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## Messages & Writings : October 2010

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## Messages & Writings

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### The State of Our University

10.13.10

Earlier today, hundreds of Northeastern community members gathered in a Town Hall meeting to participate in our annual State of the University address. I'm pleased to report that the state of our University has never been stronger.

Working together, we have accomplished a great deal so far. We have attracted more highly talented students, expanded our faculty ranks, and built a first-rate research enterprise.

But these accomplishments represent the beginning, not the end, of our collective journey. Now, it is time to propel Northeastern to even greater heights. All of us have an important role to play in our relentless pursuit of uncompromising excellence. Every individual member of our community must be an active participant in our efforts to take our University to even higher levels.

At the Town Hall meeting, the Provost and I outlined a framework to achieve a new level of excellence over the next five years: the University's Long-Range Plan.

The Long-Range Plan is the Academic Plan in action. It is a blueprint that outlines steps we must take to extend our University's success. But it is up to you, as part of the Northeastern community, to help us shape the plan and work collaboratively to implement it.

Like the Academic Plan, which was organized around several overarching goals, the Long-Range Plan is built on four distinct pillars: further strengthening our educational offerings, our faculty, our research enterprise, and our students' overall experience.

To strengthen our academic programs, we must develop a broader range of innovative, flexible degree programs, new doctoral programs that support our research priorities, and expand the number of students pursuing national and international co-op and other experiences. To strengthen our faculty, we will need to continue our robust hiring efforts, with the goal of adding up to 300 new and replacement faculty in the next several years.

To expand the dramatic success of our research enterprise, we will create a pipeline of new interdisciplinary research programs that deepen our work in our signature research areas, and encourage more interdisciplinary faculty collaborations.

Finally, to further enhance our students' overall experience, we must expand extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities for our students, and increase support for talented students with financial need.

This year, we also will move forward with an exciting new effort — the Northeastern Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative. The goal of the initiative is to create a vivid ecology of innovation and entrepreneurship across campus by bolstering our existing programs in this sphere with a series of vibrant new initiatives. One way to bring this initiative to life will be the appointment of a Presidential Entrepreneurship Fellow from our student body. This honor will be reserved for a highly accomplished and innovative student with the promise to do groundbreaking work in this area.

As we work together to formulate and implement the Long-Range Plan, I invite you to review our new booklet, [Excellence by Design](#), which details all that we have accomplished together. As always, I am deeply grateful for the contributions of our University community to our outstanding success. I look forward to continuing with you on Northeastern's extraordinary journey.

Joseph E. Aoun  
President