August 1, 2005

To Members of the Boston University Community:

The last eight weeks of my transition to Boston University have been exhilarating. I want to thank the members of the BU community who have extended such a warm welcome to my family and to me. I have been and will continue through the remainder of the summer to be spending most of my time learning about Boston University by talking to faculty, staff, and students.

As September 1st draws closer, I will be concentrating on several important appointments. There is no position that is more important to the University than the appointment of the Provost. Professor David Campbell, a distinguished theoretical physicist, has been serving as Provost ad interim since July 2004.

The Provost is the chief academic officer of the Charles River Campus and, in collaboration with the Executive Vice President, Joseph Mercurio, and the Provost of the Medical Campus, Karen Antman, will share with me responsibility for budgetary and financial planning for the University. I will look to the Provost for leadership in academic matters involving the Charles River Campus. The Provost should work closely with the deans and department chairs, in collaboration with the faculty, to build consensus on academic directions and to manage the resources of the University.

To serve our community, the Provost must be an exceptional scholar, have high integrity, and have the wisdom and experience to guide a complex academic enterprise. The ability to work collaboratively with faculty and administrative leadership to build consensus on key issues will be a critical characteristic of the person holding this position.

I invite you to send me your ideas regarding the structure of the Provost's position and possible candidates. I would also like to receive your thoughts on key issues that the Provost should focus on in the coming years. You may send letters to me confidentially either at the Office of the President, One Sherborn Street, Boston, Massachusetts, 02215, or via email at: provostinput@bu.edu. I hope to make an appointment early in the fall term.

I look forward to hearing your ideas and to working with you in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,
Bob Brown