**New Faculty Institute 2015 | Introduction: Judith D. Singer, Provost Alan Garber**

JUDITH D. SINGER: Thank you all for coming out to today's new Faculty Institute. I'm just going to make a few opening remarks and then introduce provost Alan Garber, who will also make some opening remarks. And then I'll come back on.

One request I have is don't sit next to somebody you know. The whole purpose of this is to meet people you don't know. And we are trying to encourage those kinds of opportunities. And there will be a break, and there will also be a reception afterwards where there will be more opportunity for that.

Just want to say a few words of introduction about why we do this new Faculty Institute. I am the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity. I started in this role in 2008.

And one of the commitments that I had when I started was to try to make faculty at Harvard feel not just part of their department or their school, but part of Harvard University. Harvard is a fabulous place with lots of interesting people and lots of rich opportunities. But historically, the university had too few opportunities to do these kinds of things.

In fact, I was just talking with one of our panelists about this. And when I was hired in 1984-- so it's 30 years ago-- I was given keys to an office and I was told to go to an HR orientation to learn about my health benefits, and then I started teaching.

So Harvard in those days did nothing. Harvard in those days did not have a tenure track. It did not have a commitment to its assistant and associate professors. The Harvard of today is really quite different in terms of what we are trying to accomplish as a university, and why you were all selected by your colleagues who put in an enormous amount of work to identify you as people to come into our vibrant community.

What you'll learn, if you haven't already, is that Harvard's a great place to be a faculty member for a variety of reasons, some obvious, some not so obvious. The obvious ones are fabulous colleagues.

I mean, when you came and interviewed, when you had conversations, you really got a sense, hopefully, of the excitement. There is a little bit of Harvard exceptionalism that we sometimes take too much advantage of and sometimes can make light of. But one of the things today is to meet colleagues who are not in your immediate sphere.

So either people from other parts of the university who do work similar to you or people in your part of the university who do work dissimilar from you. And I hope you take the chance to do that.

How many of you are teaching right now? Yeah. So once you start teaching, you just get a sense of how vibrant the students are, how exciting they are, how challenging they are, how they make you think.

They make you think you don't know things you thought you know. They make you go home and work on things that you didn't know you were going to work on because they asked you a question you actually don't know the answer to and you're terrified.

You'll also have fabulous opportunities. This is part of the Harvard exceptionalism. Being here opens doors. Being at Harvard, people like to have people on panels. People like to solicit people.

And it's also just a great place to do research and scholarship and engage, whether it's with our library collections, with our art collections, with our scientific facilities. Whatever it is that you're interested in, Harvard has a wealth of resources in this.

So I'm going to stop right now because Alan's time is rather tight, and introduce Alan Garber who is our provost. He is now no longer a newbie. He has been here-- this is your--

ALAN M. GARBER: Fifth year.

JUDITH D. SINGER: --fifth year, wow. OK. It's Alan's fifth year. Alan bleeds crimson. He went here as an undergraduate, did some training here. He is an MD/PhD, PhD in economics, and brings his skills both as an MD and able to work with people and as a PhD in economics in terms of analyzing higher education and the finances of higher education and how things run.

And we've invited Alan here to just make a few welcoming remarks, and also if we have some time to take some questions from folks in the audience. So let me introduce Alan Garber.

[APPLAUSE]

ALAN M. GARBER: Thank you, Judy. First of all, I just want to add my welcome. We're delighted that you're all here. I'm not talking about for this afternoon's event, although we are happy about that, but that you're here at Harvard.

And for us, success means that your career grows beyond your wildest dreams as a result of your coming to Harvard to be faculty. Whether you are a junior faculty member or a newly recruited tenured professor, Harvard is a place where we want you to achieve your professional aspirations.

I don't have a lot of advice for you. Sometimes I'm asked for advice. And I have four children, I should add, and I know how rare it is to be able to give somebody advice where they ask for it and they'll actually listen to you.

As provost, people will always at least go through the motions of sounding grateful. But I have some advice that I think is really worth following, and this is the advice I want to give you.

When you think about what Harvard offers, Judy touched on a lot of what makes Harvard great. We have the largest university endowment. Although if you look at a per student or per faculty basis, we do not.

We have the most distinguished faculty in the world, arguably, although we do have plenty of competition. Tomorrow's New York Times is going to have a story that rankles a little bit having to do with economics. But we certainly do have a distinguished faculty.

We have the world's largest library. Largest research library, I should say. And it's the fourth largest library in the world by many measures. We have our art museum. We have many museums on campus.

Our art museum is by some measures the sixth largest art museum in the country. Not among academic institutions, among all art museums. And the list goes on and on. We have many treasures that we own. We have many things that make Harvard look like a spectacular place.

But what I think is the genuine distinction of Harvard and why it is so terrific to be a faculty member here or a student here is that our excellence extends across so many different areas. So many areas of academic, of intellectual pursuit. Very few universities are even competitive with us in this regard.

So many of you have come here to be in the top ranked department in your field, or at least one of the top ranked departments. And you undoubtedly will feel that it's a great environment for you to advance your career, to conduct your research, to teach with tremendous students, and so on.

What I want to urge you to do is to look beyond your department, even to look beyond your school. And now I'm going to be shameless about this for a moment. But one of the things that's challenging about Harvard is it's difficult to get to know people who are not in your immediate environment. And we try to create opportunities for you to meet other people.

This afternoon is one of them, but we need to have many more and we do have many more. And I want to urge you to take advantage of them, of those opportunities. If it's 4:30 in the afternoon on a Wednesday, you may have a stack of student papers to grade, referee reports to write, recommendation letters to write, a whole series of things that you have to do every day.

And I know all of you are very busy already. And you have many, many things weighing on you. The easiest thing to do is to always plow through the work that you have ahead of you and ignore some of the invitations, some of the seminars, some of the performances that you get invited to in the normal course of a week at Harvard.

I want to urge you to think about sometimes dropping that work that you need to do for a while to take advantage of an event. Judy's office sponsors many events to get faculty together. Sometimes these are special performances at the ART, the American Repertory Theater, arguably the greatest regional theater in America, which we also own.

But there are many, many activities that she sponsors and you will have other activities of that kind. And what I want to urge you to do is get to know people in other areas. Go to a seminar occasionally that's outside your immediate department or area, but maybe that has some loose relation to something you're interested in. Get out there. Get to know people who aren't in your field.

Sometimes the way to get to know other people is through students that you may share in common, particularly at the graduate level. But also undergraduates can be a bridge. Sometimes you will be invited by your students to attend events at the houses or in Annenberg. If they're freshmen, they have faculty nights.

Accept those invitations. Not only get to know students, get to know other faculty. There are many, many opportunities, and the biggest barrier is the demands on your time. And those demands, as you know, are to a great extent internally imposed.

You'd certainly have obligations to others who make demands on your time, but you will have to make a decision about what the priorities are. It's not sacrificing your career to take advantage of some of these riches and people that Harvard has to offer. You will not have a fully successful Harvard experience if your entire academic life is lived within your department.

So please, please take advantage of the breadth of what Harvard has to offer. You will sometimes even find very direct payoffs in terms of your work from having interacted with people outside your immediate area. The unexpected collaboration or sometimes you may read something you wouldn't otherwise read when you get to know other people in the Harvard environment outside your area.

So make the most of this experience. I wish you every success. And Judy's office and the provost's office stand ready to help you in every way we can. Have a great experience.

Let me just ask if people have questions or want to make any comments. And let me add one other thing. Don't let the river be a barrier. Many of you are here from the School of Public Health, the med school, the business school.

The river, it's a very narrow river, and the traffic can be bad at rush hour but it's pretty quick to get in between during other times of day. And I would hate to think of Longwood as a different universe or that Allston is a different universe. A lot of what we're going to be doing in the next several years is helping people understand that Allston and Cambridge are all one campus.

OK, thank you very much. Good luck.

[APPLAUSE]

JUDITH D. SINGER: Thank you, Alan. I'm going to make a few remarks about the university before we go around the room and say who we are and what department we're in so that people can get a chance to know each other. The first thing I'm going to talk about is-- I'm a statistician, so I'll give some statistics.

As Alan was implying, Harvard is a huge place. And not counting the hospitals, which have about 10,000 faculty, we have 1,500 ladder faculty who are spread across our campuses. They are increasingly diverse, which is something we are very much committed to.

About 70% of the faculty are tenured. About 30% are tenure track. 29% are women. That's an all time high for Harvard. It's really remarkable, the progress that we've been making.

And in the earlier ranks, the fraction of women is up to 38% which is also an all time high. So we're really making progress in diversifying our faculty. This year, 22% of our faculty are members of minority groups. That's an all time high.

And once again, in the assistant and associate professor ranks, we're at about 30% minority. Your entering class is also diverse. 39% female, 30% minority. There are some places at the Harvard faculty club where all you see are pictures of dead white men. That's what Harvard was.

So when you look around the room and you see very different faces, it's a sense that this is a new Harvard. And that's an institution that very much I want to be a part of and I hope you want to be a part of.

The other part of Harvard that's changing is to some extent it's the way we're organized and structured, but it's also about the opportunities that Alan was talking about. You may hear people talk about every tub on its own bottom, or the tub system. This is a system where the budgets are decentralized. Each dean controls his or her budget.

And part of that tub system contributed to a lot of city-states that were somewhat balkanized. And part of the mission of the provost's office in general, but also President Faust since she took office in 2007, is the phrase we use is "One Harvard." We actually want this to be a university where people feel part of the university. They can move across the university.

And that's what Alan was trying to get at when he was urging you to meet people. The other thing we've discovered is that newer people are much more interested in meeting people than people who've been here for 30 or 40 years. So part of today is focused on people who are new to the university and giving them an opportunity to get to know each other.

If you haven't signed up for our geomap, you should have gotten something in your packet. I just met somebody who's living down the street from me. So it's a good opportunity to get to know faculty who live in your community. Find people you might carpool with or have a barbecue with, who might live near you or have kids the same age as your kids, and to feel part of Harvard.

Let me say a word about today's program, and then I'm going to have us go around the room. The idea here is we're going to have two faculty panels, and I'm pleased to see the first panel actually has arrived. I was beginning to have that fear you have, where are my speakers? Thank you for coming.

And the first panel is going to be from people who were relatively recently promoted from assistant to associate professors to tell those of you who are assistant professors that it actually can happen and does happen at Harvard. And then our second panel is going to be of some tenured faculty who have been here for varying numbers of years who will give you a perspective on the university that they have from their perch.

Some of the questions we've asked people to talk about are what are the critical factors essential to your development and feeling part of the university. What kinds of resources have you found particularly effective? Where do you go when you have a question? How do you find out how to maneuver around this very large and vast campus?

And how do you develop relationships and collaborations with faculty? And how do you balance those demands of hunkering down and you've got a paper you need to get out and taking advantage of those opportunities. And so different people have different perspectives on this.

And so what we're hoping is by hearing these six different voices who come from different schools, different disciplines, and are at different career stages, you'll get some food for thought that hopefully will stimulate your own thinking and also conversations that can take place at the breaks and at receptions.

Both of the panels are going to be introduced by my colleague. Elizabeth Ancarana, who's the Assistant Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity. And I would say that if you don't have a place to go to ask a question, Elizabeth, me, we are open to all kinds of questions. And we can direct you to the right place if we're not the right place.

So to start breaking down some barriers, let's go around the room and have everybody introduce themselves. For time reasons, let's keep it short. So basically your name, your school, and your department or field. And one sentence about your research. Hit it.

NATASHA SUMNER: I'm Natasha Sumner. I'm in Celtic Languages and Literatures. And I work on a heroic corpus in Irish and Scottish Gaelic.

JUDITH D. SINGER: Perfect.

SCOTT CARTER: Scott Carter. I'm a computational biologist at the Harvard School for Public Health in the Dana-Farber. I'm working on human cancer, genetics, and evolution.

MATTHEW HERSCH: Matthew Hersch, faculty of Arts and Sciences, History of Science. I work on the history of aerospace technology.

ISAAC CHIU: Hi. My name's Isaac Chiu. I'm in the Department of Microbiology and Amino Biology at Harvard Medical School. And I work on the interaction between the nervous system and immune system and inflammation and pain.

MAOFA LIAO: Hi. My name is Maofa Liao. I'm in Cell Biology Department at Harvard Medical School. We mainly use electromicroscopy to study protein structure and function.

GARETH DOHERTY: My name's Gareth Doherty. I'm in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the Graduate School of Design. And I work on the intersections between design and anthropology.

CHRISTOPHER STANTON: I'm Christopher Stanton at the Business School, and I'm an applied microeconometrician.

STEPHANE VERGUET: Hi, Stephane Verguet, Harvard Chan School of Public Health and Global Health Population. And I work in priority setting in global health, and particularly equity and poverty issues.

NIR EYAL: I'm Nir Eyal. I know this guy, sorry, because we're in the same department. Global Health and Population in the Public Health School. And I'm an ethicist. I do ethics at the level of populations.

TAMARRA JAMES-TODD: Hello. I'm Tamarra James-Todd. I'm also at Harvard Chan School of Public Health, but I do not know the two gentlemen that I'm sitting next to. I'm in the Department of Environmental Health and Epidemiology, and I look at environmental and reproductive predictors of women's health outcomes.

TIM REBBECK: Hi, I'm Tim Rebbeck. At the Chan School of Public Health and the Dana-Farber, and I'm a cancer molecular epidemiologist.

BETHANY HEDT-GAUTHIER: My name is Bethany Hedt-Gauthier. I'm a bio-statistician at Harvard Medical School, and I do research on health system strengthening and research capacity building, primarily in Rwanda.

DAVID STERN: My name is David Stern I'm in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in the departments of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and Comparative Literature. And I work in classical medieval Jewish literature and culture, and the history of the book.

BRANDON TERRY: Hi. My name is Brandon Terry. I'm also in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. I'm in the Department of African and African-American Studies and Social Studies. I'm a political theorist working on African-American politics and political thought.

JOE ALLEN: Hello. Joe Allen, Harvard Chan School of Public Health, Department of Environmental Health. I study buildings and their impact on health, trying to figure out how to optimize indoor environments for improved health.

MELANI CAMMETT: Hi. I'm Melani Cammett. I'm in Arts and Sciences in the Department of Government, and I work on the politics of economic development in the Middle East and have a lot of projects actually on the politics of access to health care, so sort of wannabe public health person as well.

YUHUA WANG: I'm Yuhua Wang, also in the Arts and Sciences in the department of Government. I'm a political scientist doing work on Chinese politics.

STEPHEN GRAY: Hi, I'm Stephen Gray. Graduate School of Design. I'm an urban designer in the Department of Urban Planning and Design, and I focus on the intersection among design democracy and development in the city.

DANIELLE LEE: Hi, I'm Danielle Lee. I'm an economist at the Business School, and I study the economics of science.

CHARLIE CONROY: I'm Charlie Conroy. I'm in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in the Astronomy department, and I study the formation and evolution of galaxies.

SOROUSH SAGHAFIAN: Soroush Saghafian from Harvard Kennedy School, and my area is in operations research and operations management. I use them for studying basically health care systems.

LUKE MIRATRIX: Hello. I'm Luke Miratrix. I'm in the School of Education. And I work on statistical methodology for determining causality and observational data, and also do data mining for text analysis.

STRATOS IDREOS: Hi, I'm Stratos Idreos. I'm a computer scientist in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. And I work on data systems. That's how you store, access, and analyze large amounts of data.

MADHU SUDAN: Hi. I'm Madhu Sudan. Sorry, I'm also a computer scientist from the School of Engineering, so I'm sitting next to Stratos, but I didn't really know him till today. I work in the mathematical theories of computers and communicating devices.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Hi. I'm Jeremy Friedman. I'm at the Business School too, and I'm a historian of communism and revolution.

GARY ADAMKIEWICZ: Hi, I'm Gary Adamkiewicz. I'm in the Department of Environmental Health at the TH Chan School of Public Health. And I mostly work on issues that connect housing to health with a focus on low income communities and environmental health disparities.

ANDREW HOLDER: I'm Andrew Holder. I'm in the Department of Architecture at the Graduate School of Design. And I'm working on the resuscitation of the Rococo and contemporary building practice.

NICK MENZIES: Hi, my name's Nick Menzies. I'm one of many people, it seems, from the Chan School of Public Health. I'm in the Department of Global Health and Population. And in my work, I look at, I guess, predicting the long term outcomes of infectious disease control policies.

ANKUR PANDYA: I'm Ankur Pandya. I'm also from the Chan School in the Department of Health Policy and Management. When not introducing myself to economists, I call myself a health economist.

[LAUGHTER]

SHEILA ISANAKA: I'm Sheila Isanaka. I am at the School of Public Health in the departments of Nutrition and Global Health and Population. I do clinical and community-based research looking at methods to treat and prevent child malnutrition and infectious disease.

JUSTINE LANDAU: Hello. I'm Justine Landau. I'm at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. I teach classical Persian literature, and I study mostly theories, classical theories of literature, and poetics.

SEAN EDDY: I'm Sean Eddy. I'm in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology and also in Applied Mathematics. I'm a computational biologist, and I develop computational tools for analyzing the evolution of biological sequences over very long time scales.

SI NAE PARK: My name is Si Nae Park. I'm in the department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations. I look at pre-modern Korean literature through the scope of cosmopolitan and vernacular. I'm interested in history of reading and oral storytelling and written texts.

DEMBA BA: Hello. My name is Demba Ba. I'm in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. And I use mathematics, statistical modeling, and computing to understand how large scale systems operate when they work the way they're supposed to and when they don't work the way they're supposed to. So more recently, I've been interested in applications of math, statistical modeling, and computing to neuroscience and understanding how the brain works.

ELIZABETH KNOLL: I'm Elizabeth Knoll. I'm the Assistant Provost for Faculty Appointments working with Judy, and I'm delighted to see that you're all really here.

MINA CIKARA: Hello. My name is Mina Cikara. I'm in the Department of Psychology, and I study the cognitive affective and neural bases of inter-group conflict and violence.

SCOTT KUINDERSMA: Hi, I'm Scott Kuindersma. I'm in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. I work in robotics at the intersection between control, optimization, and machine learning.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: And as Judy mentioned, I'm Elizabeth Ancarana, the Assistant Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity in the office of the President and the Provost. And I join Judy and Alan and my other colleagues here in welcoming you all to Harvard.

We're just so delighted to see you here. I have the pleasure of introducing our panelists. But before I do, I just wanted to echo Judy's comments about how we really are here for you as a resource.

In addition to our colleagues in the dean's offices, in your departments, your department chairs, et cetera, over the years Judy and I and our colleagues have amassed a vast network of people that we can help to introduce and connect you to as you navigate your experience right now in the beginning during your transition to Harvard and the Cambridge-Boston area, but as you develop and progress through your career at Harvard.

I was in the FAS doing faculty recruitment for a decade before moving into the provost's office almost three years ago. And a lot of faculty come our way, and it's just such a pleasure to work with all of you. So any time you have a question, you don't know where to go, you don't know who to ask, give us a ring and we'll make sure you're doing just fine.