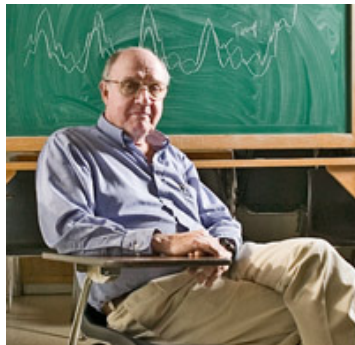


**University of Pennsylvania  
Amy Gutmann**

***Toward Environmental Sustainability on Penn's Campus***

When President Amy Gutmann signed the Presidents Climate Commitment in February of 2007 – the first of the Ivy League presidents to do so – it took many in the university community by surprise. Although environmental awareness was a hot topic among students and faculty, and Penn had long been recognized as a leader in wind-power and energy management, few anticipated the dedication to environmental improvement that President Gutmann was ready to demonstrate.



Among the surprised faculty was Dr. Robert Giegengack, the long-time geology teacher and one of the student's perennial favorite lecturers. Dr. Giegengack – “Gieg,” as he's universally known – had already made a name for himself in the national press for his thoughtful critique of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*. “What,” Gieg wondered aloud, “has President Gutmann sprung on us with this *Climate Commitment*?” His musings didn't stop at idle questioning – he decided to create a class to examine Penn's environmental footprint and engage the students in developing solutions the challenges presented by the ACUPCC.

For a partner in his endeavor, Gieg didn't have to look far. Stan Laskowski had just taken a two-year leave-of-absence from the EPA, where he was the director and senior career staff member at the Region 3 office, to teach in Penn's Environmental Studies program. Stan's 40-year career at the EPA had well prepared him to dealing with institutional responses to environmental challenges, and with assistance from graduate student Stephanie Chiorean, developed a curriculum over the summer for a fall 2007 graduate and undergraduate seminar class.



*Stan Laskowski*



On September 5, 2007, over 20 students showed up for the first session of *ENVS 494, Toward Environmental Sustainability on Penn's Campus*. As the primary lecture component, Gieg and Stan recruited senior staff and faculty to present Penn's operational response to the ACUPCC, including School of Design's Dr. William Braham, who had recently completed the university's greenhouse gas inventory, Anne Papageorge, Vice President for Facilities and Real Estate Services, to discuss initiatives in university planning, design, and construction, and Vice President for Budget and Management Analysis Bonnie Gibson to present institutional financial challenges and opportunities. Students were given an unprecedented opportunity to dialogue with university decision-makers, suggest changes, and question assumptions and practices.

The class "deliverables" are being sent to President Gutmann this spring – student team reports on utilities and conservation, distributed energy generation, recycling and waste reduction, green buildings, stormwater management, and university communications strategies. In addition to their research and recommendations, the class as a whole presented overarching findings and recommendations in a summary document for President Gutmann, addressing Penn's continued leadership in wind energy, recommendations for modifying the Responsibility Center Management financial model to provide sustainability incentives, and strategies to improve effectiveness of managerial and operational decision-making.

Although the semester ended in mid-December, the class isn't over yet – a number of students have enthusiastically elected to continue their research as independent study through the spring semester. On the evening of January 16<sup>th</sup>, a special class session was convened by the University's chief administrative officer, Executive Vice President Craig Carnaroli, for him, members of the Provosts Office, and the Vice President of Facilities and Real Estate to hear the students' recommendations firsthand.

By engaging faculty, students, and senior staff at the University of Pennsylvania, the Presidents Climate Commitment has already provided impressive dividends through *Toward Environmental Sustainability on Penn's Campus*. Stan Laskowski and Robert Giegengack's expect that this class will be an annual offering, with subsequent generations of student continuing to engage, challenge, and hold the University accountable to President Gutmann's commitment, and to build on the successes of each prior class. We're already looking forward to the fall of 2008!