

**Dean's Address to the Graduate Faculty
State of the Laney Graduate School**

Lisa A. Tedesco

2021

The Laney Graduate School shapes thinkers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and advocates whose footprints are visible worldwide. Our goals are guided by the defining mission of the comprehensive research university – discovery, innovation, education, and service.

Our students work with leading faculty and researchers to solve our era's most complex problems, form deep connections, and develop shared interests through intellectual curiosity, innovation, and creativity. Our students and faculty—who are represented throughout campus academic units—are essential team members who drive award-winning research and scholarship at Emory University.

Overall State of the Laney Graduate School

A year ago, the Laney Graduate School was in the early phase of adjusting to disruptions wrought by COVID-19. In May 2020, LGS joined with the rest of the University to stage a virtual Commencement to celebrate the important milestone in our students' academic journey despite the pandemic. The LGS Commencement website included a special message from the Dean, a conversation from graduating past LGSC presidents, a montage of graduating student reflections, and other tributes. President Claire Sterk virtually conferred degrees, and faculty, staff, and students could personalize the [Laney Graduate School Shared Memories Wall](#) by submitting their favorite student memories, personal photos, and video greetings.

It was thrilling to celebrate 2021 and 2020 graduates at a face-to-face ceremony just a short time ago, in May. To be sure, it was a very different ceremony, when compared to our traditional Emory commencements on the Quad. For one, it took place at the Georgia World Congress Center where ample space allowed for the appropriate level of social distancing, and guests, including faculty, were limited in number due to the lingering effects of COVID-19. Still, it was a joyful event and a symbol of recovery on the horizon.

Since Spring term 2020, the Office of the Provost directed the Return to Campus for Research Framework—a phased plan informed by public health guidance, pragmatism, and caution. To support this plan and our graduate community's needs, LGS partnered with other units to implement a scaled approval process for graduate students' return to research facilities as the University cleared laboratories and other venues for re-opening. I and my colleagues in LGS are grateful for the collegial partnership of research deans in Emory College and the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health that made this process possible.

The 2020-2021 pandemic academic year demanded all forms of herculean work—and in its broadest sense, the work of heart and mind. The need to pivot in response to the pandemic continues to challenge and sometimes exhaust resources, talent, and patience. Remote learning, work from home, re-designed practices and policies for health and safety required the entire LGS community to reshape our strategies to continue the mission of the graduate school and Emory's commitment to eminence. We are proud of our proactive and innovative responses to the challenges presented.

Today, LGS continues to work with University leadership to establish an effective and comprehensive clearance process for students returning to campus. Our plans are designed to ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge and understanding of public health safety protocols and affirm their readiness to return to limited in-person settings as necessary.

Given the many disruptions to the Emory community due to COVID-19, we were grateful for the University's leadership and support in maintaining our funding commitment to doctoral students. As we continued to plan and adjust to circumstances for the Fall term, LGS was pleased to sustain the approved increase of 2.5 percent for doctoral student stipend rates 2020-2021.

During the Fall 2020 New Student Orientation, LGS hosted virtual orientations through the Canvas platform and a host of new student activities. Gregory L. Fenves, Emory's newly appointed president, offered greetings at several virtual LGS events and shared his vision for graduate education with our students, faculty, and staff. I think I speak for students, faculty, and staff when I express gratitude to President Fenves for his staunch commitment to graduate education and his deep appreciation of the role that it must play at a great research university.

As the University prepared for return to campus activities, LGS communicated, supported and, when necessary, enforced the strict COVID-19 testing requirements. Today, LGS supports and emphasizes the required vaccination for all students and the weekly COVID screening policy for all LGS students who are unable to be vaccinated.

Continued Progress Towards Strategic Goals

Before describing the ongoing work of LGS this year, I'd like to talk a little about two distinct yet complementary strategies that have commanded much of our attention in recent years and will continue to play prominent roles in the future.

In order for LGS to fulfill its mission, we must collaborate with our partners in other schools and units at Emory to provide broadly based, excellent graduate education that supports the research and scholarship of students, faculty, and the University as a whole. In recent years, we have especially focused on diversity and inclusion and professional development. We are determined to:

- foster an environment of inclusion to ensure the range of educational benefits that can only come from diversity across the academic community; and
- complement the world-class education our faculty offer by preparing our graduates for success in competitive national and global economies through contemporary professional development and career planning resources and programming.

Improving Graduate Program Diversity and Inclusion

Fostering a diverse and inclusive community is fundamental to our commitment to graduate education. Laney EDGE (Emory Diversifying Graduate Education) partnered and led several initiatives over the course of the year that addressed a wide range of themes to address student needs.

- In collaboration with the LGS Professional Development and Career Planning, LGS created virtual "Fireside Chats." The fireside chats were conducted in alignment with Emory University's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic vision.
- Our Summer 2020 undergraduate research experience, LGS-SOAR, transitioned to a virtual format and host over 200 non-Emory undergraduates from historically underrepresented groups of students in graduate education. Additionally, over 15 current LGS students helped to ensure the success of this program. For Summer 2021, LGS-SOST was able to resume the on-campus format.
- LGS-EDGE facilitated much-needed conversations around race and social justice at the program, school, and University levels.
- Fall 2020 was spent implementing action around race and differences and equity discussions over the summer. LGS was instrumental in conversations around the review of University policy changes to ensure inclusivity.
- LGS-EDGE partnered with Campus Life to establish a more succinct and robust mechanism for reporting bias incidents and bringing support to those affected.
- LGS EDGE Fellows and Ambassadors virtually attended over 15 national conferences dedicated to recruiting students for the class of 2021, with great success.
- LGS-EDGE hosted its second annual preview visitation, Learning about Laney, with faculty and students representing over 35 programs.
- LGS-EDGE also hosted the Inaugural Research Symposium on Racial and Social Disparities, Inequities, and Injustice planned by EDGE volunteers. The symposium had presentations from LGS students from all parts of campus with incredible faculty panels about how their scholarly work interfaces with race and social justice.
- LGS-EDGE nominated and participated in the national induction of our first two cohorts of scholars to the [National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society](#).

- LGS partnered with the Campus Life Office of RACE to design and fund a mentoring program, P2P Connect (Peer to Peer), geared towards connecting LGS students in their first two years with more advanced LGS students. The program is founded on an omni-mentoring theme and aims to allow all members to participate to support student success.

LGS continues to allocate supplemental stipend support to recruit students from historically underrepresented groups through LGS Admissions Fellowships—Centennial Scholars, Women in Natural Sciences, and the Initiative for Maximizing Student Development.

Beyond the work above to support increased diversity in graduate cohorts and advance faculty commitments to creating climates that are inclusive, LGS places a high priority on ensuring environments where students can do their best work. The tragic murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmad Arbery, and many other black and brown individuals brought our academic community to renewed commitments for racial equity and social justice. We must now take on the impact on our students and the work to address how faculty at the graduate program level prepare and execute agendas and programming to address climate, racial equity, and social justice. Resources within LGS must be newly dedicated to advance these goals as part of our DEI mission.

Professional Development and Career Planning (PDCP)

Whether in education, public service, or private enterprise, graduate education is a steppingstone to a professional career. LGS recognizes the profound impact that the right professional development resources and training can have on students. We offer a range of professional development and career planning programming that encourages students to develop their professional skills and engage with broader professional communities.

We continue to offer programs that allow students to:

- **Sharpen professional skills** related to grant writing, communication, research, teaching, and more;
- **Explore careers** within the academy and beyond the professoriate, and connect with successful alumni who have used their degrees to great professional success;
- **Manage the job search** through advanced preparation and a plan to navigate the search process;
- **Explore fellowship and grant opportunities**, from advanced fellowships offered by LGS and Emory partners to external opportunities that build professional capacity;
- **Master the art of teaching** and gain experience with the proven and cutting-edge pedagogical tools;

- **Establish a foundational understanding of ethics** and the responsible conduct of research;
- Learn how to **build successful mentoring relationships**.

In 2020-21, Assistant Dean for Professional Development and Career Planning (PDCP) Dr. Rob Pearson welcomed new staff members, Dr. Mike Suh (LGS '18) as Assistant Director and Ashley Turner as Program Coordinator.

Staff enhancements have supported increased program offerings.

Of special note:

- Group trainings and workshops now number about 25 per semester and feature numerous speakers who bring expertise in working with graduate students.
- PDCP also provides access to numerous [online resources](#) at Emory to support student professional development, including an online course on using LinkedIn, and VersatilePhD, a tool that helps PhDs identify, prepare for, and excel in diverse career paths.
- The high impact [career coaching program](#) featuring two professional career counselors, committed to understanding the graduate student experience and graduate pathways continues to provide one-on-one and group coaching;
- Fruitful partnerships with Emory units provide students with fresh opportunities for professional development and career preparation. Our partners have included the Office of Postdoctoral Education (OPE) and the Center for Integrated Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL), the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship (ECDS), and the Emory Career Center. For example, with OPE, PDCP is piloting [the NIH Becoming a Resilient Scientist Series](#), a necessary program at any time, and most especially in the time of COVID.
- The [Mellon Interventions Project \(MI\)](#), funded by a grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, provides humanities and humanistically oriented social sciences doctoral students with exposure to professional competencies that integrate public scholarship into doctoral training as well as graduate teaching and research endeavors. Under the leadership of Professor Walter S. Mellon, Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Art History and Director of the William and Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, MI sponsored student remote “attendance” at several residencies at the National Humanities Center in 2020 and 2021 and will do so again in Summer 2021 and Winter 2021-22.
- MI also sponsored the Inaugural Public Humanities Seminar in Spring 2020 and will do so again in Spring 2022. COVID forced a quick, creative pivot for programming. The circumstances are described in an article co-authored by Ben Reiss, Professor and Chair of English and three students, and published in December 2020. Due to the suspension of travel and on-campus gatherings forced by COVID, unexpended funds will allow the continuation of MI programming beyond the grant's end date.

LGS leadership has been fully engaged in national conversations about doctoral students' career trajectories. Having received initial funding from the Council of Graduate School (CGS) Pathways Project to conduct surveys of current students and alumni, LGS plans to continue data collection and analysis now that the grant is over. We are grateful for collaboration from the Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support.

The Professional Development and Career Planning (PDCP) team maintained a high level of engagement with students and faculty while also pivoting all of its activities to an online format. TATTO 600, the required training for all incoming Teaching Assistants, evolved to encompass new teaching and learning approaches. In addition to taking place through diverse modalities such as recorded videos, live conversation, asynchronous discussion, faculty-led microteaching, and interactive online course modules, the course also evolved to center the topics of inclusive pedagogy and online teaching in its learning objectives.

We are so proud of the contributions of Teaching Assistants and Graduate Instructors to Emory's ecosystem of teaching and learning. Our TAs and GIs navigated entirely new challenges during Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 and moved forward during long stretches of uncertainty while demonstrating an unwavering commitment to their students. Many of them opted into special trainings in teaching and learning beyond TATTO 600. Of particular note, PDCP co-sponsored the Summer 2020 training opportunity Emory Foundations of Online Teaching and Teaching, Pedagogy, Curriculum Plus Research (TPC+R), offered through the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship, which brought special training opportunities in teaching to nearly 100 students. Furthermore, two of our most experienced Dean's Teaching Fellows were featured in the new Bill and Martha Dobes Series for Excellence in Teaching. They will engage our LGS community of teachers in their innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

The required training for new doctoral students, JPE 600, also took place entirely online and involved a deep level of engagement with ethical topics from diverse faculty experts from a range of disciplines. The course also provided greater visibility for JPE Ambassadors, advanced graduates student leaders invested in the JPE program, who held directed conversations about mentoring and navigating graduate school with incoming graduate students.

The JPE 610 series, overseen by the new Assistant Director of PDCP, Dr. Mike Suh, has taken an opportunity to bring national conversations related to ethics and graduate education to our LGS community within the framework of the Jones Program in Ethics. Two notable guest speakers include Dr. Katina Rogers, author of *Putting the Humanities PhD to Work: Thriving in and Beyond the Classroom*, and Dr. Julie Posselt, author of *Equity in Science: Representation, Culture, and the Dynamics of Change in Graduate Education*.

Together, TATTO 600 and JPE 600 represent an important moment for our LGS community; these courses brought together over 75 faculty, staff, and student leaders from every area of the Laney Graduate School.

LGS was also pleased to announce that the Professional Development Support Funds (PDS) program would begin accepting applications for the 2020-2021 academic year after a temporary suspension of funds due to travel restrictions. The [updated 2020-21 PDS Handbook](#) included information regarding PDS and preparing applications for upcoming deadlines. Policies regarding travel due to COVID-19 aligned with the latest [University guidelines](#).

In response to the increased academic needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, a special PDS update was also implemented for the 2020-21 academic year. PDS funds in the research category could be used to support materials that were previously ineligible, such as software and research books/articles.

LGS is also pleased to report the move to hybrid TATTO and JPE workshops in preparation for Fall term 2021. Innovations to these programs, from newly designed approaches adjusting to pandemic conditions, were found to have sustainable platforms to better meet the time needs of both new and returning students.

Admissions

The public health measures associated with the pandemic gained force just as the admissions season for Fall 2020 was in its final phase and continued through the admissions cycle for Fall 2021. LGS faced a succession of challenges concerning admission:

- The move to remote education, first for Spring, then for Summer, and eventually for Fall and Spring of the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Changes in the lives of new students, including travel restrictions that forced many first-year students to study remotely.
- Rapid changes in visa rules and regulations.

In response, LGS developed clear options for new students to defer enrollment or to enroll remotely, working with programs to understand whether each could accommodate fully remote enrollment, and providing admitted applicants a clear set of options from which to choose.

LGS also adjusted our standard policy on funding for PhD students who were unable to travel to the U.S. in time for the start of Fall term (who had the option of enrolling remotely).

With the Office of International Student and Scholar Services, LGS supported new international students in a changing visa landscape, working to keep them informed and

to help them understand what their options for enrollment or deferral would mean in practice.

We started Fall 2020 with a robust first-year cohort of 389 new doctoral and master's students, along with a record number of 58 new students who deferred enrollment. Several of the deferred students were able to join us for Spring 2021, and many more are scheduled to join us in the Fall of 2021.

Our experience with international applicants and students largely mirrors the national experience. The Council of Graduate School's [2020 CGS International Graduate Applications and Enrollment](#) report (to which we contribute data) shows that international graduate students' first-time enrollment fell by 39 percent. Ours fell by 32 percent, and international students went from 32 percent of the incoming cohort to 20 percent.

Programs across the LGS were affected. The greatest impact was on the master's program in Computer Science. Its enrollment is about 90 percent international students. In Fall 2020, only one new student enrolled: all others either declined or deferred enrollment.

Given the role that visa policies and perceptions about the climate for international students played in last year's developments, we are pleased to note that our international applications remain at the high levels of the recent past. Both our number and share of international applicants are slightly higher than in recent years. The master's program in Computer Science received roughly as many applications this year as last year, and as in past years over 90 percent are from international applicants. At this point, we see no indications that the turmoil of the 2020 admissions season has deterred international applicants from applying to Emory and the Laney Graduate School.

We also note that our one new PhD program for Fall 2021 enrollment, Global Health and Development, received 150 applications in its first year of accepting applications. The new addition speaks to the strength of interdisciplinary study created by partnerships among existing social science programs and the public health sciences for PhD training at Emory and to the efforts of faculty and others to promote this new program, in particular.

Recruitment efforts for Fall 2021 enrollment transitioned to a fully virtual format. Several recruitment videos were developed and intended for use by all programs in the recruiting process. Recruitment videos include:

- [The Graduate Campus Tour Video](#): This video features a virtual version of the traditional walking tours normally available to recruiting visitors in person.

- [The Campus Highlights Video](#): This video is a short collection of various campus views, together with basic facts about LGS. It is most useful at an early stage of recruiting.
- The remaining series of four videos include:
 - [The LGS Community](#)
 - [Student Reflections: Memories](#)
 - [Student Reflections: Research](#)
 - [Student Reflections: Teaching](#)

These videos are compiled and available on the [Look at Laney page](#). Each video was created to offer a glimpse into graduate student life at LGS and as a way to virtually engage recruits in conversations about LGS and about different aspects of a graduate student's career. We know that at least one department in Emory College shared the videos with faculty candidates.

In sum, as LGS closed out the Spring 2021 term, we remained steadfast in ensuring the health and safety of our campus community while maintaining the highest quality graduate experiences and advancing our core mission.

Student Affairs

We expanded our pre-orientation Canvas and conducted our first remote orientation just in time to welcome Emory's new president Dr. Gregory Fenves, and the new LGS Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Jennifer Cason. Dr. Cason also added a new Assistant Director of Student Affairs and Wellness, Claire Beaudro.

We continued to work closely with academic programs and the Emory community to find solutions for students impacted by the pandemic. A wide range of efforts provided academic support for students in isolation and quarantine. LGS embraced academic continuity collaborations to ensure technology needs were addressed. University protocols were adapted and leveraged to ensure the health and wellness of LGS students.

LGS recognized that the graduate student experience was unprecedented and that making academic progress and reaching milestones such as candidacy required new research timelines and realities.

Student affairs coordinated with the Laney Graduate Student Council and graduate faculty to ensure essential tasks such as Honor and Conduct hearings could be conducted remotely.

Graduate Student Affairs-related topics were recognized, routed, and supported through the administration of the Emory Forward fund and by building solidarity across the Emory community.

International Visibility/International Student Support/English Language Support Program

The Laney Graduate School remains committed to maintaining international visibility abroad and supporting current international and multilingual students in Atlanta. Although exchanges were suspended due to COVID-19, LGS has continued partnership agreements with Peking University, Queensland University, University of the Western Cape, and Nanjing University. We continue to participate in programs that support international students, such as The China Scholarship Council, and offer our own Women in the Natural Sciences Admissions Award that is open to exceptional international women graduate students in science.

LGS also maintains a graduate student exchange program with the Freie Universität Berlin (FUB), one of Germany's leading research universities. Studying abroad assists students in gaining many professional and personal experiences, as well as new language skills. This program collaboration promotes strong academic and cultural ties. Based on a competitive application process, one student will be selected to represent Emory at the FUB for the 2021-22 academic year.

LGS understands the challenges faced by our international scholars both here and abroad. To address these circumstances, we implemented the following initiatives, programs, and features to address and highlight these circumstances.

- As part of Emory's Stories of Resilience and Resolve, the greater Emory community learned about LGS student [Jung Jae Kim](#), a student in the Economics program who remained in Korea during his first year of graduate school. Over this past Spring, he continued to find innovative ways to study and has persevered even while attending classes at 2 a.m. due to time zone differences. This awareness of international students' struggles was recognized within our own English Language Support Program (ELSP), which shifted the majority of its spring course offerings to either early in the morning or late afternoon to accommodate our students, including those studying in Korea China, and Brazil.
- During the Spring 2021 term, ELSP offered 11 different writing and speaking courses serving programs across the Laney Graduate School (Biomedical Engineering, Biostatistics, Business, Chemistry, Computer Science and Informatics, Development Practice, Economics, Environmental Health Sciences, Epidemiology, Hispanic Studies, History, Mathematics, Nursing, Nutrition and Health Sciences, Political Science, Religion, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies).

As LGS continues to diversify globally, the ELSP program continues to evolve. Under the leadership of Dr. Mackenzie Bristow, the program has revised its mission and offerings to offer contemporary language support and continues to broaden its reach and access. Reflecting the complexity and richness of international and multilingual spaces, ELSP:

- holds weekly writing groups in partnership with the Emory Writing Program and;

- hosts a new Communication Workshop Series with the LGS Professional Development and Career Program to address essential skills such as presenting, body language, and networking for the remote environment.

ELSP continues to support the greater mission of the University by:

- providing access to English language training to postdoctoral researchers and employees;
- providing staff professional development training through partners such as ISSS (Workshop: Communicating Well with Multilingual Students and Colleagues – Jan. 14), and;
- offering short Summer 2021 coursework to all multilingual graduate and professional students across the University.

In response to the pandemic, the ELSP program, for the first time in 2020, provided all of its language assessment services remotely. The program conducted a total of 114 exams (including exemptions and screenings). Due to the success of this effort, ELSP will continue to hold its exams remotely and add additional optional testing days in June leading to better efficiency of time, flexibility, and response for students and programs.

International Student Support and Collaboration Efforts

More than 60 countries are represented in the LGS student body. Our alumni, faculty, and students are engaged and represented in research in nearly every corner of the globe. LGS graduate programs partner with leading international organizations and networks to offer our students field-based opportunities across various platforms and programs.

Faculty Governance and Academic Affairs

Despite the extraordinary times brought about by COVID, the LGS graduate faculty continued the important work of curriculum development, revision, and renewal. In 2020-21, the Graduate Executive Council proposed three new programs, seven program revisions, and four new courses.

In addition, the Executive Council discussed and then endorsed the Council of Graduate School's Statement of Principles and Commitments Supporting the Mental Health and Well Being of Graduate Students. Long a concern of LGS, mental health among graduate students is of crucial importance in the age of COVID. LGS leadership is gratified by the depth of support among the LGS Executive Council, Directors of Graduate Studies and Program Directors, and the larger Emory community.

Alumni Engagement

LGS engaged with our alumni in creative ways in response to the pandemic. We transformed our events and engagements into virtual formats. We have seen our alumni in faculty roles demonstrate innovatively, modified teaching approaches in the

classroom, and in settings beyond the academy, address social justice and racial equity, and generously serve vulnerable populations in the field.

Additional LGS alumni engagement efforts are summarized below.

- LGS participated in Homecoming 2020 with a large variety of virtual programming and activities throughout the weekend. Students, faculty, and staff had the opportunity to engage and network with over 3500 Emory alumni participants. These participants also made 430 gifts of philanthropic support.
- LGS also participated in #GivingTuesdayNow, the global day of giving and unity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through virtual donation requests via video and social media outreach, alumni gave directly to initiatives and funds that would support our graduate students' needs.
- LGS launched the first-ever Laney Alumni Connections e-newsletter in September 2020. This newsletter is published bi-monthly and reaches approximately 10,000 LGS alumni around the world. Included in the newsletter are campus updates, alumni features and highlights, messages and updates from the Dean, and a calendar of virtual events to increase engagement and alumni presence.
- LGS donor-funded priorities continue in three key areas: professional development, diversity and inclusion, and graduate fellowships. Support and partnership with alumni in meeting these goals helps us forge ahead as a model for advancing graduate education.

LGS alumni and donors are collectively one of our greatest strengths, and we are grateful for their support and partnership in mentorship and engagement with our students. Recent alumni achievements include:

- [Dr. Tressie McMillan Cottom, 15G](#), received a 2020 MacArthur Fellowship in recognition of her work to shape discourse on issues related to race, gender, education, and digital technology.
- [Dr. Fahamu Pecou, 18G](#), is an interdisciplinary artist and scholar whose paintings, performance art, and academic work addresses concerns around contemporary representations of Black men and how these images impact both the reading and performance of Black masculinity.
- [Representative Dr. Jasmine Clark, 13G](#), is serving her second term in the Georgia State House of Representatives, District 108.
- [Dr. Scott Sprenger, 95G](#), is President of the American University of Rome.

As I close this presentation, it marks my final Dean's Address. In November of 2020, Provost Love announced that I would step down in August 2021. I extend my sincerest well wishes and support to Vice Provost and Dean designate, Dr. Kimberly Jacob Arriola, who will take on the leadership of this precious Emory academic unit, a unit central to Emory's ambitions for transformational leadership and global eminence.

It has been a distinct honor for me to serve as Vice Provost and Dean. We have a great graduate school and after 15 years, I continue to marvel at the brilliance of Emory faculty, the creative genius of our students, and the generous dedication of staff across the LGS. The Laney community is extraordinary in its commitment to scholarship, to research, and to service, all dedicated to promoting the global public good.

Serving the graduate project at Emory has also been a great joy. It is always a joy to hear the excitement in the voices of our students as they describe their work. And it is a similar joy to hear the pride in our faculty's voices as they discuss their student's accomplishments. It has also been a privilege to work with so many dedicated staff across the university who bring care and creativity to the important work of supporting Laney Graduate School faculty and students.

I have learned much during my time in this role. Working to advance and enliven graduate education at Emory became a passion, a commitment of transformational service to our students and faculty and staff. And, in this time your commitments and values deepened my appreciation for the scale of work that great research universities do.

In closing, the state of the Laney Graduate School is strong, and its future is undoubtedly bright as I pass the torch to our new Dean Kimberly Jacob Arriola, who has been a great partner to me and others in LGS as a DGS, an Executive Council member, and as RSPH Senior Associate Dean.

With greatest sincerity, thank you for this partnership. Thank you for all you continue to do for LGS and for Emory.