, New York University