Welcome to this year’s Dean’s Address to the graduate faculty. I am honored to stand before you for the sixth time. It is wonderful to see you here, and to have this time with you.

The time we spend together during this annual address has become our ritual, now. And, as with all rituals, we each have a performance part to play. I speak for about thirty minutes or so, summarizing LGS accomplishments of the year just passed, offering observations of developments in graduate education at Emory and beyond, and providing perspectives to shape goals for the challenges we face. You respond with really difficult questions, often the imponderables and then someone takes mercy and throws me a soft ball, I graciously respond and we move on to wine and other refreshments.

Today I will discuss some of the challenges we continue to face here at Emory and nationally, and pose to you some difficult questions we must answer.

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Before I dive into that, I would like to take a moment to remember three colleagues we lost this year, who each meant a great deal to me and to graduate education at Emory.

National Endowment for the Humanities Professor Ivan Karp served the ILA for many years, co-founded and co-directed the Center for the Study of Public Scholarship, co-founded and co-directed the Laney Graduate School’s Grant Writing Program, and assisted in the Fulbright and Mellon selection processes. Ivan was a leader in the fields of museum studies and African belief systems.

Goodrich C. White Professor Rudolph Byrd founded the James Weldon Johnson Institute, chaired the department of African American Studies, established funding for and co-directed the Laney Graduate School’s highly successful Mellon Graduate Teaching Fellowship Program as well as the
Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program. Rudolph was a leader in the fields of African American studies, literature, sexuality and difference.

Associate Professor of French and Italian Candace Lang served as Chair of the Department of French and Italian from 2006 to 2009 and again for some time in 2010. Candace was devoted to the graduate program in French and advised many graduate students working in French literature and critical theory.

Please join me as we pause for a moment to remember these colleagues.

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When we remember colleagues who have spent their professional lives in the academy, it is natural to think about that world and about our own professional lives in it. It is a world that may be changing in significant ways, and I will have some things to say about that later on. But as I was thinking through those challenging and difficult things, I reminded myself about another side, about what makes me proud to be the dean of the Laney Graduate School at Emory University. I feel proud to have colleagues like Ivan, Rudolph and Candace, …

- when I talk to Ken Brigham and Julie Gazmararian, coming back from a Burroughs-Wellcome conference, and they tell me that our Molecules to Mankind program is recognizably ahead of others because we have strong structures and cultures that support interdisciplinary innovation;

- when I talk to David Nugent and Carla Roncoli, returning from world conferences on development practice programs, and they tell me that our curriculum and practicum structure is emerging as the model others seek to adapt;

- when I attend the MLA conference awards session, and Emory is the only university that has faculty members called up to receive awards three times;

- when I hear that the Mellon Foundation has again singled out our Art History program as a leader, this time by funding a program that will place Art History doctoral students at the High Museum of Art, learning about curating objects.

These are moments when I feel enormously proud, proud to be working with a talented and committed group of faculty colleagues, at an institution that enables them to pursue extraordinary work as researchers, scholars, and teachers.

Thank you, for these moments and many others, and for all everyone does for the Laney Graduate School and for Emory University.

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It is customary at these occasions to take some time to update you about important developments at the Laney Graduate School. Let me take a few moments to mention some developments among our newer graduate programs.
This spring marks the conclusion of the first year for our doctoral programs in Cancer Biology and Environmental Health Sciences. Both are attracting the attention of excellently prepared potential students.

This spring, we also graduate our first class of students in the Masters in Development Practice program. This program has enjoyed tremendous success in its first two years in large part due to the leadership of Professor David Nugent. Professor Nugent was recently appointed the North American representative to the newly formed International Steering Committee of the MDP.

This year also saw the first exchange of students with Peking University in our joint Biomedical Engineering program with Georgia Tech and Peking University. Students from our program went to China, and students from China joined us here in Atlanta. This is an exciting project of international collaboration, and we are very pleased to see it thriving.

I am also pleased to report that this coming academic year, we will have a new PhD program in Islamic Civilizations Studies or ICIVS. ICIVS will highlight the trans-regional and transnational connections between the Middle East, South Asia, Africa and beyond. No university in North America offers a degree program that is comparable to ICIVS or is as truly interdisciplinary. We are very proud to offer this great program and thank Professors Vincent Cornell and Gordon Newby for their work in developing and guiding the proposal.

Our students are also taking steps to create programs that meet their needs. A great example of this is Eat, Teach, Talk, Run. Students are invited to meet at cross-points of the campus, enjoy lunch, and hear short 4-minute flash talks from other graduate students before getting back to the lab or classroom.

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Looking inward, the Laney Graduate School is also engaged in programming and exercises to keep us vibrant and responsive to the changing landscape of the academy and the challenges of the day.

The director of the Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Professor Keith Wilkinson, and the director of the Emory Center for Science Education, Professor Pat Marsteller, submitted an excellent NIH proposal this year to develop the Emory Initiative for Maximizing Student Development, which focuses particularly on mentoring and diversity. The Laney Graduate School will also partner with the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference and the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence to bring successful mentors to the LGS to describe their projects and provide guidance for adoption by faculty.

Nursing is not a new program for us, but I do want to congratulate them on an achievement: this year the School of Nursing received a $1.5M grant from the National Institutes of Health to train nurse scientists to develop innovative clinical interventions for patients with chronic illnesses. We are thrilled to have this award join the more than one dozen training grants led by faculty in the biomedical, biological and public health sciences programs.

As you all know, the Program for Scholarly Integrity was approved by the Executive Council this academic year. We convened pilot workshops on a range of topics this year, some suited for a general, broad audience and others targeted toward specific divisions. We’ve received some good
feedback, which will be taken into account as we prepare to train incoming natural and biomedical/biological sciences doctoral students this fall. Incoming students in the humanities and social sciences will begin the program in fall 2013.

And finally, I am pleased to announce that the Laney Graduate School will fund two doctoral assistantships that we hope to fill as soon as this summer. Students will work in LGS on activities related to programming such as the Program for Scholarly Integrity or in research endeavors, such as benchmarking practices and policies at Emory and peer institutions. We will begin advertising these positions soon.

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We are always engaged on planning for the future, often with an eye towards financing and sustainable funding, and several such projects are underway.

Our Development and Alumni Relations team had an incredibly successful year. It is now all but certain that we will reach our campaign goal. To date, we have raised in gifts and pledges $9,908,000 towards our $10M campaign goal, and we are closing in on a few additional major gifts that will take us well past the goal. We are deeply grateful to the many alumni and friends who have contributed to this success – including Jim Gavin, an alumnus and a member of the Emory Board of Trustees, Bill and Cathy Rice, Jim and Ethel Montag, the late Robert Wellborn, and many others. And, of course, to our hard working Assistant Dean of Development, Katie Busch.

The Laney Graduate School and the Rollins School of Public Health have entered a funding partnership that establishes 24-month support for all students in our public health sciences PhD programs. After this strong institutional foundation, students will move onto mentor or individual grants. This funding reform is an excellent example of our work to establish sustainable funding plans.

You may recall that last year we convened a committee to look at opportunities for growth and sustainability in the Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences. This past fall, I met with GDBBS faculty leadership to discuss the Committee’s report and recommendations, and I heard them loud and clear: the first priority toward growth and sustainability in the GDBBS is to raise the stipend level and not the number of students. Fall 2012 will see increased stipend support for GDBBS graduate students. And we will continue to model for growth so we are prepared when the finding environment improves.

We also recently circulated a report of the Languages and Literatures Advisory Committee, convened last year to consider how we sustain and advance the strengths we have in languages and literatures. The committee proposed ideas on a variety of scales, and we look forward to engaging with partners to examine their viability.

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In my addresses over the years I have often reported on how the graduate school looks in terms of enrollment trends. Those reports show a trajectory that is by now familiar.
In a bottom line sense, we are growing, slowly but steadily. In 2003, the year before we reduced enrollment as part of the Arts and Sciences funding reforms, we had about 1,600 students. At the start of this academic year, 2011, we had 1,800 students. We are about 15% larger. The financial downturn a few years ago forced us to significantly reduce the number of new students we admitted for the fall of 2009. In terms of overall enrollment numbers, we have come through those events: in the fall of 2008, we had 1,793 students; in the fall of 2011, we have 1,831 students. That is, we now have more students, 7% more, than we had before the downturn.

Looking more closely, we see that our student body has been shifting. We can parse this in different ways. Looking at changes from 2003 to 2011:

- In terms of our divisions, the humanities have seen a 7% decrease in the number of students, while the social sciences have increased by 16% and the natural sciences by 33%.
- In terms of the schools we partner with, programs aligned primarily with the College of Arts and Sciences have seen a 5% decrease in the number of students, while programs aligned primarily with the Woodruff Health Sciences Center have seen a 48% increase.
- In terms of funding source, programs that are driven by university funding alone have seen a 3% decrease in the number of students, while programs that are driven in part by external funding have seen a 35% increase.

In the version of this address posted on our website, you will find a chart that contains these numbers.

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These enrollment numbers illustrate two trends in the development of graduate education at Emory. First of all, we see a steady trend towards a graduate school with a strong presence from every part of the university. We see it in the data from the last several years, and we see it even more strongly if we go back a little farther.

- In 1996, three quarters of our students were enrolled in programs aligned with College departments, and one quarter were in programs aligned with the health sciences.
- This year, half our students are in programs aligned with college departments, and 40% are in programs aligned with the health sciences. Along with that, we have a well established presence of doctoral students in Business, and several of our master’s programs cross school boundaries in new ways.

This is a remarkable change, for the Laney Graduate School and for Emory University: we are truly a graduate school of the whole university.

The second trend concerns funding and growth. Before I even came to Emory, I noted the extraordinary level of central support for graduate education at Emory, expressed in the very high share of the funding for doctoral education that comes from central resources. I am pleased that this commitment continues. This is shown, not least, in our ability to recover our overall enrollment numbers after the reductions in 2009. We also see it in the continued strong presence of the fields that are funded entirely, or almost entirely, from central sources – the humanities and many social sciences.
However, our enrollment trends also show this: programs that rely solely on university funds are financially more vulnerable and cannot sustain the same level of growth as programs that are funded in part by external sources. The university continues to commit substantial support, but the reality is that these funds do not go as far as they once did, and in the fields that rely solely on them, we see flat enrollment.

The availability of external funding, like research and training grants, varies a great deal across fields, and in some cases there just isn’t much to draw on. But there may be sources of funding available that we are not competing for, and we may be able to strengthen graduate education by engaging with external funders in new ways. Later this year, we will be sharing with all DGSs and others some new reporting available through Academic Analytics that allows us to look at grant funding by discipline, to get a sense of what “the market” is and to consider our place in it.

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I need to share some further observations about the state of our resources. Our pattern of growth is under a good deal of stress. One immediate issue is the financial model that has supported it, and the pressures come from several directions. Budgets at Emory are strained. Several partner schools face projected deficits, and many of you will have heard or read sobering messages from your deans. They are working hard to come into balance, and they will come into balance. The Laney Graduate School is not, at present, projecting a deficit, but we will be affected. As you know, graduate education is funded in part by contributions from schools who participate as partners, so when they are in difficult financial situations, we will feel that as well. We will be working closely with our partners to help ensure the continued excellence of graduate programs and associated departments and units.

This is not a sudden crisis, like the one we experienced in the fall of 2008, when we absorbed an immediate reduction in the number of new students for the following academic year. This time, the budget strains reflect long-term issues around projected incomes and expenses, and will require adjustments at Emory that will affect graduate education.

In a broader sense, it is the downturn of 2008 that is still with us. The recovery is moving slowly and unevenly, and we are experiencing what, for some time, will be a new normal. The traditional sources of income that find their way to supporting higher education are under stress: families have less money for tuition, and federal funding for research and higher education is growing less, is subject to new competing policy priorities and interests, and is the object of fierce competition among potential recipients. We have already seen one direct national reduction in support for graduate education, in the form of changes to the way interest is calculated on graduate student loans.

We are living in a lean economic and financial world. The full impact – on Emory University as a whole and on the Laney Graduate School – is still developing.

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As we go forward, we must do so with this situation firmly in mind. In an era of tightening budgets for graduate education, we must be the very best stewards we can be of the resources that are entrusted to us.
Graduate education must align with research excellence and vitality. We will continue to work closely with our partner schools to ensure coordinated efforts around faculty hiring, research programs and investments, and other initiatives that create opportunities to support graduate education. One of our fundamental principles is that graduate education follows faculty research excellence.

It is also the case that the funds we do have must be used wisely to create the best opportunities for attracting and supporting the best graduate students. We know that increased support is an important issue: we must continue to maintain our 100 percent health insurance subsidy, we need to move to 12 month stipends for all doctoral students, we must keep pace with our stipend amounts, and we must maintain and enhance our professional development support.

This is “the” list of priorities. It is a daunting list in any circumstance. In the current economic climate, it is an extraordinary challenge. What is the relative importance of these items, and how should they be balanced against other priorities? And how will they be influenced by developments beyond our control? For example, the cost of health insurance seems to rise every year. What will happen to this cost when the Supreme Court issues its decision on the Affordable Care Act?

* * *

If one source of stress is about how we cover our costs, another is about the professional futures for PhD graduates. Academic markets are very difficult. Across the U.S., the ratio of new PhDs to advertised faculty positions has been poor for some time now. In some cases, universities are closing departments and programs. In grant-driven sciences, graduates spend longer time in post-doc positions, PIs spend more time applying for funding and face lower success rates.

The situation has drawn comments from wider circles. The journal *Nature* argued we need to “fix the PhD” in science, because

increased government research funding from the US National Institutes of Health and Japan's science and education ministry has driven expansion of doctoral and postdoctoral education — without giving enough thought to how the labour market will accommodate those who emerge. The system is driven by the supply of research funding, not the demand of the job market.¹

*The Economist* considered “why doing a PhD is often a waste of time,” and also pointed to a mismatch between graduate education and employment:

There is an oversupply of PhDs. Although a doctorate is designed as training for a job in academia, the number of PhD positions is unrelated to the number of job openings. Meanwhile, business leaders complain about shortages of high-level skills, suggesting PhDs are not teaching the right things. The fiercest critics compare research doctorates to Ponzi or pyramid schemes.²

¹ *Nature*, 21 April 2011, [http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v472/n7343/full/472259b.html](http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v472/n7343/full/472259b.html)
Closer to home, the Chronicle of Higher Education has carried a number of articles over the last several years about the worsening employment prospects for PhDs, particularly in the humanities, and about how this is impacting both professors and graduate students. One recent set of articles involved several of “our own,” commenting on the role of graduate education in their professional lives and identities.3

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It is abundantly clear that our students’ professional development is more important than ever, and we must move forward in full awareness of the ways in which our profession is changing. I want to suggest ways in which the LGS seeks to respond, and to pose some questions that programs and you – the faculty members of the LGS – will likely face over the next several years.

Let’s remind ourselves that even though academic job markets are tough, they will always be an essential component of our graduates’ professional futures. We must continue to train the very best researchers and scholars, equipped with rigorous preparations in their chosen fields of study. We must continue to support and develop professional skills required for successful academic careers: teaching, grant writing, mentoring, scholarly ethics, and more.

And, as all of you know, we must do more to help our students navigate careers outside the academy. Last year, I spoke of a report developed by the Council of Graduate Schools and Educational Testing Services, The Path Forward. One of the most fundamental opportunities noted in the report is the need for a highly educated workforce: the number of jobs that require a graduate degree is estimated to grow by 2.5 million by 2018, a 17% increase in those requiring a PhD and 18% in those requiring a master’s.

How do we help prepare our students for these broader arrays of professional futures? A large component of this is about helping our students understand the skills and expertise they have in the context of positions in a broad range of sectors – government, non-profits, business. It is about helping our students imagine possible career paths and seek out the contacts and networks that can help them start. The Laney Graduate School is committed to providing resources in these areas. We have started, by providing resources like the Versatile PhD, Pathways Beyond the Professoriate presentations, the alumni mentoring network, and more. And we will do more.

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Developing this kind of programming is important and necessary. But there are other levels of change which more clearly affect you, our programs and our faculty.

I have been involved in a follow-up report from CGS and ETS, called Pathways Through Graduate School and Into Careers, due to be released in about a week (http://pathwaysreport.org). This report seeks to assess what graduate students know about career options at different points in their graduate education as well as how they acquire this knowledge. It also considers the role of graduate

programs and faculty in guiding students, and provides policy recommendations for a number of stakeholders. When it’s released, we will send you a link to access it.

I particularly want to call attention to two items from the report. The first was discussed by Debra Stewart, President of CGS, in a recent article. She pointed out that “a majority of PhD degree holders find their way into careers outside the world of faculty and … for many, these careers are considered a highly satisfying outcome.” Even in the humanities – sometimes considered the most bound to a future in the academy – 15 years ago, a survey found that only 60% of graduates worked as postsecondary faculty. For as long as we have been training them, our PhD graduates have pursued careers – exciting, rewarding, fulfilling careers – outside the confines of the academy.

As faculty members, our professional experience is usually limited to the profession we have chosen. But, as my friend and colleague Debra Stewart is suggesting, it is likely that we have access to more information than we think, by calling on networks of friends, colleagues and alumni. One of our essential tasks is to become more aware of these career pathways. The Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences has responded by convening career seminars targeted to biological/biomedical students involving industry leaders. Other programs invite alumni and others to speak and represent agencies and businesses beyond the academy. Taken together, these are colleagues, alumni and others who can help current students by providing information and contacts that current faculty cannot. What can other programs do to extend opportunities and engagements?

*          *           *

The report I worked on also points to another important set of facts, where our response raises more complex issues.

PhD graduates bring highly developed and valuable skills and expertise to organizations that hire them: the ability to work with complex problems, to plan and execute extended research projects, to acquire and apply new knowledge, and to engage in sophisticated and analytical inquiry. But employers of PhDs also report that they lack some other essential skills: experience working on teams, presentation skills, and the ability to convey technical and specialized knowledge to individuals who do not have technical and specialized training.

If we combine this finding with some of the criticisms I cited earlier – about the production of PhDs not being sufficiently related to the employment market for PhDs – we are poised to ask another question. If our graduates will need to be prepared for a broader set of professional futures, how does that impact the nature of the training itself?

We tend to think of the curriculum and PhD education as one thing, and professional preparation, from TATTO to networking, as another, two complementary tracks. Perhaps that is in part predicated on the idea that we are training, in essence, future professors, and that one of the tracks – the curriculum – is squarely aimed to deliver this kind of training and no other. If we recognize that we need to aim for training professionals with more varied career paths, then do we need to consider whether this fact should lead us to revise the way we structure the curriculum and path to

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degree completion itself? If we take a look at the training we provide with the interest of the students, as future professionals, at heart – then what?

This line of questions raises complex and sensitive issues, issues where the initiative belongs properly, and again squarely, in your domain as faculty members in graduate programs.

* * *

To help us deliberate about these matters related to programming for student support and resources in general, I am reviving a structure that was very helpful a few years ago: the Laney Graduate School Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee will start meeting this month, and it will begin by considering two immediate issues.

First: our admissions fellowships – the Woodruff, Diversity and Arts and Sciences fellowships we offer to selected applicants – have been in place for a long time, and it is time for us to examine whether their current structure serves us well, or should be reconsidered in some way to ensure we successfully recruit the best students.

Second: professional development for students that prepares them for 21st century careers, both within and beyond the academy.

In the larger picture, the Advisory Committee will also help us with a question I raised in last year’s address. Regardless of the challenging economic circumstances, we are rich with a faculty full of ambition and excellent ideas. We continue to receive proposals, large and small, for new things worth doing – new initiatives, new projects, new degree programs – supported by groups of faculty with energy, expertise and commitment. Operating in unforgiving economic circumstances, needing to enhance many things we are already doing, and presented with attractive proposals for new things to do, we must ask again and with some urgency:

What will we not do?

What kinds of changes are off the table? Of the things we now do, which ones might we disengage from? Of the things that seem like good new ideas to start doing, how do we choose wisely?

* * *

This takes me to my final point, a moment that brings together heart and mind.

Back in October, many of us read an article in the Chronicle of Higher Education, written by the president and the executive director of the American Historical Association. The article considered the job market for new PhDs in History and the ways in which we can and ought to prepare our students for it.

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The article is called “No More Plan B,” and the very title urges that jobs outside the academy should no longer be considered as fallbacks, plan B, alternative or any of a range of terms for “secondary.” Instead, we need to start looking at a broad range of career options, in universities, government, business, industry, non-profits and more as one continuum of career paths. These paths are potentially rewarding, fulfilling, satisfying, exciting and honorable paths on which to prosper with doctoral education as preparation.

Now, we can say this – and we do. And we can prepare our students for it – and we will do a better job of this. And we can learn more about friends, colleagues and alumni who have already taken these paths – and with your help, we will do that do.

But we need to do one more thing. Let me put it forward with some frankness. If there is one thing our students excel at from day one in graduate school, it is this: they know how to read their teachers. They have done it for a very long time, and they have come as far as one can in the formal system of education. If we say to our students that we prepare them for and support their pursuit of a broad range of professional futures, and we don’t mean it, they will know.

So I am asking you to mean it.

I am well aware of the depth of this request. Many of us see “training our successors” as a large part of our professional identity. This is a type of “legacy.” How often do we identify ourselves and our colleagues by identifying the labs we trained in, and the mentors who shaped us? How often do we measure our success by the academic positions and accomplishments of our students? We also feel a kind of obligation to pass on the training of past generations of scholars and researchers to new generations. In many ways, training our successors is the difference between being at a two or four year college and being at a PhD granting university.

It may be a fact of our times that as a group, we will do less of this, and that we need to reconceive our legacies, our obligations – our professional identities – in ways that embrace a broader vision of the skills, the expertise, and the ethos that we pass on to our students, and through them to our society and culture.

This is a question for our hearts – yours and mine. For some of us it will be easy to ask and answer, and for some of us it will be a moment of professional and personal reckoning. For all of our students, I ask of you this: join me in not just recognizing or accepting the full range of our students’ professional futures, but in learning about, embracing and shaping it.
## Degree Seeking Student Enrollment in the Laney Graduate School

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<th>Count as % of Total</th>
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Count = Number of students enrolled in a degree program.
UNIT = Emory unit that is primary home of most faculty in the program. GDR includes faculty from the Candler School of Theology and from ECAS.
Other = Master’s students in Bioethics and Development Practice.
PI = Program where funding for graduate students is structured around research and training grants held by Principal Investigators.
Data reflect the fall Date of Record report for each year.