

world, was commissioned by J Mays, designer of Volkswagen's New Beetle and the 2002 Ford Thunderbird. At a ceremony on February 20, the Design School honored Mays with its 2002 Excellence in Design Award, established in 1997 to "broaden the school's involvement with disciplines of the greater design community not formally represented" in its three main departments: architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning and design.

Exhibit co-curator and assistant professor of architecture Joseph MacDonald says that there has been an "accelerated blurring between design disciplines recently

as a result of emerging technologies, and the school wants to acknowledge and foster alliances in that climate of connectivity." Mays himself reached out to tap Australian Marc Swenson, a designer of furniture, glassware, and restaurant interiors, to create O21C, for example. Built in 1999, the car, which Mays (now the head of global design for Ford Motor Company) has characterized as "more George Jetson than Georg Jensen," went on to appear at the 2000 Milan Furniture Fair (where it acquired its present green color). "That Ford would be present at a furniture show, how strange is that?" asks MacDonald.

Architects can learn from designers like Mays to "reflect and participate in contemporary culture in a meaningful way," MacDonald says. "We're less interested in the product than in the working method." Mays's design process, says MacDonald, begins with a design vocabulary that captures the essence of an era as expressed in the common language of pop culture: text, images, film, and music. The words for the New Beetle, for example, are "simple, reliable, honest." His own work in three words? "Lust, longing, and desire," says Mays. That George Jetson could be sexy, who knew?

## A Dean for All Weathers

WHEN HE ANNOUNCED on February 11 that he would relinquish the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) deanship this June, Jeremy R. Knowles signaled the end of a tenure that began together with Neil L. Rudenstine's presidency, on July 1, 1991.

Early in that decade-plus-one, Knowles addressed persistent deficits that would, over time, have sapped the faculty's strength. As means became available, he made necessary investments in FAS's ne-

glected infrastructure. And then, buttressed by support from faculty members and alumni, he pursued a select list of enhancements to the research and teaching conducted within what he came to call a "community of scholars." Those gains accelerated courtesy of the University Campaign—which brought FAS \$1.2 billion in gifts and pledges—and the unprecedented growth of the endowment in the late 1990s.

But such blessings were never inevitable. In retrospect, it is clear that the disciplined trajectory Knowles established put FAS in a strong position to bolster its

professorial ranks to take on the intellectual challenges of the new century.

THE HAND Knowles was dealt was unpromising. When economist A. Michael Spence resigned as dean in 1990 to take the reins at Stanford's business school, he left behind both a formidable list of needs (dozens of new faculty positions, huge capital projects like renovating the freshman dormitories in Harvard Yard) and an annual operating deficit of some \$12 million—nearly 5 percent of FAS's budget. Even a stern diet imposed by Henry Rosovsky in his one year as acting dean left FAS with a deficit of nearly \$10 million.

Why then did Knowles—who had turned down entreaties to become dean in 1984, succeeding Rosovsky—accept this time, during a recession, with costs to cut, on the eve of a massive fundraising effort? For one thing, Knowles, who was and is Houghton professor of chemistry and biochemistry, had by then had nearly a decade more of highly successful research and teaching, and was mindful, he said, that "Scientists tend not to grow wise. There is a fierce quality in this institution, and one would never want to be A-." So the second offer of the deanship—a surprise, in light of his earlier reluctance—appeared as an attractive opportunity to do "something very, very different." That the offer came from Rudenstine, a new president and almost an exact contemporary, made the proposition seem "an exciting, an invigorating and

**Jeremy R. Knowles in the Faculty Room of University Hall, which was meticulously renovated during his 11 years of service as dean.**



energizing new set of challenges to look at—and that proved correct.”

Blissful ignorance also played a part. Did he grasp the faculty’s fiscal hole, and what filling it would require? “No,” the self-possessed dean now admits.

“By the end of the summer [of 1991], I more or less understood the problem” of the “deep-seated” deficits, he continues. A visit to each department “to see how they lived was vastly illuminating,” too. From that came the conviction that “even though bankrupt,” the faculty had to bring together its humanities scholars, who were dispersed haphazardly throughout and beyond Harvard Yard. “There was not even the opportunity for a community,” he says. “If one only ever sees one’s colleagues across the departmental meeting table, and one’s students the other side of a podium, there isn’t much community there.” Thus were established the themes of a deanship: frugality, faithfulness to the core purposes of scholarship, and bootstrapping resources to sustain them.

His first decanal letter to the faculty, in January 1992, was spinach. Knowles the scientist resorted to charts and graphs (making this the first illustrated letter) to help Knowles the teacher drive home the lesson that the financial news was “not reassuring.” The dean, who loves humorous literary allusions, and has indulged in them freely in recent annual letters, then allowed himself only one (“We must recognize that we are somewhat worse off than the Red Queen, who ran as fast as she could to stay in the same place”)—pointedly aimed at setting the stage for a period in which “the best treatment...should be manageable, although not painless.”

Those measures included eliminating several dozen administrative and support jobs and restraining departmental budgets—the behavior, as he put it in late 1992, of a “wet-weather dean.” Reporting in 1994, when the deficit had been halved, Knowles noted continuing “moderation in the growth of student financial aid” as a contributing factor. Even as the University Campaign gathered \$500 million in gifts and pledges before its formal kickoff that spring, he warned colleagues against “Campaign indiscipline”—the desire to spend beyond FAS’s academic plans. And as late as 1997, he reported on initiatives to

outsource custodial and security functions (economies now reversed by new pay packages and contracting practices after the “living wage” campaign).

THE HARDEST THING about directing FAS’s financial reformation, Knowles recalls, was “saying no to everything. Faculty members visit and have a marvelous idea, and you listen, and always have to say no.” Beyond the immediate regret that engenders, “It takes much longer to say no, because you must explain yourself.” Though it didn’t win as many ready smiles as assenting to new ideas would have, Knowles’s naysaying paid essential, unrecognized dividends: faculty recruitment went on; faculty salaries were never frozen; and undergraduate financial aid was “protected,” if not much enhanced.

And the dean also found ways to say yes. Even while respecting a philosophy he described in 1996 as “comparative frugality,” FAS scaled up its information-systems staff as faculty offices and student rooms were wired—the precursor to dramatic improvements in teaching. When the president offered University funds toward refreshing the Yard dorms, FAS promptly accepted: “That *had* to be done,” Knowles recalls. “They were in *terrible* shape—a major element of our deferred maintenance.” Reviving the Educational Policy Committee provided a no-cost way to involve faculty colleagues in systematically reviewing undergraduate concentration requirements and “sharing of information and knowledge and good practices” among disciplines. In later years, Knowles used the same tactic—charging committees to examine some aspect of FAS behavior and disseminate best practices—to address such problems as attracting women to the science faculty and enhancing the effectiveness of faculty recruitment, all without incremental expense or elaborate legislation. A study resulted in a restructuring of the Harvard College deanship and operations.

When resources became available—and only then—Knowles authorized a linked Memorial Hall-Harvard Union-Boylston Hall renovation to reconfigure the humanities departments; pushed ahead on the protracted effort (as yet unconsummated) to build a similarly integrated home for

## Weighing In

**What lies ahead for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences? What are the most important qualities for its next dean? Who would be the ideal candidate?** President Lawrence Summers has invited comment from members of the faculty, students, and staff. Suggestions may be forwarded to [fasdeansearch@harvard.edu](mailto:fasdeansearch@harvard.edu) or sent to the president’s office, in Massachusetts Hall.

An advisory group of senior faculty members has also been formed to consult throughout the spring with Summers and Provost Steven Hyman on the search. They are: Jorge Domínguez (government, and director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs), Catherine Dulac (molecular and cellular biology), Daniel Fisher (physics), Henry Louis Gates Jr. (Afro-American studies), Stephen Greenblatt (English), Benedict Gross (mathematics), Douglas Melton (molecular and cellular biology), Thomas Scanlon (philosophy), Daniel Schacter (psychology), Maria Tatar (German), Laurel Thatcher Ulrich (history), Sidney Verba (government and director of the Harvard University Library), and Mary Waters (sociology).

the government department and international centers; and gratefully accepted gifts for science projects like the Maxwell-Dworkin building for computer science and the Naito Chemistry Laboratory. From the darkest early days, Knowles says, alumni were “steady” in their support, and as the Campaign proceeded, “passionate in their willingness and commitment” to help.

Where resources were not forthcoming, or were in dispute, he defended FAS’s interests as he perceived them. The 1994 reduction in faculty benefits across the University, a response to soaring healthcare costs, prompted another innovation, Knowles’s Resources Committee. “I felt that I needed, and the president would be helped, by a committee of really knowledgeable faculty with whom I would freely share all aspects” of the allocation of FAS funds, he says. That vehicle proved important over time in defusing disputes

between FAS and the central administration. It also helped Knowles win support within FAS for action on junior-faculty compensation, graduate-student financial aid, leave policy, and, in the last year of Rudenstine's presidency, FAS's ultimate acceptance of its lead role in underwriting the early work to develop Harvard's new campus in Allston.

By 1998, the "wet-weather dean" nearly allowed himself to forecast sunshine, rele-

gating the budget to the end of his annual letter for the first time. Funds for undergraduate financial aid rose and then rose again, ultimately more than doubling. Graduate-student aid packages were liberalized and made more secure. College section sizes were reduced, and decanal exhortation began to increase the number of small seminars for freshmen. The Core curriculum was reviewed, and added a requirement in quantitative reasoning.

Knowles felt confident enough to un-

derwrite the massive reconstruction of Widener Library before donors stepped forward, and to move ahead on a new genomics building: the most visible sign of an extensive science initiative extending from the frontiers of biology and imaging of small structures to neuroscience and the broad social effects of computers and information technology. And even though the University Campaign yielded fewer than the 40 new positions Knowles sought, FAS ranks began growing during

### Changing the College Curriculum

**The renovation of Harvard's** undergraduate course of study took two piecemeal steps forward during the late winter and early spring, even as the timetable for a major overhaul was slowed by significant personnel changes within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS).

At its March 12 meeting, the faculty voted to reduce the number of Core Curriculum courses students must complete from eight to seven (of the 32 courses required for a degree). This measure liberalizes a standard established at the Core's 1978 inception. It will be effected by granting students exemptions from the four Core areas (foreign cultures, moral reasoning, science A and B, and so on) closest to their concentration. By this mechanism, the faculty aims to maximize students' breadth of education, even as their overall exposure to Core courses is lessened.

Citing the need to create "curricular flexibility" for students, dean of undergraduate education and professor of history Susan G. Pedersen began discussion on changing the Core requirement at the February 12 faculty meeting. Both undergraduates and faculty members have raised the problem of navigating the requirements for Cores, foreign-language study, expository writing, and concentrations (which may prescribe up to 16 of a student's courses); Pedersen, a veteran of the College class of 1981, knows about the curriculum firsthand as student, professor, and now dean. The Educational Policy Committee has jawboned departments to reduce concentration requirements in recent years. But students have

still found it difficult to accommodate freshman seminars (whose availability Pedersen has championed) or to study abroad—or simply to pursue an interesting class when the spirit moves them (see "Undergraduate Upgrade," January-February, page 59).

Some faculty members worried that in simply cutting Core requirements, they were shirking their responsibility to ensure that students are liberally educated. In the February debate, Baird professor of science Gary J. Feldman cautioned that most of his physics advisees would use their new freedom to take *more* courses in physics or related fields, thereby losing "the breadth that I think a Harvard education should provide." During the March discussion, professor of Chinese history Peter K. Bol moved that the eighth Core requirement be waived for students who used that slot for general-education purposes—a freshman seminar, say, or study abroad. In the event, Feldman declared himself satisfied by Pedersen's formula for determining which four Core areas a student could skip, and Bol's motion failed, in part because there are not yet enough seminars to accommodate all freshmen.

Pedersen also reported that the standing committee on study out of residence had delivered its report on study abroad, under the direction of its chairman, William L. Fash, Bowditch professor of Central American and Mexican archaeology and ethnology, and William C. Kirby, Geisinger professor of history. Although that report will be refined before the faculty debates any new legislation this

spring, its recommendations are sweeping. The committee urged that study abroad not be restricted to a "special opportunity" unavailable at Harvard, and that in fact study abroad for credit itself be perceived as a special opportunity, "an invaluable part of a Harvard education." So the committee would liberalize rules on content and foreign-language skill now governing study out of residence, and urged favorable review of such experiences from the perspective of both Core and departmental concentration requirements.

During these debates, several faculty members expressed a wish to examine the entire undergraduate curriculum. So the announcement before the March 12 faculty meeting that Pedersen (who has two very young children, and whose husband holds an academic position in New York City) would relinquish her decanal duties at the end of the term took on greater than usual significance. From her initial, and strikingly successful, work on freshman seminars (see "Face-to-Face with Faculty," January-February 2001, page 64), Pedersen has sparked swift change in the College academic experience. Broader rethinking of the curriculum—a major undertaking—now must await the arrival of a new FAS dean and of Pedersen's successor as well. After the faculty changed the Core requirements, President Lawrence H. Summers made a point of going on record in favor of the comprehensive curriculum review, saying that it surely "will be appropriate for the new dean and new dean of undergraduate education" to launch that effort.



the last two years of his term, after many years of stability. In all, some 180 of the 440 or so tenured professors now in FAS have been appointed since 1991, resulting, he says, in “a number of departments that are unrecognizably better today, and that’s a thrill.”

In acknowledging Knowles during the February 12 faculty meeting, President Lawrence H. Summers succinctly captured both aspects of his deanship: applauding him for leaving the FAS “even stronger than he found it” and for being a *disciplined* builder: “[A]s Jeremy would be the first to stress,” Summers asserted, “it is a mistake in academic life to conflate accomplishment and growth. Jeremy also leaves behind a legacy of principles maintained, standards upheld, resources used prudently, and an ever stronger commitment to the pure pursuit of truth.” (Given much tighter budgets looming in the next few years, Knowles’s “prudence” is likely to continue in the office he leaves behind.)

**ASSESSING HIMSELF**, Knowles is no easy grader. He is “pleased that we are now really changing the nature of the graduate experience,” but regrets “not having put more funds into graduate students earlier.” He is “still hungry for more graduate student housing.” The science initiatives, he thinks, are having a real effect on “faculty recruitment and graduate education and undergraduate research opportunities,” but should have begun earlier.

He thinks the replenishment and growth of the faculty have “been too conservative” in the past decade. Noting that deans are, with the president, “formally only sieves,” he still sees a vital role for the dean in “bringing the departments to lift up their chins and propose some stellar new colleagues.” That said, he does perceive “a change in attitude, in courage and spirit, in terms of faculty colleagues identifying new people they would really like.” Given the outspoken advocacy by Summers and Provost Steven E. Hyman for taking more risks on promising scholars early in their careers, further acceleration is likely as Harvard seeks to expand the professoriate and replace a large number of retirees this decade.

What issues await a new FAS dean?

## HARVARD PORTRAIT



### Joseph P. Kalt

**HOME THE NIGHT BEFORE** from Australia, where his expertise in the economics of antitrust and regulation in the natural-resource sector was wanted, Joseph Kalt is full of beans, geniality, and patience, despite the wildly inapposite time his biological clock is telling. The Kennedy School of Government’s Ford Foundation professor of international political economy talks fervently about his main concern: economic development and self-determination among American Indian tribes, of which there are about 500, mostly living in extreme poverty on 350 reservations. With two professors at the University of Arizona, he directs the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, which since 1987 has worked for and with tribes on nation-building, and which Kalt characterizes as the Indian Country equivalent of the Little Engine That Could. He teaches a University-wide course on American Indians today and nation-building—which attracts not only Indian students but those from other emerging countries—and he is faculty chair of the interfaculty Harvard University Native American Program (see “Native Americans in the Present Tense,” September–October 1999, page 78). Born and raised in Tucson, he was educated at Stanford and UCLA. He, his wife, and two children have a ranch with a satellite dish in Montana, 70 miles from town, where he moves his office each summer and raises American quarterhorses. At age two, they come to the Kalt farm in Sudbury, Massachusetts, where the professor trains them for “cutting,” a sport he competes in that involves steering cattle. “I go home at night,” says Kalt, “and by the end of a session with the horses, I can’t even remember what I was hassling about in some faculty meeting that day.”

## JOHN HARVARD'S JOURNAL

Knowles cites two. First will be a “holistic look at the undergraduate curriculum.” He approves of the recent “move of the pendulum towards liberating more room for electives” and perhaps for study abroad (see page 50). But a “major look” at the entire curriculum “deserves somebody who has a forward span”—a fundamental reason for his decision to step down now. Second, the dean will have to figure out, well before plans for Allston are complete, “how to move forward with the pressing need for new laboratory space” to accommodate growth in the sciences. Hence the detailed planning for the “North Precinct” (see page 54).

Knowles’s immediate personal contri-

bution to those efforts will be to absent himself from the scene, so his successor has a clear path. Knowles has a leave due, but will not stray far from Cambridge until his wife, historian Jane Knowles, completes organizing a major exhibition for the Radcliffe Institute this autumn.

Knowles will have more time to indulge his passion for music and to visit a country home in southern Vermont, where he has retreated to fell trees, build a playhouse for grandchildren, ski, and, inevitably, read memos and draft his annual letters to the faculty during each Christmas vacation. (Summers told the faculty that after he was appointed president, “I was in the habit of calling Jeremy at home on week-

ends. I learned quickly that this gave me the pleasure of a conversation with Jane. But if I wanted the pleasure of a conversation with Jeremy, I would be well advised to place a call to University Hall. The light in his office is Harvard’s version of the eternal flame.”)

As for returning to the “community of scholars” full time, Knowles says, “It will be gripping for me again to read the scientific literature and to open my eyes to what has gone on. I’m a bit of a Rip Van Winkle. The first thing is re-education, and the second is teaching.” Susan Pederesen, the outgoing dean of undergraduate education, has already called, urging him to offer a freshman seminar.

### ROTC Resurgent

**ROTC at Harvard** is standing taller after September 11 and after what CNN calls “old-fashioned flag-waving” by President Lawrence H. Summers.

Speaking with students, Summers has called military service “noble” and said, “We need to be careful about adopting any policy on campus of nonsupport for those involved in defending the country.” In a Veterans Day letter to Harvard cadets and midshipmen, he wrote that he “and many others deeply admire those of you who choose to serve society in this way.” He asked editors of the *Harvard Yearbook* to allow students to list ROTC among their activities, which they could not previously do because ROTC is not an officially sanctioned activity.

In a speech at the Kennedy School, Summers said that “if these terrible events and the struggle that we are now engaged in once again re-ignite our sense of patriotism—re-ignite our respect for those who wear uniforms—and bring us together as a country in that way, it will be no small thing.”

Speaking to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), Summers described military service as “vitally important to the freedom that makes possible institutions like Harvard.” Given the long history of debate about ROTC at the University, he said, “I have begun to acquaint myself with the record of faculty” discussion and decisions,

mindful of Harvard’s commitments both to nondiscrimination and to the imperative of national service at a time of war.

FAS banished the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps in 1969 during the Vietnam War. Harvard students could continue to participate in ROTC, but they had to train with the ROTC program at MIT. Harvard made payments to MIT to cover the administrative costs of training its students until 1993, when it stopped doing even that on the grounds that the ban on homosexuals in the military violated the University’s nondiscrimination policy. At the time, Harvard president Neil L. Rudenstine, with the knowledge of the faculty, set up with a local law firm a channel through which administrative costs could be paid by alumni donors, not by Harvard. Since then, the annual costs

of about \$135,000 have been met by two or three anonymous donors.

At the Harvard Club of Boston’s annual meeting on March 26, Summers called the present funding arrangement for ROTC an “uncomfortable compromise,” echoing comments he made earlier to students. Yet he has not so far indicated that he has decided to change Harvard’s financial or administrative policies toward ROTC. And the military’s policies about homosexuality have not changed.

The members of Advocates for Harvard ROTC, an organization founded in 1988, have been energized by events and by Summers’s statements. The group now has 1,060 Harvard affiliates signed on, and the number is growing.

The Advocates for Harvard ROTC seek “the complete acceptance of ROTC by

**A commissioning ceremony for Harvard ROTC students occurs each June in Harvard Yard.**

