THE STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

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I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the Hofstra faculty and to present this summary of the state of the University over the past year. The first year of my presidency has been both exhilarating and challenging. I have found the presidency to be a complex and demanding position, as well as an extraordinarily rewarding one. The University’s fine faculty, administration and staff, who have shown an exceptional dedication and commitment to Hofstra and its students, have helped me enormously. I also owe a special debt of gratitude to the distinguished members of the Hofstra University Board of Trustees, who have been most supportive and encouraging, and have been a wonderful source of wisdom and counsel.

As I stated last year, and I will repeat this theme frequently, our collective goal is to maintain and strengthen our core mission of teaching and scholarship, while enhancing the academic credentials of our students as well as our academic reputation, profile and prestige. A complementary theme of this administration is the importance of enhancing the student supportiveness of the University in every possible way. The students are why the University exists, and we need to ensure that they are able to focus on their education with as little red tape as possible in registration, financial aid, payment and other administrative tasks. To study this issue, I have formed a Task Force on the First-Year Experience, Registration and Advisement. This Task Force, which is co-chaired by Senior Vice President for Planning and Administration Pat Adamski and Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Herman Berliner and consists of faculty and administrators, will meet regularly throughout the year to formulate recommendations to improve the students’ first-year experience, registration and advisement. I will be calling on each of you as well to help the University improve in these areas. Beyond that, I will make every effort to communicate how important it is to interact with our students in a supportive and helpful manner.
The 2001-02 academic year was a successful, albeit challenging, year. We endured together the horrors of September 11, 2001, and grieved together over the loss of 25 Hofstra alumni and one student in the World Trade Center attacks. On September 11, 2002, we again came together as a community to mark the anniversary of the tragedy, to mourn the victims and console the survivors, and to reaffirm the University’s role as a haven where hatred and bigotry will never be tolerated. The tragedy of 9/11 has brought us all closer together. It vividly demonstrated Hofstra’s caring spirit, as students, faculty, administrators and staff organized and contributed to blood, food and supply drives and volunteered in the rescue and relief efforts. The impact of September 11 will never fade completely. However, we will emerge all the stronger as we reaffirm the role of the University as a place for the free exchange of ideas and the promotion of tolerance, respect and justice.

The successes of the last academic year are many. Our faculty have been enormously productive; the academic credentials of the entering class have significantly improved; we have strengthened the administrative infrastructure of the University; and we have embarked on an ambitious renovation program that will improve many academic areas on campus. All of this will be described in detail below. We have just begun, however, and much work remains to be done.

PLANNING

Careful planning and monitoring are required in order to reach our goals. To that end, I have asked Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Herman Berliner and Senior Vice President for Planning and Administration Pat Adamski to work with me in overseeing the preparation of a five-year plan that will be presented to the Board of Trustees within the next year. I intend this plan to be a realistic road map of our goals over the next five years, with benchmarks for measuring the accomplishment of those goals. We have formulated a draft questionnaire to guide in the planning process and are refining the questionnaire with input from the Deans. I have asked each Dean to begin the planning process within the School/College, and to involve faculty in every aspect of the planning process. I am confident that working together to determine priorities, and to make difficult choices about the use of scarce resources to achieve those priorities, will help unite the community and move us forward to the next level.
I am very proud of our productive and hard working faculty and of their accomplishments over the last year. The faculty are the heart of this institution: they educate our students, and through their teaching and scholarship, establish the academic reputation of the University. I am determined to do everything possible to encourage the best of teaching and scholarship, as well as to hire the best possible new faculty. I am pleased to report that the University has increased the travel allowance for faculty to $1,500 per year (a 50-percent increase over the past two years). The Center for Teaching Excellence now has a new name and an additional mission. The name has been changed to the Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence and the mission has been expanded to provide support in the area of scholarship, including but not limited to mentoring, peer review workshops and faculty research meetings to facilitate the sharing of ideas and cross-fertilization. To help lead this effort, Dr. Matt Sonfield has been appointed Associate Director, and he will be working closely with Dr. Liora Schmelkin, Director of the CTSE.

A large number of individual faculty members have been honored during the past year. I will mention but a few to offer some sense of the scope of faculty accomplishments, with apologies to the many distinguished faculty whom I am not able to include. School of Communication Professor Lisa Merrill was awarded the 2002 Lilla A. Heston Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Interpretation and Performance Studies. Two HCLAS faculty members – Professors James Berger (English) and Sharryn Kasmir (Sociology/Anthropology) won National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships for this year. Professor Louis Kern received a Fulbright Scholar grant, and Professor Frank Bowe (CSCR) received the Mary E. Switzer Distinguished Fellowship from the American Public Health Association. An Earmark Grant of $500,000 from the U.S. Department of Education was awarded to Professors Janice Koch and Maureen Miletta to help middle school teachers link the performing arts with math, science, literacy studies, and technology in their curriculum. The New York State Great Irish Famine Curriculum Guide developed by Professors Maureen Murphy, Alan Singer and Maureen Miletta has been published and distributed to every school library in New York state. In recognition of their outstanding work, Professors Murphy and Singer were honored with the 2002 Program of Excellence Award from the National Council for the Social Studies.
NEW ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

Hofstra University Honors College is flourishing in its second year, and I especially appreciate the joint leadership of Co-Deans Warren Frisina and Steve Russell. The entering class for the fall of 2002 consists of 143 exceptional students from the top of their high school classes. This is a significant increase from last year’s inaugural class of 93. The average SAT score for the Honors College entering class is approximately 1320. In all respects, Hofstra’s Honors College students have been very positive about their experiences, and have given high marks to the program and the faculty. I believe that the success of Honors College will help raise the academic profile of the University and generally enhance our recruitment efforts. Our ultimate goal is to have an Honors College enrollment of 800 students, or approximately 10 percent of the full-time undergraduate population.

This fall the Physician Assistant Studies Program and new majors in computer engineering, entrepreneurship, public relations, and early childhood education are among Hofstra’s new academic offerings. We have initiated an M.A. in speech communication and rhetorical studies (our first graduate program in the School of Communication), and two new B.B.A./M.S. programs, one in marketing and market research and the other in accounting and taxation, in the Zarb School of Business. In addition, we are offering a certificate and professional diploma in literacy studies. Finally, the University Archives was awarded the 2002 Annual Archives Award for Program Excellence in a Historical Records Repository by the New York State Board of Regents and the State Archive.

We are continuing to study new initiatives and hope that a variety of promising new program ideas will emerge as part of our five-year plan. We continue to consider the possibility of constructing a hotel on campus, as well as the possibility of a school or department of hospitality and sports facility management. A feasibility study as to the economics and projected use of a hotel on campus prepared by an outside consultant (without cost to the University) will be completed shortly. I have appointed a Task Force, chaired by Senior Vice President for Planning and Administration Pat Adamski and Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Herman Berliner, and consisting of faculty and administrators, to consider and make recommendations with respect to a possible school of hospitality and sports facility management.
BUDGET AND FUNDRAISING

We have completed the 2001-02 fiscal year with an operating surplus of approximately $1,000,000. Although we encountered unanticipated increases in health care and insurance costs, as well as declining endowment returns and declining interest earned on invested operating cash, we were able to pare expenses sufficiently to produce this surplus. For the first time, I have asked Provost Berliner to solicit faculty input as to academic priorities for the use of a portion of the surplus, and we will act on those recommendations to devote a portion of the surplus to academic priorities. The remainder of the surplus will be used for physical facility renovation and repairs, including the air conditioning of the Physical Fitness Center.

The economy, as well as spiraling health care and insurance costs, continues to present challenges in budget preparation and planning. Our goals are many, and their accomplishment requires additional resources. We can only do so much from tuition-derived revenues not earmarked for mandatory expenses. Thus we cannot achieve all our goals at once. Our ambitions must be tempered by fiscal reality, since nothing can be accomplished without fiscal stability and a balanced budget. We can, however, expect to make slow, steady progress toward our goals over time.

Of course, fund raising is extremely important in providing the long-term resources needed to increase scholarship funds, as well as the number of faculty and support for faculty research. I devote a substantial amount of time to fund raising and have been successful in securing a number of significant major gifts to date. We are also pursuing a number of promising government grant opportunities. Indeed, the governor recently announced that Hofstra will receive $3 million as part of the New York State GeNYsis Program in the biotech development area. The grant will support the renovation of the former federal courthouse building, which will house Hofstra’s School of Education and Allied Human Services, and the creation of the Institute for the Development of Education in the Advanced Sciences (IDEAS) to be located within the School. The funds will permit the inclusion of specially designed science and computer labs for teacher training and student programs as well as high-technology classrooms and seminar rooms that will encourage interactive learning. Through IDEAS, Hofstra will continue its long history of addressing the needs of Long Island teachers and children with special programs and activities for the professional development of educators teaching technology or science in grades K-12.
We are beginning to plan for a capital campaign that would target funds primarily for endowment to support scholarships for students, research and distinguished professorships/chairs for faculty, as well as other academic initiatives. We have interviewed a number of capital campaign consultants, and one firm will make a presentation to the Board of Trustees in November. We expect that a feasibility study as to the target amount and timing of the capital campaign will begin in late December.

Since James McCue’s retirement as Vice President for Financial Affairs and Treasurer, we have been most fortunate to have Cathy Hennessy as our new chief financial officer. Vice President Hennessy received a B.B.A. from Hofstra University and an M.B.A. from The University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School. She served as a senior financial analyst at Morgan Guaranty and senior auditor and computer audit specialist at Peat Marwick. Prior to coming to Hofstra, Vice President Hennessy had been vice president of finance and treasurer of Adelphi University since 1986. Her proven skills and talents in financial management have already begun to save the University money, and we are looking forward to her extremely successful tenure here.

**Recruitment and Enrollment of Students**

As we had discussed last year, our target number for the class entering this fall was approximately 150 students fewer than in 2001. I am pleased to report that we are on target with an entering class of approximately 1,765 full-time freshmen. We have decreased special programs through the elimination of approximately 100 slots in the Write Start Program. Our selectivity ratio has improved; this year we accepted 72 percent of applicants as opposed to 77 percent last year. Finally, based on preliminary figures, our average SAT score and percentage of students in the top 10 percent of their high school class have improved significantly. These improvements were accomplished through the use of increased scholarship aid and careful monitoring of the admissions and acceptance process.

Upon the retirement of Mary Beth Carey, the staff of Admissions and Financial Aid worked very diligently and deserve special commendation for their efforts in completing the recruitment of the entering class. The new Vice President for Enrollment Management, Gigi Lamens, has joined the Hofstra community. Ms. Lamens was assistant provost and dean of enrollment services at Stony Brook University, and came to us with an extraordinary record of accomplishments. At Hofstra, she is responsible for all aspects of undergraduate recruitment and retention, admissions and financial aid,
including the design and implementation of strategic plans for improvements in the credentials of each year's entering class. Vice President Lamens plans to increase the use of faculty in the recruitment process, as well as to focus on targeted recruitment efforts and enhancing Hofstra's relationships with key guidance counselors.

After an extensive search involving both faculty and administration, we have in place a Dean for Graduate Admissions, Dr. Thomas Rock. Dean Rock has extensive admissions experience and served for the last five years at Columbia University where he managed all aspects of admissions, financial aid and student affairs for the School of Engineering and Applied Science. The Dean of Graduate Admissions reports to Provost Herman Berliner; this reporting line emphasizes the important relationship between the Office of Graduate Admissions and the Deans and faculty. Dean Rock has already begun his recruitment efforts and is working closely with the graduate coordinators, faculty and Deans.

The University has retained the academic consulting firm of Maguire Associates, Inc. to study our recruitment, admissions, financial aid and retention, and to make recommendations in these areas. In particular, Maguire Associates will make detailed recommendations as to our tuition and discount rates, how to recruit more selectively and effectively, and how to improve our retention rate. In addition, Maguire Associates will review our publications and marketing materials and recommend ways in which those materials can be improved. We are very enthusiastic about this study and believe that it will provide important data to help us plan for Hofstra's future.

**OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

After a national search, we have hired Dolores Fredrich, Esq. as Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel for the University. Vice President Fredrich, a graduate of Hofstra Law School, where she was first in her class, was Managing Editor of the *Law Review* and had been a partner at the law firm of Farrell Fritz. At Hofstra, Vice President Fredrich has created an Office of Legal Affairs that is proactive and has begun to review and revise various policies and procedures, as well as to supervise litigation and to advise faculty and administrators on a variety of legal issues. The Office of Legal Affairs is an important addition to Hofstra; we believe that over time it will help to reduce the University’s legal exposure in a variety of areas, as well as serving as an important resource for the University community as a whole.
TECHNOLOGY

Last year, we began a process of replacing faculty computers on a systematic basis. We also replaced computers in a large number of the student labs. We added to the budget for this year an amount sufficient to continue the program of faculty computer replacement on a recurring basis. In all, more than $500,000 was added to the Computer Center budget for faculty computer replacement, faculty computing, and an increase in staff for the Help Desk as well as in Systems and Technological Services.

With the help of Dean Daniel Rubey and a New York state grant, we were also able to make Blackboard fully available to our faculty. I am pleased to report that 382 courses using Blackboard have already been made active by the faculty. We have also completed the implementation of Banner administration software. I especially want to thank Dean Rubey for all his efforts in the area of academic technology advancement and the Banner implementation.

With the retirement of Eugene Ingoglia, formerly Executive Dean for Administrative Computing, we have combined faculty computing and administrative computing under the leadership of Vice President for Information Technology Robert Juckiewicz. Vice President Juckiewicz was hired after an extensive national search, and came to Hofstra from Columbia University where he served as deputy vice president of administrative information services and interim vice president for student services. Vice President Juckiewicz has been meeting regularly with faculty and administrators and will be focusing on, among other areas, the support of faculty in the exploration, development and application of information technology to enhance teaching. He will also be following up on Banner implementation by helping the University community fully and successfully use Banner, as well as the enhancements needed to support Hofstra’s requirements. To better understand these requirements, Vice President Juckiewicz is holding faculty focus group meetings, and working with students and administrators to develop a prioritized plan that responds to the University’s needs.

CULTURAL CENTER

Hofstra’s Cultural Center continues to provide the University community with a rich array of conferences, symposia, lectures, and musical and dramatic performances. In 2001-2002, impressive conferences were held on Legal Ethics, Moby-Dick, a Peace Odyssey (an exploration of 100 years of the Nobel Peace Prize), Louis Armstrong, John
Steinbeck's Americas, George Gershwin, Spanish and Spanish-American Poetry, as well as a symposium on the Life and Legacy of Charles Lindbergh. This fall's schedule includes conferences on Primo Levi and on Bing Crosby, as well as a symposium on Sacco and Vanzetti. The spring 2003 schedule includes conferences on the Broadway Musical and on the Past, Present and Future of the Aviation Industry.

We have been working with the Cultural Center to help increase student participation in future events, and the Cultural Center will target student organizations to help in planning and stimulating student interest in conferences and other events. A table has been reserved for students at conference banquets, so that a rotating group of students will be able to attend without charge. A similar table has also been reserved for faculty.

**PHYSICAL FACILITIES**

I described to you last year the physical facilities renovation program approved by the Board of Trustees that would address the most pressing of the University's space concerns and needs. The implementation of this plan has already begun. The plans for the renovation of the federal courthouse building into a new home for the School of Education and Allied Human Services have been drawn up, and construction is expected to begin this fall with an anticipated completion date of fall 2003. An architectural firm has been selected to design a new building to be located next to the John Cranford Adams Playhouse and Dempster Hall. This new building will house a 250-seat “black box” theater, a band rehearsal hall, music practice rooms, faculty offices and small classrooms. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2003, with completion of this building scheduled for the summer of 2004. We expect that some work on the renovation of the Playhouse will also begin this year. The remaining moves and renovations under the physical facilities renovation plan will be phased in as buildings become vacant and available for reconstruction.

During this past year, we have also accomplished the following: sprinkler systems have been installed in the remaining three high-rise residence halls so that all the high-rise residence halls have approved sprinkler systems; the Sociology/Anthropology Department has moved to larger quarters in Davison Hall; space has been made available for the Office of Graduate Admissions in Memorial Hall; and a new lounge has been created in the Sondra and David S. Mack Student Center that includes couches, televisions, games and the availability of high-speed Internet connections for laptops.
ADVERTISING

We are continuing to focus on advertisements that feature Hofstra faculty as well as those that highlight particular schools and/or programs. Vice President for University Relations Mike DeLuise will be experimenting with new looks for some of these advertisements. He has also created with Producer/Director Len Thon a video that will be aired on television as part of our image advertising. This year, we will be increasing our efforts to showcase our faculty by putting them in touch with the press for comment on particular topics related to their areas of expertise. I would like to ask the faculty for help in this regard, both by responding to our request for information about your areas of expertise, and especially by making yourself available to appear on a radio or television show, or write a column, when the opportunity arises. Hofstra’s outstanding faculty are our best ambassadors and our best free advertisements about the quality of this University. We greatly appreciate your help in this endeavor to showcase the strength of our faculty.

CONCLUSION

I believe that the State of the University address performs an important function in informing the community about the University's plans and progress. And the delivery of this address before the faculty permits an opportunity for questions and dialogue. I am beginning to meet more and more of the Hofstra community personally, and I urge you to introduce yourself, stop by my office or make an appointment to chat, or e-mail me. Meeting as many members of the University community as possible, and listening carefully to them, is a very important way for me to further understand the aspirations and concerns of the University. I look forward to working with each of you during this year and the years to come.