

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Office of the Associate Provost
122 College Hall / 6303

September 23, 2003

TO: Retired Faculty Members

Dear Colleague,

The report of the 2001-2002 Task Force on Faculty Retirement, which was published in the *Almanac* last September, recommended that consideration be given to forming an association of the retired members of the faculty. The relevant part of that report is on the reverse side of this sheet. Such an association could provide an effective mechanism to help retired faculty members keep in touch with each other and with the University. It could also help inform retired faculty members of opportunities to participate in University activities and provide a mechanism to bring the concerns of retired faculty members to the attention of the University.

An association of this nature makes sense only if a reasonable number of retired faculty members are interested in participating at some level. I realize that many of you now reside in places far from – and generally warmer than – Philadelphia, and could participate only from a distance. I also know that at least a few of you are now so engrossed in new activities that a continuing relationship with the University would have little attraction. However, I suspect that there may be sufficient interest to justify forming some kind of association. We would hardly be a pioneer in this business, since a number of other universities have already gone this route. Some of them appear to have very active and well-established emeritus organizations.

At the time I decided to write this letter I feared that I would find that the University's records of its retired faculty were in dismal shape. I am sorry to report that those records are in even worse shape than I had feared. Although I have attempted to bring the records up to date, this letter will undoubtedly miss many faculty members whose names are missing or whose addresses are either missing or wrong. It will also be directed, unfortunately, to at least a few faculty members who died some years ago.

This letter has several objectives. First, I would like to know whether you would be interested in such an organization. Second, I would like to know whether you would be willing to serve on an initial steering committee to help develop plans for this organization. Space for your answers to these questions, as well as for any comments or suggestions you may have, is provided on the enclosed questionnaire. I promise to read all of your comments, and I will try to respond if it appears that a response might be helpful. Finally, since our records of the addresses of retired faculty members are in truly wretched shape, I would appreciate it if you would provide your preferred mailing address and your e-mail address if you have one. To return this questionnaire you need only put it in the enclosed stamped envelope and deposit it in the mail. I hope that I will be hearing from you soon. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Walter D. Wales
Interim Associate Provost (Professor Emeritus of Physics)

Organization of Retired Faculty

The Task Force strongly supports the concept of establishing a University-wide Association of Retired Faculty (ARF) within the Associate Provost's office with widespread supportive activities. The establishment of such an organization would demonstrate the importance of the service and scholarly input faculty members have contributed to the University over many years and the opportunities for ongoing service in the Emeritus phase of faculty life. The following possible activities of such an organization could include⁶:

- advocate for various senior faculty issues such as provision of office space or university-sponsored long-term care insurance.
- advocate for the University in the area of fund-raising. Many emeritus faculty, as a result of years of service to the University and to the Philadelphia region, are ideally suited for identifying and approaching individuals and institutions capable of supporting the University when properly alerted to a specific need.
- through a questionnaire to all senior faculty (active and emeritus) create a talent bank of services that they would be willing to provide *pro bono*.

In order to staff and support these activities of the ARF, the University Administration should:

- develop an Office of Retired Faculty within the Associate Provost's office, with a staff person who can commit at least 50 percent of his/her time to ARF activities. (One possible funding mechanism could come from the activities of senior and emeritus faculty, who teach in medical school or university-wide programs such as the "Freshman Seminar Program" without remuneration. The University receives tuition funds for these courses and could fund the office for efforts of its emeritus faculty for the University.)
- the ARF could develop Senior Faculty teaching as a marketable resource. For example, in the Medical School, certain desirable courses in medical/scientific topics could be available for undergraduates and in distance learning programs, and a negotiated portion of the revenues produced would return to the Medical School to support the Retired Faculty Program.

Emeritus Faculty Questionnaire

1. Would you be interested in participating (at least occasionally) in an Association of Emeritus Faculty?

Comments:

2. Would you be willing to serve on a steering committee to help develop an initial plan for such an association?

Comments:

Your Name _____

Your preferred *mailing address*:

Your *e-mail address*:
