



Purchase College | Notes from the Provost

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

October 23, 2017

To: The Faculty and Staff

From: Barry Pearson, Provost

Dear Colleagues:

There has never been a great predictive test for identifying future leaders. Traditions in higher education run the full continuum, from selecting the well-meaning but inexperienced newbie, or opting for the administratively inept but well-liked colleague, to settling for the self-promoting yet benign “leaderish” type. We can always do better in choosing leaders. And often we get it right. But as we prepare to hire two new academic deans, here are some characteristics that I think are especially important criteria for “fit” at Purchase.

In my own experience, what matters most is the quality of a candidate’s intellect. I think the measure of quality is the person’s depth of analysis, bolstered by a willingness to engage ideas and people fairly and openly. Without a commitment to this kind of engaged leadership, we can never know if someone is ethical or conscientious. It’s comforting to be left with the assumption that leaders are ethical when they aren’t doing anything, but far more validating to see their ethics at work because they are advancing ideas and engaging challenges that move the institution forward.

One often-overlooked quality is the ability of candidates to know a problem or good idea when they see one. It’s one thing to look at a house and see that it’s on fire, but quite another to see subtle opportunities around which to build consensus and excitement. Crises can bring out really wonderful qualities in leaders, but they are rarely the opportunities that lead to substantial innovation or change.

We have a great many opportunities at Purchase. The work of faculty and students deserves a champion. Just as importantly, these efforts require that new leaders bring insight and enthusiasm to help shape and enable their success. In short, our new deans should love Purchase. Their enthusiasm for our mission and passion for it should be evident.

With this idea in mind, what characteristics should we assess as we look at candidates? Trust is certainly important, but I think we need to trust them while they do more than cheer us on. I think we need to recognize that, at some point, a leader will make decisions. Selecting people and crossing our fingers that they will never have to make a decision is simply teeing up an inevitable disaster. So more than needing leaders who communicate well or with enthusiasm, we need leaders who communicate and transmit consistent values through their actual decision-making.

Within this framework, then, there are two critical components that I think are important for Purchase at this time. The first is that our future leaders will need to engage challenges, ideas, and opportunities openly and transparently. In identifying potential candidates for leadership, we should look closely at their records of achievement to identify patterns that reinforce active yet collaborative engagement. Secondly, decisions should

be grounded in sound judgment and data, and consistently reflect institutional goals and objectives. I think this one is harder to assess and requires getting to know the person behind the candidacy. It's as much a personal characteristic as a professional one. I often think of this element as a gut-level reaction to the question, "What might they do when nobody is looking?"

The last thing to keep in mind is that leading is rarely a solo act. It happens within a network that is at once social as well as professional, replete with multilayered challenges that defy conventional conceptions of decision-making. The ability to view a problem or an opportunity from multiple perspectives is critical. It's rare in today's environment that decisions have a single consequence. Often, they have multiple outcomes, many of which will be unforeseen.

To meet our needs at Purchase, we should expect the new deans to contribute ideas, work directly to implement them, and pitch in to solve our current problems. Standing back or off to the side will not be an option. Joining with chairs and directors across campus, the two new leaders will advance the ongoing collaborations as we continue to explore innovations and advance our commitment to diversity. These are exciting efforts, and our newest leaders should bring talents to bear that advance their progress.

Purchase Dance Company Represents the U.S. in Taipei

The Purchase Dance Company has been invited to perform this month at the renowned [Kuandu Arts Festival](#) in Taipei. Interim director **Nelly van Bommel**, along with faculty members **Larry Clark** and **Victor Catano**, will lead a group of nine students on tour. As the sole representatives of the U.S., the Purchase Dance Company will perform an excerpt of [Doug Varone's](#) *Lux* and a *pas de deux* from *Talsik*, commissioned for the company by [Norbert De La Cruz III](#). The delegation will also travel to Kaohsiung City to visit Tsoying High School, where they will perform, teach a workshop, and moderate a discussion with the students. In addition, van Bommel and Clark will offer master classes to the Taiwan National University of the Arts students.

The Joint is Jumpin': Jazz at the Center

Collaboration, cooperation, and cross-pollination with the college at all levels is central to the **Performing Art Center's** vision for this season and beyond. The **Jazz at the Center** series, now in its second year, is a prime example. This series is co-curated by Professor [Jon Faddis](#), one of the most innovative and inspiring jazz trumpeters of our time. The events are one-of-a-kind happenings, festival-style programs that bring together the genre's greats and rising stars, drawing heavily from the talent coming out of the Conservatory of Music's [jazz studies program](#).

The series kicked off on Friday, October 13, with an evening that featured the inimitable Branford Marsalis and his quartet. Word on the street is that the house was packed and a good time was had by all!

Next up, on **Saturday, November 4**, at 8 p.m., is [A Triumph of Trumpets: A Tribute to Dizzy Gillespie](#). This celebration of the centennial year of the birth of John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie will be headlined by Jon Faddis, who considered Dizzy Gillespie to be his closest musical mentor and a dear friend. It will be a small-group format with special guests—Grammy-winning bassist [Todd Coolman](#) and the ever-versatile pianist [David Hazeltine](#) (both members of the Purchase jazz studies faculty), trumpeters and jazz studies alumni **Max Darché** (MusB '06, MM '08) and **Bruce Harris** (MusB '05, MM '07), plus an impressive list of other exceptional musicians.

April is [Jazz Appreciation Month](#) (JAM), and it will be time to do exactly that on **Friday, April 28**, at 8 p.m.—it's a [Big Band Dance Party with the Purchase Jazz Orchestra](#)! Jon Faddis will be conducting, and we'll be celebrating not only the PAC's 40th anniversary, but also the 25th anniversary of the jazz studies program in the Conservatory of Music. Specially commissioned charts from the Jon Faddis Jazz Orchestra of New York's library

will be given their inaugural PAC performance by the PJO; listen for some classic Glenn Miller and Count Basie charts as well. Purchase jazz studies alumni will also take the stage.

Free preconcert discussions will take place at 7 p.m. before each concert. As always, discounted tickets are available for faculty and staff, and a student rush sale will be offered for both shows. *Keep an eye on the PAC website, your purchase.edu email, and the PAC's social media channels for information about rush sale dates and times.*

For more information about the PAC and to view the full season schedule, visit www.artscenter.org.

Anthony Lemieux to Speak on November 14: Collaborating Across Disciplines to Understand Terrorism and Violence

Tuesday, November 14, 7 p.m. | Natural Sciences Lecture Hall (1001)

Natural and Social Sciences Lecture Series

The big question that [Anthony Lemieux](#), PhD, seeks to answer is what factors mobilize people toward violent action. He focuses primarily on terrorism, a particularly challenging and important area. Lemieux will highlight two programs of research that are interdisciplinary and collaborative. He will touch on how he got into these areas of study by providing some background and personal detail. This will lead into a consideration of how we can effectively conceptualize approaches to ensure that key voices and perspectives are included.

Anthony Lemieux is the director of the [Global Studies Institute](#) and professor of global studies and communication at Georgia State University, where he is also a lead researcher in the interdisciplinary [Second Century Initiative](#) on transcultural conflict and violence. He has extensively studied motivations for terrorism and violent extremism. Lemieux is also an adjunct associate professor in the Rollins School of Public Health and the Department of Pediatrics in the Emory University School of Medicine.

This event is free and open to the public.

All Upcoming Events

Check the redesigned [campus calendar](#) for all upcoming events. You can search it using a range of filters, save and share the events, and add them to your Outlook, Google, Yahoo, or iCal calendars. For events at the Performing Arts Center, you can also check the [PAC calendar](#) and then order your tickets online. (Online ticket sales close 24 hours before each event. To check on the availability of day-of-show tickets, call the box office at 914 251-6200.)

Reminder: Upcoming Award Application Deadlines

- [Faculty Support Awards](#): **November 1** (to your chair or director)
- [Part-Time Teaching Support Awards](#): **November 15** (to your chair or director)
- [Chancellor's Awards for Excellence](#): For all categories except Adjunct Teaching, the deadline is **December 1**; the call for nominations is issued by the respective peer review committee.

For more information, including application deadlines in spring 2018, please visit the [Faculty Awards](#) section on the Office of the Provost website. Information on awards and leaves offered through the New York State/United University Professions Joint Labor-Management Committees (JLMC) is available at nysuup.lmc.ny.gov.