To: All Graduate and Professional Students

From: President Amy Gutmann and Provost Wendell Pritchett

Subject: Update on Graduate Student Unionization

Earlier today, we received notice that GET-UP, a group affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) union, voluntarily withdrew its petition to represent graduate and professional students at Penn who serve as teaching and research assistants. This action means that there will no longer be an election later this semester to determine whether eligible graduate and professional students will choose to be represented by GET-UP.

We look forward to continuing to work directly with our graduate and professional students, as we have long been doing, to improve your professional development and academic lives. Graduate and professional students are at the very heart of our mission at Penn: expanding the frontiers of innovative scholarship and research, teaching the next generations of future leaders, and creating new ideas that change the world.

We are very proud of all of your contributions to scholarship and education, as well as the initiatives we have launched in collaboration with our graduate students and their elected leadership to enhance every aspect of graduate education and student life at Penn. These efforts have been especially energetic since 2004, when we devoted the campus-wide self-study of Middle States reaccreditation to graduate education and we implemented major initiatives as a result of what we learned. You can learn more about the long history of these initiatives at our dedicated web pages on Valuing Graduate Students at Penn <https://www.upenn.edu/pages/valuing-grad-students>.

We aspire to sustain Penn’s place as a global leader in graduate and professional education. We can do this only as full partners with our outstanding students and their elected leadership. Moving forward, we are committed to redoubling our efforts to learn more about the evolving needs of our graduate and professional students and to develop new initiatives that shape the graduate education and student life of the future. To reaffirm this commitment, the Graduate Student Center will host a series of conversations in which graduate and professional students will be invited to share your views about the issues that are most important to you, especially regarding diversity, mentoring, and harassment. More information about this series will be posted soon on the Graduate Student Center website <http://www.gsc.upenn.edu/>.

We are enormously grateful for your contributions to academic and university life at Penn and we look forward to collectively advancing and achieving our shared goals as an educational community.