The Year in Review

Dear Bucknell Students:

As the 2006-07 academic year begins, I’d like to welcome back returning students as well as 37 transfer students and the 923 members of the incoming Class of 2010. We are delighted you are now part of Bucknell, and wish you and all our students great success and fulfillment this year.

With these new beginnings upon us, I thought you might find it useful to have in hand a review of the past year and a sense of the key challenges that lie before us as a University community. Portions of this review were sent to other Bucknell constituencies at the end of the spring semester, but since by then classes had ended and most students had left the campus, I felt it important to share this review with you at the beginning of the academic year.

With thanks for your commitment to Bucknell,

Sincerely,

Brian C. Mitchell
President

The Plan for Bucknell

The University’s most significant accomplishment last year was the unanimous endorsement by the student government, faculty and Board of Trustees of The Plan for Bucknell. This strategic document articulates our common vision, which students were instrumental in crafting: “To provide students with the premier undergraduate experience in American higher education.” To meet this goal, The Plan sets forth five strategies:

- Strengthen the Academic Core
- Deepen the Residential Learning Experience
- Enhance Diversity
- Build Bridges
- Secure Our Financial Future

Bucknell
The Bucknell Student Government endorsed the strategic plan at a spring meeting. Provost DeCredico and I were delighted to be in the audience when the vote took place. The Provost and I have enjoyed regular lunches with the BSG leadership and look forward to continuing these meetings and working closely with the BSG, ably led by Adam Weinberg ’07.

All students recently received the abbreviated version of The Plan. I hope you will read it, as it will guide the University for the next decade. The full version is available online at www.bucknell.edu/ThePlanForBucknell.

We are determined to put this plan into action. To guide the University in that task, the Provost and I have established the Office of Strategy Implementation and appointed Mark Dillard as its director. We expect students to contribute in a significant way to the development of The Plan. To learn more, including how to submit ideas, see www.bucknell.edu/StrategyImplementation.

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

This summer, we officially merged the offices of student and academic affairs; the combined division will be led by Provost Mary A. DeCredico. We took this step to make the educational experience seamless and full of teachable moments. Among the agenda immediately ahead is how to create a vertical, four-year experience that deepens the residential experience.

We have established the new Teaching and Learning Center in Room 122 of the Bertrand Library with Professor Geoff Schneider, the 2006 recipient of the Class of 1956 Lectureship for inspirational teaching, serving as the inaugural director. Created this year by Provost Mary DeCredico and the Faculty Advisory Committee on Teaching to further enhance teaching and learning at Bucknell, the center’s goal is to work closely with and to provide support for our faculty in their role as teachers.

After more than four years of intense discussion involving every academic department, and following the recommendation of the administration and an intense analysis by the Board of Trustees, the Board approved the University’s moving toward a five-course load, in which faculty will teach five instead of the current six courses each academic year.

To implement this new course load fully across all departments, which we expect will take several years, we will be investing considerable new resources in hiring additional faculty. When completed, this change will bring us more in line with our peer institutions and allow faculty to dedicate even more time to their teaching, scholarship and service to the University. This change is one of the most important steps in Bucknell’s academic system in generations, and will produce significant advances in teaching, our ability to recruit and retain faculty, and the capacity of our faculty to distinguish themselves nationally as teacher-scholars.

During the spring meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Provost, Mrs. Mitchell, and I were proud to host an inaugural dinner with the Board to honor the faculty who, during this academic year, received tenure or were promoted to full professor. This year, 17 faculty were awarded tenure and five faculty were named full professors. Such promotions are among the most significant and hard-won steps in a faculty member’s professional life.

LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

- Sam Lundquist took office September 1 as our new Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations. Previously assistant vice president for development and campaign initiatives at the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Lundquist will oversee all university fundraising, notably the upcoming comprehensive campaign, as well as university relations with Bucknell alumni and parents, which are vital to the “Secure Our Financial Future” goal in The Plan.

- Pete Mackey joined Bucknell in April as the University’s first Chief Communications Officer. Dr. Mackey has responsibility for overseeing a
comprehensive strategic communications plan for Bucknell, including student recruitment, the upcoming comprehensive fundraising campaign, and the strategic plan and its grounding in the academic core.

- Charlie Pollock has been named Vice President of External Affairs. Previously vice president of student affairs and secretary of the University, Mr. Pollock will be the point of first contact for Bucknell's work with local and county communities as well as managing our relations with state and federal offices, all aspects of the building bridges component of The Plan.

- Kurt Thiede has been named Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admissions. Mr. Thiede’s combined roles will help the University build a new admissions and enrollment paradigm, one that focuses on building and strengthening our relationship with students from the start of their interest in attending Bucknell, which will contribute to numerous aspects of The Plan.

- Associate Dean Chris Zappe has been named interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Zappe, who has been with the Department of Management since 1993, was named associate dean of the college in 2002. He has taken his new role with the retirement of Genie Gerdes from her position as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Gerdes served 18 years in senior administrative roles, including 16 as dean. She has returned to her work as a member of the faculty of our Department of Psychology, which she joined in 1974. We deeply appreciate Dr. Gerdes’ numerous contributions to Bucknell in her roles as a teacher and administrator across these 32 years and look forward to her further service to the University.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

As last year began, we had a number of vacancies in key administrative roles that have a direct impact on the student experience. I am pleased that we have now filled almost every one of those, namely with the following appointments:

- Mark Davies as Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management. Dr. Davies’ responsibilities will include managing a number of strategic projects for the division, including our new enrollment programs with Posse and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

- Michaela Denny as Director of the Women’s Resource Center. A doctoral candidate at Florida State University, Ms. Denny has served in women’s resource centers at both the local and national levels.

- Jason Friedberg as Director of Public Safety. Most recently Mr. Friedberg was associate director and captain of the Franklin & Marshall College’s Public Safety Office.

- Jessica Quintana Hess as Director of the Office of Multicultural Student Services. A 1999 Bucknell grad, Ms. Hess received a master’s degree from Bucknell in 2000 and most recently served as Associate Director of Admissions.

- Robert Midkiff as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Dr. Midkiff will assume oversight for Bucknell’s academic policies relating to curriculum development and management, course and instructional facilities scheduling, and international education, and work closely with the Registrar’s office regarding the Catalog and the University’s academic calendar.

- Kathy Owens as Assistant for Special Projects in the Office of the Provost. Dr. Owens’ responsibilities will include a review and documentation of all policies related to sexual conduct and consequences of sexual misconduct, and the merger of Academic Affairs/Student Affairs. Dr. Owens has worked at Bucknell for five years, most recently as executive assistant to the president/assistant secretary to the Board of Trustees.

We also have appointed Gerry Commerford as acting dean of students. As we conduct a national search to fill this vital position, Dean Commerford’s focus in this
role will be guiding the student affairs staff in developing its specific tactics for *The Plan for Bucknell*.

**MAJOR GRANTS**

The University has received two especially notable recent grants:

- A grant of $806,400 from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, which will enable Bucknell to expand its partnerships with community colleges. We expect to enroll 45 new transfer students through this program over the next four years.

- The William Randolph Hearst Foundations awarded Bucknell a $100,000 supplemental grant, which modifies the fund’s original purpose to support first-generation college students. The support from the Cooke and Hearst Foundations gives the University vital resources to further expand our ability to invest in diversity on campus in all its forms, another tenet of *The Plan*.

**CHAMPIONS**

Our Bucknell student-athletes again won the Patriot League all-sports championship, earning the Bison their 12th Presidents’ Cup in the 16-year history of the conference. Eight of our teams won Patriot League championships this year: women’s soccer, women’s cross country, women’s indoor and outdoor track and field, women’s swimming and diving, men’s basketball, men’s golf, and women’s rowing.

The men’s basketball team, of course, completed the first-ever undefeated regular basketball season in the history of the conference, won a school-record 27 games, advanced for the second straight year to the second round of the NCAA tournament, and finished the season ranked 25th in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches’ Poll. And Bucknell was the only university in the 65-team men’s basketball NCAA tournament with a 100 percent success rate graduating its basketball players, representing well our top-10 ranking nationally for the graduation rate of all our teams combined.

We also celebrated successful competitions in academic areas. Chemical engineering students received two recognitions. David Van Wagener ’06 received first place in the student paper competition for his research talk on “Verifying Steady State Assumptions in Laboratory Microdialysis.” Dr. Margot Vigeant served as his research advisor. David will present his work in a special symposium with the eight other first place regional winners this November in San Francisco. And the ChemE Car Team placed second in its competition, earning the opportunity to compete at the National ChemE Car Competition, also in San Francisco in November.

The 10 members of the Bucknell Math Team again were successful in the Putnam Math Competition. Under the guidance of faculty advisors Dr. Greg Adams and Dr. Ueli Daepf, the team finished 21st out of 395 North American colleges in this year’s competition.

**ATHLETICS**

The NCAA recertification process has come to a successful conclusion. Following a year-long self-study and an evaluation from a peer review team, the NCAA Committee on Athletics Certification has announced that Bucknell has been certified without conditions.

**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

This year, the University will initiate a comprehensive facilities master plan to ensure that Bucknell remains one of the most beautiful and functional campuses in America. We have selected the distinguished firm of Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott to help develop this plan. Areas high on our agenda include creating more student-centered learning and living spaces, improving teaching and research space for faculty, and developing more locations in which administrators and support staff can work closely and productively together.

In addition to improved outdoor athletic facilities at the West Fields Complex, Graham Field for field hockey
and women’s lacrosse, and the new Varsity Soccer Field, construction began this summer on West Fields Phase III, a state-of-the art facility offering spectator seating, concessions and team rooms for both Graham Field and the Varsity Soccer Field.

Approval has been given to construct a new administrative office building to house development and other personnel near the golf course on Abbey Lane. In the coming months, we will be deciding which of the several sites that we now have under consideration will ultimately be home to this building.

CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Within two years, the University will launch an aggressive comprehensive fundraising campaign. We have hired the distinguished firm of Grenzebach, Glier & Associates, as campaign counsel. To prepare for the campaign, the University is aggressively recruiting staff in development and alumni relations.

HONORARY DEGREES

The Board of Trustees and faculty have re-instituted a process for the granting of honorary degrees, beginning with 2007 commencement. (Nominations were due Aug. 15 for 2007 Commencement honors, and the Class of 2007 submitted a timely list of nominees.) Honorary degrees recognize individuals whose work exemplifies the qualities of intellect, character, and creativity most cherished by the University. Special consideration will be given to those individuals whose distinguished contributions have not yet been widely or formally recognized outside their own fields and to individuals who are part of the Bucknell community. Members of the Bucknell community may submit future nominations through myBucknell. The Honorary Degree Nomination channel is under the Academic category. Or see www.bucknell.edu.Provost.

I hope you have found this summary informative.