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Northeastern University

Aoun University Messages

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Northeastern University
Office of the President

Message to faculty and staff

09.07.09

Dear Colleagues: As we begin a new academic year, I would like to thank all of you for your work over the past year and outline some of what we can expect in the weeks and months ahead. As you know, we are still experiencing a period of tremendous economic challenges. Universities have not been immune from the current downturn; many are taking across-the-board steps to protect themselves. At Northeastern, we took a strategic approach. Thanks to the combined commitment of our community and sound financial stewardship, over the past year we continued to advance our top priorities. To name just a few:

- We continued our global expansion of co-op and experiential learning, and we further integrated co-op with our rigorous academic offerings.
- We recruited dozens of new faculty members, even when many of our peer institutions enacted hiring freezes. In this case, we turned the economic crisis into an opportunity.
- We developed new areas of excellence in research, winning major federal grants to establish interdisciplinary centers focused on infrastructure assessment; the advancement of women in scientific, engineering, and social science fields; and improving health care delivery.

Our continued momentum has enabled us to enroll one of the most academically talented freshman classes in our history—further evidence of the high value students and parents place on the unique power of a Northeastern education. These 2,800 freshmen, as well as the rest of our returning student body, stand poised to achieve new levels of excellence—in the classroom, in the lab, and around the world.

This year, we will remain focused on our strategic goals. I look forward to working with all of you to build on our success and accelerate our momentum.

We begin by welcoming 42 new tenured and tenure-track faculty to our campus—women and men who teach and conduct research across a range of disciplines. We will continue to recruit faculty at every level—from early assistant professors to senior scholars—as we solidify our strong academic reputation.

I would also like to congratulate the 26 Northeastern faculty members who were recently tenured or promoted to associate and full professor. These professors represent the breadth and depth of Northeastern's academic ambitions; we look forward to the many outstanding contributions they will make to the University—and the world—in the years ahead.

This fall also marks the centennial anniversary of cooperative education at Northeastern. Throughout the course of the year, we will host events that engage our community around the value of co-op and —perhaps more important—where we will take co-op over the next 100 years.

These are just some of the highlights. We are also engaged in an important college structure process, and we are taking steps to strengthen our reputation as a national research university.

I invite all of you to join me for our annual "State of the University" Town Hall Meeting at noon on Wednesday, September 30, in the Curry Ballroom, where we can discuss the many opportunities that lie ahead. I wish everyone an exciting and productive academic year, and I look forward to seeing you on September 30.

Very truly yours,

Joseph E. Aoun