



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

A private university in the public service

Office of the Provost

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David W. McLaughlin *Provost*

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Dear Faculty Colleagues,

As we settle into the familiar rhythms of the academic year, I am pleased to greet our returning faculty and to welcome the new faculty who are joining New York University. NYU is a wonderfully vibrant and energetic research university, and I look forward to working with you to support your scholarship, develop and advance our academic initiatives, and strengthen our infrastructure for teaching and research.

New Faculty

This fall, our schools and academic departments are welcoming an outstanding group of new faculty colleagues. A list of our new tenured and tenure-track faculty (not including faculty at the School of Medicine), with photos and brief statements of their research interests and backgrounds, is available at the [Provost's web site](#). The web sites of NYU's individual schools list additional accomplished faculty who have joined NYU as global distinguished professors, arts professors, music professors, clinical professors, visiting professors, and in other capacities.

Our new colleagues join a distinguished faculty community, some of whose recent awards and accomplishments can be viewed [here](#). I am exceedingly proud of our faculty, who are the heart of our University and the core of our world-class status as a center for excellence in teaching and research.

Two members of our faculty received very special honors this past year and deserve special mention and congratulations. Thomas J. Sargent, Berkley Professor of Economics (FAS) and Business (Stern School), shared the 2011 Nobel Prize in Economics for his work on cause and effect in the macro-economy. S.R. Srinivasa (Raghu) Varadhan, Gould Professor of Science and Professor of Mathematics (Courant Institute), was honored by President Obama with a 2011 National Medal of Science for his fundamental work in probability theory in general and the theory of large deviations in particular.

As Provost, it is my pleasure and privilege to work with our faculty in a variety of venues, including the [Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee](#), the [Undergraduate Curriculum Advisory Committee](#), planning committees and task forces, Dean's search

committees, meetings with the Faculty Senators Council, research meetings, academic events and receptions, and especially meetings with individual members of our faculty. A particularly rich example is the [Provost's Faculty Advisory Committee on Academic Priorities](#), composed of a rotating multi-year membership of distinguished senior faculty from across the University. This group, which is now entering its 10th year and meets four times a semester, has advised – and sometimes cautioned – President Sexton and me on many critical academic matters, including space planning and allocation, metrics for assessing academic excellence, portal campuses, instructional technology, and faculty and student recruitment. At NYU, as at all universities, most academic planning is done within the schools by their faculty. This academic year, I'll be visiting each school to discuss academic issues, listen to faculty concerns, and talk about how to sustain NYU's academic trajectory. Whether our paths cross in these various venues or not, faculty should always feel free to [be in touch with my office](#) to arrange a time to talk.

The Undergraduate Student Body

At NYU, the undergraduate student body is vibrant and talented – and perhaps uniquely eager to embrace the challenge of our city, navigate the complexity of our campus, and embrace the promise of global scholarship and global citizenship.

This year, we met our undergraduate enrollment targets, and we continue to be highly selective, with approximately 3 in 10 of the more than 43,000 applicants (our 5th record year for applicants in a row) being offered admission for approximately 5,000 undergraduate seats. Our entering undergraduate freshmen have standardized test scores and high school records that are among the strongest we have seen at NYU. This year's freshman class is arguably our most ethnically diverse, and it is also the most international we have ever welcomed to Washington Square: 16% are citizens of 68 nations outside the United States, compared to 3-4% 10 years ago. Retaining our historic commitment to improving college access by enrolling first-generation students, 650 in our freshman class are the first in their families to go to college. Many students receive financial aid, though we are a tuition-dependent university with a small per student endowment. This year, as part of our student recruitment, we will provide over \$190 million of undergraduate institutional grant aid. As President Sexton emphasized in his letter to the community, financial aid is the highest priority of our current fund-raising efforts, and this past year we raised more for financial aid – some \$120 million – than ever before.

Academic Initiatives

In addition to all the important initiatives taking place in our schools, there are several exciting multi-school projects and programs that go across traditional boundaries and bring together like-minded scholars and researchers. Today, such inter-disciplinary collaborations are natural, and a number of them are being developed as University priorities. These include programs in engineering (including bio-engineering, urban engineering, and communications engineering), global public health, the future of cities, data science and statistics, digital media, neural science, and the humanities initiative.

Among the already concrete manifestation of these initiatives are the [Global Public Health Program](#), a unique academic model that draws academic strengths from schools across the University; the [Center for Urban Science and Progress](#) (CUSP), a consortium of University and industrial partners created this past spring by NYU and NYU-Poly in partnership with NYC to tackle urban problems; and the recently established [Druckenmiller Neuroscience Institute](#) based at the NYU Langone Medical Center in partnership with the Center for Neural Science at the Square. Initiatives in development include an institute on cities and environmental sustainability, a bio-engineering institute, and a center for data science and statistics that will each bring together multiple faculty from across the University. Both the NYU and NYU-Poly Boards of Trustees have agreed to move ahead with the final set of steps necessary for NYU-Poly to become NYU's school of engineering; Poly has made great strides in both faculty and student recruitment, and the completion of this process – which involves internal consultations and external approvals over the next 18 to 22 months – will benefit both schools. The overall notion is that strategically planned academic development across NYU's schools and campuses – for example, in faculty hiring, curriculum development, student recruitment, research initiatives, and facilities – will create synergies that will make the most of our resources and enable our faculty and students to address the major interdisciplinary issues and problems of our times.

The Global Network University

NYU's global network encompasses our New York campus (at Washington Square, downtown Brooklyn, Museum Mile, and the First Avenue Health Corridor); twodegree-granting, research university portal campuses – [NYU Abu Dhabi](#), which accepted its third class this fall, and [NYU Shanghai](#), which will welcome its first undergraduate class in 2013; and 11 [Study Away](#) sites in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, and Australia. This academic year we opened [NYU Washington D.C.](#) and, at the other end of the world, [NYU Sydney](#).

Looking forward, the time has come to pause our expansion of the number of new Study Away sites, and to focus on strengthening and integrating faculty recruitment, research and scholarship, as well as undergraduate and graduate education throughout the global network. As Provost, my central academic goal for the Global Network University (GNU) is to ensure the full integration of NYU's two portal campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai with academic programs, departments and other units at NYU New York; create an academic infrastructure that coordinates research and teaching activities across the network, including the Study Away sites; and strategically coordinate the resources made available by NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai.

Among these resources are more than 400 tenured and tenure-track faculty lines to be filled in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai in the coming years. A number of these new appointments can be jointwith departments in New York, and my aim is for all to be associated with graduate programs in New York. Thus, these appointments at the portal campuses should be understood as a way to enhance NYU's faculty and academic

programs, system-wide. In addition, there are ‘affiliated’ appointments at NYU Shanghai and NYU Abu Dhabi that are available to New York faculty. This academic year, approximately 80 New York faculty are scheduled to visit NYU Abu Dhabi for periods of varying length.

Faculty and graduate students also have opportunities to conduct research throughout the network:

- The Provost’s [Global Research Initiatives](#) program (GRI) defrays travel costs and provides research space and administrative support at NYU global academic sites – so far, in Berlin, London, Florence, Prague, and Washington, D.C. GRI funding is available to faculty to support research, the writing of Ph.D. dissertations, conferences, workshops, exchanges, etc. throughout the network. Since its inception last year, over 40 faculty members and 90 graduate students have spent time at one of the GRI sites abroad with University support. GRI also sponsored 19 faculty initiatives establishing research links with NYU’s global centers or international institutions.
- The [Global Institute for Advanced Study](#) supports faculty working groups that are conducting sustained multi-year collaborative research on an international scale; presently four groups – in law, philosophy, economics, and neural science – are starting their research projects.
- Through the [NYU Abu Dhabi Institute](#), NYU faculty from New York are also leading research groups in Abu Dhabi – on projects that range from linguistics and economic development to neuroscience and cultural digital archives – and are hosting conferences, workshops, performances, and other public programs in Abu Dhabi.
- At [NYU Shanghai](#), plans in development initially call for three joint research institutes planned with our partners at East China Normal University – in neuroscience, mathematics, and computational chemistry – as well as research in global public health (primarily in social work).

For our undergraduate students, NYU’s global network provides an unparalleled educational experience and is one of the principal reasons that NYU keeps attracting better and better students. In this regard, it is interesting to note that recent data from the College Board reveal that NYU has generated more inquiries from students in China – indeed, from all international students – than any other university. NYU students can advance their studies abroad in some of the key cities in the world. More than 43% of NYU New York students currently study in the network for a semester or longer; all NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai students will do so. Equipped with these broad-ranging educational experiences, our students are preparing to become effective global citizens, trained in their chosen professions and ready to compete for jobs not only in the cities of their home campuses but across the globe.

Optimizing our students’ educational experience requires school and department-based academic planning that anticipates students’ multi-year academic needs and enables their seamless movement throughout the network. This year, departments and programs in

New York will be developing special relationships with specific sites – relationships that will establish each site’s academic and scholarly identity and create pathways for undergraduates to take courses in their majors.

Online Education/Technology in Instruction

As President Sexton mentioned in his letter to the community, NYU has been exploring how best to use technology to further the academic mission of the University. Under the leadership of Senior Vice Provost Matthew Santirocco, the Teaching Technology Committee, which is composed of faculty and information technology experts from across the University, has recommended a number of specific initiatives which are already being implemented –e.g., to move to a single learning management system for the entire GNU, the first stage of which is to migrate all units currently on Blackboard to Sakai; to coordinate purchases of software and licenses for use throughout the global network, thereby achieving efficiencies and cost-savings; and to create and implement standards for equipping and maintaining classrooms and other learning spaces with technology. Even more importantly, the committee has identified three new areas for investment this year: (1) the support of faculty who wish to use technology to enhance their classes and their teaching; (2) the use of technology to connect faculty, students, and courses at the various sites across the GNU and thereby leverage the academic resources of one site for the benefit of the others; and (3) the work by individual members of our faculty to develop and convert their courses (or components of them) into a collection of online courses for use in New York and throughout the global network in hybrid learning environments that combine online and face-to-face instruction. To these ends, President Sexton and I have instructed Senior Vice Provost Santirocco to appoint immediately a Special Faculty Subcommittee of the Teaching Technology Committee, which will be co-chaired by him and Rick Matasar, Professor of Management and Vice President for University Enterprise Initiatives. This committee will consult widely, advise us on the future of online education at NYU, and coordinate our faculty’s moves into this area. Additional consultations will be had with the Faculty Senators Council, various University committees, and the deans and faculties of our schools. Interested individuals are also invited to reach out directly to [Matthew Santirocco](#) or [Rick Matasar](#).

Academic Facilities

Universities must have an appropriate physical infrastructure to enable faculty’s pursuit of their research, to provide a high-quality teaching and learning experience for our students, and to meet and advance university academic needs and priorities. Among our new facilities are the [Academic Resource Center](#) on Washington Place, which clusters NYU Opportunity Programs with the [University Learning Center](#) (containing advising and tutoring facilities and classrooms); the [Global Center for Academic and Spiritual Life](#) on Thompson Street, which provides new classrooms, music practice spaces, and a home for our communities of faith; refurbished University classrooms across the Square; and renovated spaces for a number of academic departments. In [Washington Mews](#), buildings 7-8, 14A, and 44 were converted from residential to academic use to house the Institute for African American

Affairs; Africa House; Asian, Pacific, and American Studies; China House; the Development Research Institute; and the Taub Center for Israel Studies. Later this year, the English Department will move into its new home at 244 Greene Street. In development are plans to relocate Physics from the Meyer Complex to 726 Broadway, and to provide increased space in Meyer for brain and cognitive sciences. Other academic projects in progress on the Square include construction of chemistry laboratories in the Silver Building, renovations in the East and Education Buildings for the Steinhardt School, and the continuation of Bobst Library's multi-phase plan to renovate research and study spaces.

In Brooklyn, we are developing the headquarters for NYU's newest academic unit, [CUSP](#), the Center for Urban Science and Progress. It will be temporarily housed in 1 Metro Tech Center, pending completion of a permanent home a short distance away at 370 Jay Street. Also in Brooklyn at 2 Metro Tech Center, the University is building a multi-school facility in integrated digital design (including game design, educational technology and games for learning, and game engineering) that will co-locate selected research, graduate and undergraduate programs in Tisch, Steinhardt, NYU-Poly, and the Courant Institute. In this first-of-its-kind cross-school facility, which is to be completed for fall 2013, faculty from these schools are designing a shared space to house faculty offices, shared student work spaces, classrooms, and research areas. Also underway in the University's "health corridor" on First Avenue is work on a new building for the College of Nursing, new research space for the College of Dentistry, and space for a new bio-engineering institute, to be completed in 2015. In Abu Dhabi, the new two million square feet campus on Saadiyat Island is under construction and scheduled for completion in January 2014, with a capacity for 3,000 students and faculty housing for 300. In Shanghai, NYU's new campus is under construction in downtown Pudong (within the Lujiazui Finance and Trade Zone) on Century Boulevard. Its 15 story academic building – scheduled for occupancy by fall 2014 – provides almost 600,000 square feet for classrooms, offices and other academic and social spaces; student dormitories for the initial cohort of students are already completed.

On a much longer time frame, this summer the New York City Council approved the University's Core Plan, which provides us with a zoning envelope near the Square to meet NYU's academic space needs over the next two decades. This year we will pivot from the external approvals process to an internal discourse about how best to proceed to meet our pressing space needs within the envelope of the City's approvals; this discourse is especially important given the concerns, misgivings, and even opposition expressed by some faculty and departments. A presidential working group—chaired by Associate Professor Ted Magder of The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development and composed primarily of faculty and including students and administrators—will solicit input from the University community, provide definitive guidance to the University administration about implementation, specify which future academic activities are most important to locate at the Washington Square core, and identify ways to increase the efficiency and usage of existing space, among other charges.

Support for Faculty Research and Teaching

NYU values the spirit of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship brought to the University community by faculty across the disciplines. To support and assist them, seed money and project funds are available on a competitive basis from:

- [University Research Challenge Fund](#)
- [NYU-Poly Seed Grants for Collaborative Research](#)
- [Curricular Development Challenge Fund](#)
- [Global Public Health Research Challenge Fund](#)
- [Humanities Initiative](#)

In that same spirit, at nyu.edu/entrepreneur, faculty can access the [Entrepreneurs Handbook](#) and the [Scientists Guide to Startups](#), and consult with the Office of [Industrial Liaison](#) (the technology transfer office at NYU) and the [Innovation Venture Fund](#). Support for obtaining external funding for research, including support for faculty who are writing interdisciplinary and interschool ‘mega’ (or center) grants, is available from the NYU Office of [Sponsored Programs](#). Additional support for obtaining private sector support is available from the Office of [University Development and Alumni Relations](#). Among its programs and events, the [Office of Faculty Resources](#) provides programming to support faculty development in teaching through its Center for Teaching Excellence and Faculty Resource Network. With research in some disciplines relying heavily on postdocs, faculty should be aware of NYU’s [Postdoctoral and Transition Program for Academic Diversity Fellowship](#), which provides in-residence fellowships for scholars from diverse backgrounds, races, ethnic groups, and other under-represented groups; and the [Office of Postdoctoral Affairs](#), which promotes and enhances the research careers of NYU postdocs.

Over the past few years, NYU has improved dramatically as a research university. As one indication of our increased academic strength: in the 2012 Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities, NYU moved to #28 from #57 in 2003, and in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings NYU moved up nearly 40 positions to #41. But there is still much to do. In particular, this year, the University community will be facing important and challenging issues – including online education, space priorities, faculty dialogue, integration of our engineering programs, and integration of our faculties, research, and teaching across the Global Network University. I eagerly look forward to working with you in partnership to meet the challenges and advance the goals of New York University as it continues its impressive trajectory of academic excellence.

With my best wishes for an exciting and productive academic year,

[David W. McLaughlin](#)

Provost, New York University