Dear colleagues, it is an honor to be with you today serving as President of
Boston University and beginning our work together toward shaping the future of this
institution. First, I would like to thank all the members of the University community who
have extended such a warm welcome to my wife, Beverly, and to me as we have made
our transition from across the river. Beginning with the announcement of my
appointment on June 4th, I started spending all my available time at Boston University,
walking around the Charles River and Medical Campuses, talking to faculty and staff
about the University today and its history, and listening to our hopes for the future.
I began forming impressions of our university.

Although I have been a student here for only five months, there is much that
I would like to say to you this afternoon about Boston University, about me, and about
how I would like to work with you to move us forward. I will try to confine my remarks
to several topics:

• Observations about Boston University
• Hopes for the future
• Realities that we must face together
• Next steps

Because of the short length of today’s remarks, my comments necessarily will have a
considerable dynamic range, from broad-brush comments about my sense of Boston
University to some very specific comments about timely issues and the next steps.

**Observations on Boston University**

As I began studying Boston University, I was prepared to experience the full
variety of programs that compose a modern university, but I was not prepared for BU!
The range of programs, the quality of the faculty and staff, and the commitment to
education and research were greater than I had ever imagined. This brings me to my first and most important observation.

I am struck by the impression that Boston University is a much better university than anyone knows, whether you speak of the faculty, students, alumni, or of the world. What is my basis for this statement?

First, Boston University has a great faculty that takes seriously the balanced commitment to teaching, research, and scholarship. The faculty’s commitment to undergraduate education runs deep. Our educational principles are based on the commitment to a strong liberal arts education complimented by the opportunities afforded by a set of excellent professional degree programs ranging from management, communications, and engineering to visual and performing arts. This mixture is an important part of Boston University’s core.

Equally as important, Boston University has become a residential university in an urban environment. Today almost 11,200 students or over 75% of our undergraduate population live on campus and experience an expanding residential campus community. Boston University is no longer the commuter school of the past. We attract students from across the country and around the world. Over 31,000 students applied last year for slightly more than 4,100 positions in our freshman class.

This residential university community is fused with the City of Boston geographically on both the Boston University Medical Campus in the South End and the Charles River Campus, through academic and public service programs that are too numerous to mention, and culturally, as the city is integral to the fabric in which we live, work, and learn.

The reach of BU goes far beyond the City of Boston. Boston University is a leader in international programs. We have one of the oldest and best-developed models for study abroad for our undergraduate students and a growing suite of international and distance education programs. As the world is moving toward global connectivity of our economic and societal futures, higher education is playing an increasingly pivotal role in this development. BU is well positioned to consider what our role in this future will be.

Today, Boston University also is a major research university with a full range of doctoral programs spanning the humanities, social sciences, physical and biological
sciences, engineering, and medical sciences. It is perhaps in this role that Boston University has changed most dramatically in the last decade. We performed over $300 million of sponsored research in the last fiscal year and are ranked in the top 45 institutions in the country in federal research support. The growth of research at Boston University in the last few decades has been nothing short of amazing and has reflected the entrepreneurial spirit that has been bred within this institution.

All of these activities—education, research, and public service—are indicative of a great urban research university. Getting this message out to all who will listen is a primary objective for me. I want to start with you today. Let me say again that Boston University is a great private university, and it can be much better.

Vision

This brings me to my hope for Boston University: I hope to help lead Boston University along the path to be one of the greatest urban private universities in America and in the world. Boston University should be known for bringing together the highest quality students and faculty. We must devote our efforts to having our campus recognized as a place where we learn and live together in the context of the city and the world; where we produce important knowledge and educate the next cohort of young people to help shape the world in the 21st century.

How do we find our path to success as a private research university and make decisions to move along it? There is no secret to this. We simply have to dedicate ourselves to achieving the highest quality in everything we undertake, whether it be our educational programs, our interdisciplinary research efforts, or the essential activities of hiring and promoting faculty. This last effort will be a crucial focus for the leadership of this university and for me.

I learned years ago that the quality of the faculty DEFINES the quality of a university. Boston University is not only a collection of colleges and schools, each with distinct goals and metrics, but it is also one faculty with the shared responsibility for the quality and future of the institution. To be truly successful, Boston University must effectively recruit faculty while competing against other universities with more money and, as some may be perceived, with more prestige. We must use the highest standards
for the promotion of faculty members, while respecting our tradition of balancing outstanding research and scholarship with teaching and with service to the University.

The composition of our student body is equally as important as the quality of our faculty. In the last few decades, Boston University has made great strides in this area and today is attracting a remarkable student body from across the country. Last year, the average SAT scores of our freshman class were over 1300, nearly 300 points above the national average. We must continue to attract the highest quality students to BU. To do this will require making BU accessible and welcoming to students of all races and socio-economic backgrounds. Achieving this goal will be difficult because of the financial realities of our university. Let’s talk about these.

**Realities**

Boston University has grown from a city-based, commuter university to a nationally-based, major private university by carefully deploying the revenues generated by our educational and research programs to invest in the campus and strengthen and expand our education and research programs.

Let me give you some context for this statement. For the fiscal year that began in July 2005, we are projecting a total budget in excess of $1.6 billion. Of this budget, approximately 50% of our revenues is coming directly from tuition and fees and 36% from research and sponsored programs. This 86% portion of the budget compares to less than 3% or $ 47.5 million coming from gifts from individuals or income from the University’s endowment. Today we are a university that lives from our collective efforts to teach and generate external support of our research.

We do not plan to continue this low level of private support. For Boston University to move forward, we must create a vision for our future that will compel our alumni and friends to increase their support. This will be a major goal.

Even so, the need will continue to carefully shepherd our resources. As we enter the planning for our next fiscal year, I will work with Provost David Campbell and Executive Vice President Joe Mercurio to examine all our expenses in detail and to strengthen the tradition of focusing our resources on enhancing the excellence of the University.
Faculty Salaries

I would like to comment on one specific aspect of our budget: faculty salaries. Faculty salaries are key to our competitive position for attracting and retaining faculty. Later in this meeting, you will hear a report from the Equity and Inclusion Committee of the Faculty Council on faculty salaries. There are two conclusions from this report that I would like to highlight and comment on here. First, you will see that using University-wide averages, excluding the School of Medicine, our average salaries are lower than the average of a set of peer institutions taken from data published by the AAUP for the last fiscal year.

To become the university I envision, we must do everything possible, within the constraints of the resources available, to pay our faculty competitively, as compared with our peer institutions. Developing a reasonable strategy for allocating resources requires looking carefully at the details that are buried inside institutional averages. An unfortunate reality is that faculty salaries within a major research university, just as in other sectors of the economy, are strongly affected by the markets at work. In a university, this statement translates into the fact that faculty in different disciplines are paid on different scales, according to a national and, sometimes international, market-based demand and professional stature.

Salaries are influenced by performance; annual reviews of faculty accomplishments are a critical piece of any fair assessment of faculty performance and review of compensation. The senior administration will work in concert with the Faculty Council to ensure that faculty salaries are set using a gender-blind, merit-based, and market-driven system.

This brings me to the second conclusion of the analysis by the faculty Committee on Equity and Inclusion. As you have heard, a comparison of salaries by gender shows that, based on University-wide averages, women faculty members are paid less than men. Although this is a national phenomenon and is influenced by the distribution of women faculty within the various disciplines and their relative salary levels, data shows that these differences exist within disciplines within our university. Irrespective of whether we can afford salaries that are as high as a defined peered group, Boston University must be
known as a university that is gender-blind for promotion and merit. Provost David Campbell began examining the issue of gender-based differences in faculty salaries this summer and will report on progress that has been made in the latest salary review cycle.

As I said before, I am committed to a *gender-blind, merit-based, and market-driven system* for setting faculty compensation. The provost and I will work diligently toward this goal.

**Planning for the Future**

How do we move Boston University forward? What will Boston University look like in a decade? How do we develop a vision for the future and a plan to achieve that vision? These are questions for all of us that deserve focused attention. Accordingly, I am moving to launch a planning cycle within the academic units of the University. Provost Campbell and I will work with the deans of the Schools and Colleges, and they will work with the department chairs and faculty, to develop plans for each academic unit. The goal will be for each academic unit to contribute to a strategic plan for its School or College. These plans should be based on realistic assessments of the present quality of our educational and research programs, on assessments of the competitive position of our programs with respect to our peers, on estimates of the resources needed to improve our programs, and the potential positive impacts of these improvements.

Planning that originates within departments, Schools, and Colleges will not capture all of the important questions that we need to consider. Groups of faculty and academic leaders will be engaged to consider questions critical to our future. Four examples of such cross-cutting questions are:

- How will Boston University promote diversity among our faculty, students, and staff?
- What is the global future of our university?
- How do we best promote interdisciplinary research and education?
- How should Boston University best engage in Boston in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century?

My hope is that our planning will generate discussions within all academic units and across campus. These discussions will continue through the academic year. Besides faculty, students, and staff, the discussions should include our Trustees and supporters.
through our various advisory committees. The goal will be to generate consensus on a path forward by next fall and to set goals, as well as metrics for measuring our progress.

It will be hard work to develop such a plan, and it will involve difficult choices. We will do our best to communicate to the faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community throughout the process and as we measure our progress against our goals.

**Finally**

There is much work to do if Boston University is going to continue the wonderful progress it has made in the last few decades. Our success will be a strong function of our commitment to the task, of our commitment to achieving the highest quality in everything we do, and of the support that we can muster from our alumni and friends. I am energized by the opportunities in front of us and by the opportunity to work with a wonderful group of colleagues toward advancing Boston University.

I will be happy to take any questions.