

## The View from Mass. Hall

IN LATE JULY, at the beginning of Drew Faust's fifth year as president, *Harvard Magazine* met with her at her office in Massachusetts Hall to discuss the University's aims in the context of its 375th anniversary. Excerpts from the conversation follow.

*On Harvard's international presence:* The increase in our international engagement in recent years is dramatic. Increasing numbers of College students spend time abroad, with encouragement of that, with financial support from the David Rockefeller gift, the Paul Weissman gift, and others. There is the increasingly global nature of the curriculum—the way [undergraduates'] General Education is structured, the way faculty are teaching and how many students they bring along with them. A lot of what our students do abroad is taking off by themselves, but they're also taking off in conjunction with a January pro-

gram that's studying water use in Brazil or a summertime film and literature program in Venice, or connecting to brain research in Tokyo—whatever the academic connections the faculty have made to benefit both research and instruction.

It's also [true of] many other parts of the University: the new [global] immersion dimension of the M.B.A. that Dean Nitin Nohria has [initiated; see page 73], the global-health activities of the School of Public Health and the Medical School—where many students take five years now, and use one of those years to do something international, because they see the practice of medicine taking place in a global context. The Law School, perhaps seen as the school most resolutely tied to American structures, recognizes that every major law firm is international in scope and that students need to be engaged in that from their very first year, when they take the required course in international law that's been introduced into the curriculum.

## Party Like It's the CCCLXXVth—and Many *Lustra* More

IN THE November-December 1986 *Harvard Magazine*, devoted to coverage of the University's gala 350th anniversary celebration that September, the editors noted, "Back in 1978 we consulted a classicist—Mason Hammond '25, caller of academic processions at both the 1936 and 1986 observances—as to how to refer in Latin to a 350th anniversary. Professor Hammond advised against it, but allowed that the ancients might have sanctioned a sesquipedalian term that literally means 'the seventh half-century anniversary.' It appears on the spine of this issue," as indeed it did: SOLLEMNIA SEMISAECULARIA SEPTIMA.

How much greater the challenge, 25 years further removed from the classical era, to come up with a suitable phrase for the 375th. The magazine polled a committee consisting of Richard J. Tarrant, Pope professor of the Latin language and literature (the chair Hammond held); Richard F. Thomas, Lane professor of the classics; and Jan Ziolkowski, Porter professor of Medieval Latin.

Ziolkowski, e-mailing from Washington, where he is also director of Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, conceded first. He admitted, "I have proven unable thus far to come up with anything that would not make sesquipedalian look brachylogical." Thomas could find nothing that wouldn't be "extremely cumbersome."

That left Tarrant to the rescue, with this formulation: "I agree that Latin doesn't easily render '375th' as an ordinal. A Latin time measurement that might be somewhat useful here is the *lustrum*, denoting a five-year period: 375 years equals 75 *lustra*, so a Latin translation for (a university) 'founded 375 years ago' might be *abhinc quinque et septuaginta lustris condita*. That doesn't answer the question of how to say 'Happy 375th!' but it may be a start."

Whatever your preferred language, the University is welcoming the extended Harvard community to a 375th anniversary celebration on Friday, October 14 (<http://375.harvard.edu>).

So we have great momentum, and one of the questions that I've asked in the past year is, what does all this mean in terms of a coherent international strategy for Harvard? Nitin has been leading a group of faculty in a discussion of that and we're digesting some of the findings. I discussed them with the council of deans last week, with the Corporation this past weekend, and we'll be discussing them with the Overseers in the fall.

What I hope to see come out of this is a statement from me about the affirmative agenda of Harvard. One of the committee's emphases is that we need to ask what are our *ends*, not what are our *means*. What do we want this institution to be and represent in the world—and then what are the means to get there? Global campuses or partnerships or whatever we might undertake are a means to a larger set of purposes that must inform what we do.

I will be working on articulating those purposes that, in a nutshell, will revolve around having students who become global citizens as a result of their presence here—who have maximum access to global opportunities in their fields of study, who will be able to understand the international dimensions of whatever problem they seek to focus on in their lives. Similarly, we want to have a faculty that has those kinds of opportunities.

Harvard has a very large global presence. When I travel abroad, it's like I'm a head of state in the way people respond to me. That opens a lot of opportunities to our students and faculty and it enables us to do work that has a very significant and positive impact around the globe. So one of the ways in which we best sustain and extend that global identity into the rest of this century is making sure that Harvard keeps that identity.

For many of our peer institutions, bricks and mortar have seemed the avenue to establishing and extending an identity. We are not at all convinced that that is the best path for us to the ends we want to achieve. Bricks and mortar are necessarily in one place, and so they limit flexibility. We have such broad and deep programs of scholarship here, in such a wide range of areas that offer our faculty and students extraordinary choices. Do they want to become Sinologists? Do they want to study Western Europe? Or maybe do they want to do both and compare some particular prob-

lem: what is higher education like in Europe and China, and how is it changing? To choose one or two locations for deep, institutional, physical investment, would seem to me a distraction from the better means for us to advance our purposes. For the time being, the [research-support] offices and the Shanghai center that have enabled us to have a maximum intellectual footprint with minimal physical footprint seem to me the right way to achieve the ends that I've described, and hope to describe in more detail in the months to come.

*On academic and curricular engagement with the arts, in the wake of her task force on the arts (which issued its report in 2008, early in the financial crisis):* I feel very good about the number of art-making opportunities that have been introduced into the undergraduate curriculum, both through General Education courses and through freshman seminars and other electives.

I was struck by the reception for the task force—that Harvard had in practice and understanding moved very far toward recognizing what the report articulated so eloquently. A decade or a generation ago, there would have been much more resistance to the idea of art-making as a cognitive exercise and essential part of an education for undergraduates at Harvard.

Instead, people have really welcomed the chance to enable students to think differently, to think about design, to think about the relationship between textual learning and visual learning.

There's a lot we need to do to further support the arts. I'm going to have lunch tomorrow with Diana Sorensen [dean of arts and humanities], to talk about ways we might fold some of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' [FAS] priorities into the capital campaign.

We've also brought art-makers into the curriculum and into the University, both temporarily and more long-term. Krzysztof Wodiczko [professor in residence of art, design, and the public domain] in the Graduate School of Design is one—and the engagement of the design school with FAS has been very much encouraged by the arts task force; they have proposed an undergraduate concentration [in architecture studies]. And there have been the Wynton Marsalis appearances on campus. He wanted to do this in response to learning about the foregrounding of the arts at Harvard. We have to keep finding opportunities to emphasize that.

*On Harvard aspirations in science and applied science, and the scope of science at the University overall:* We've seen breakthroughs in com-

putation and in the life sciences, with the genomic revolution—integrating the physical and life sciences in unprecedented ways and making possible advances in fields like stem cells and genetics and bioengineering that would have been unimaginable a generation ago. [Professor of systems biology] Eric Lander's research platforms—a product of the changed nature of computation and other tools of scientific inquiry—have enabled the Broad Institute to focus on a series of really intractable problems in mental health and diseases like malaria that seem to be so much more [subject] to basic science research than previously. That's part of the sense of growth and urgency.

Our undergraduates certainly show that kind of interest, and interest related to our growth in engineering—making things, innovating, inventing devices that can have a huge impact. So we've seen this large growth in concentrators in engineering in recent years.

We've also spent a lot of time learning how to teach science better. [School of Engineering and Applied Sciences dean] Cherry Murray's commitment is that everybody should have the encouragement and opportunity to learn science [see page 76]. Computer Science 50 is a perfect example: hundreds of undergraduate students, many of whom are going to concentrate in completely different fields, and yet they want to have that capacity to understand computation and to be innovators in areas of computer science that will enrich their own lives.\*

We've also found demand for math, and [dean for science] Jeremy Bloxham and Cherry and others have been working on this. Cherry's got a new graduate certificate that responds to this, and we're working on undergraduate versions as well. There are so many fields that require advanced, sophisticated knowledge of math—in the social sciences and business and law—so how do we provide for that across the University?

*On enhancing pedagogy, assessing what students learn, and improving the classroom experience across the University:* If we think about Harvard at its 400th anniversary, one of the

\*See Harvard Portrait, July-August 2009, page 51, on instructor David Malan, and Sarah Zhang, "The Frisson of Friction," March-April, page 49, on the course.

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areas that I think will be most significantly transformed is how we teach. We will make innovative teaching a high-priority theme in the upcoming campaign. [The subject encompasses] what we now know, through cognitive science, about how people learn and how we can adjust our teaching more effectively to that knowledge. It involves the opportunities that technology presents to do things digitally and release human time for the dimensions of teaching that benefit most from face-to-face interaction. It involves bringing the visual more fully into the classroom. It involves making the classroom more international through technological oppor-



**Drew Faust**

tunities—like [Bass professor of government] Michael Sandel’s class for Japanese, Chinese, and U.S. students to discuss the March tsunami, all at the same time. It involves thinking about assessment in different ways—how we evaluate students, faculty, methods, and courses and programs. In all those realms, we have a responsibility to provide the means and the encouragement to faculty to teach in new and exciting ways, and to teach students who learn differently and interact with the world in ways that are quite different from the ways you and I expected to interact with the world when we were in school.

*On interdisciplinary discovery and learning:* Students and faculty today have such a powerful sense of the way knowledge can have an impact on the world that it leads many of them to focus on applied research. In the professional schools in particular, they see the balance of theory and practice as including a considerable dimension of engagement beyond the academy, to make a direct impact on the world. This asks us to draw on a series of fields as they are relevant to the particular problem a student or faculty member is interested in addressing.

Global health seems to me a shining example of this. We need to draw on medicine, certainly, but [also] on epidemiology and the social sciences that provide the context within which healthcare is delivered. We need to understand cultures and languages and their shaping of people’s re-

action to medical care. We need to understand humanities to understand the very important dimensions of empathy that are a critical part of interacting with those who are suffering. This really requires the whole University to step up and provide intellectual resources.

I could make the same case for energy and the environment. Engineering can provide technological advances, but Harvard also has the capacity to consider how those changes can have an impact through public policy; how they get embedded in corporate decisionmaking; and what legal and regulatory structures establish a context within which those kinds of changes can be made. And there are all the health components of energy and environmental change as well.

*On the future of the humanities at Harvard, in light of Faust’s service on the national Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences, and heightened concern about the condition and role of these disciplines:* One of the things I’ve been struck by as I travel internationally is the admiration I find for our liberal-arts model of education. Leaders of higher education in China are concerned that their students are not challenged enough to be critical thinkers, to bring perspectives from history and literature to their scientific enterprise. As I hear this, I am struck at the way, in the United States now, we’re talking overwhelmingly about education as an engine of social mobility—about economic ben-

efit to individuals and benefit for broader economic growth. Of course that’s important, as students wonder what job are they going to get, as families worry whether education is worth the investment. But we’re about a context that will educate students not just for their first job, but for the job they may need to hold 20 years from now—when their ability to continue to be learners throughout their lives will be so critical in their success and the success of the society which they serve.

That seems to me the extraordinary contribution of the liberal arts and of the humanities, along with the sciences and social sciences.

How do we ask the big questions? Not simply, how do we get to where we want to go, but where do we want to go in the first place—and how do we continue to challenge ourselves in a world in which change is only going to get faster and more dramatic? And how do we also understand not simply that the world is flat—as it increasingly is in the way we can travel and communicate—but that the world *isn’t* flat, given the variety of perspectives and heritages and understandings that different cultures bring to their interactions with us. If we don’t have the capacity, through the study of history and language, to understand that, we are going to be crippled in our ability to be the global institution and the global society that we want to be.

*On the continuing viability of research universities’ three-part model of support from tuition, publicly funded research grants, and philanthropy:* We’re watching events in Washington very closely. We are certainly concerned and have expressed our concern with our representatives. We’re looking closely at our costs and how we adapt—what’s essential, what we will try to do more efficiently, and the variety of ways in which we can accomplish that. We are planning a capital campaign, and that will be an important initiative in endeavoring to enhance our philanthropic giving. We’re very optimistic about the messages it will enable us to send and the resources it will generate. ♡