Welcome back to another great year at Penn. We are extremely proud of our graduate students and the vibrant intellectual life that they create on campus. We have worked hard over many years, in close partnership with the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA) and the Graduate Student Center, to make the graduate student experience at Penn second to none.

We are pleased to announce two new initiatives for this fall. The Van Pelt Library has created a new study space exclusively for graduate students, in the fifth floor area previously called the Class of 1937 Memorial Reading Room. It includes individual carrels, closed access to ensure quiet, a lactation room, and a variety of seating and work options. And for PhD students with two or more children, the university has significantly increased child care grants to a maximum of $6700, rising from the previous maximum grant of $4000.

GAPSA’s leadership and representation on our University governance councils and advisory committees enable us to respond to student input and continuously improve the resources available to students for teaching, mentoring, career services, work-life balance, and assistance for students with families. Over the years, GAPSA has successfully advocated for significant increases in its budget to support University-wide programs, travel awards for graduate and professional students, and increased funding of student government in the schools. You can learn more about the benefits and programs available to graduate and professional students at Penn at: http://www.upenn.edu/pages/valuing-grad-students.

We encourage you to work closely with GAPSA and other student groups to let us know about further advancements to graduate and professional life at Penn that can continue to enhance our community.