

TOWARDS A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY RENAISSANCE: THE FUTURE OF BENGAL'S PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY

Fifth Report of the Presidency Mentor Group, July 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The members of the Presidency Mentor Group gathered in Kolkata on July 15 and 16, 2013, for a formal meeting. Our aim remains the transformation of Presidency University into a world-class research and teaching institution by the time of its 200th anniversary in 2017. In this, our fifth, report, we offer our assessment of what has been accomplished in the last two years. We suggest the outline of a roadmap of what needs to be done in stages to keep up the momentum towards reaching our goal in about three and a half years from now.

AN OUTSTANDING AND DIVERSE FACULTY

[Terms of Reference No. 4: To define search procedures and the constitution of search committees to make the best faculty appointments at the levels of professor, associate professor and assistant professor in order to create an outstanding and diverse faculty.]

Excellent progress has been made in recruiting an outstanding and diverse faculty capable of cutting-edge research and high-quality teaching that we had identified in our first report as the top priority. The outstanding scholars who came as subject experts have seen for themselves what is happening at Presidency and this has enhanced the University's reputation throughout India and beyond. We wish to place on record our deepest gratitude to them for investing so much of their time and energy in the Presidency selection process. Nearly 150 new faculty members of Presidency University have been selected in a period of 15 months. As of July 14, 2013, 14 Professors and 107 Associate and Assistant Professors were working at Presidency and another Professor and 21 Associate and Assistant Professors had sent acceptances, making for a total strength of 143 faculty members and accounting for 43% of the total sanctioned faculty positions. The average age of the Professors who have joined is 53.2 years and the average age of the Associate and Assistant Professors who have joined is 36.5 years. A talented faculty with an average age of below 40 years bodes well for the future. We, therefore, have every reason to applaud both the process and the outcome of faculty recruitment conducted since April 2012. On July 15, 2013, the University Council ratified the appointment of twelve more faculty members.

With nearly 150 excellent appointments already made, we now have a talented and young faculty. We had recommended that in addition to excellence due attention needs to be paid to the question of diversity. We are

happy to note that very good appointments have been made at the assistant professor level in the scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, and other backward classes reserved categories as well as of under-represented minorities.

Announcements seeking nominations and applications for the five Distinguished University Professorships should now be published in national newspapers as well as the *Times Higher Education Supplement* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. We are pleased to note that following our recommendation in our fourth report the state government has by an amendment to the PU Act provided for 15 department-based Heritage Chaired Professorships – one each in 15 departments. We recommend that the Heritage Chaired Professorships be named as follows: Bengali: Suniti Kumar Chatterjee; Biological Sciences: Sibatosh Mukherjee; Chemistry: Prafulla Chandra Ray; Economics: Amartya Sen; English: Gayatri Spivak; Geography: to be decided; Geology: Ajit Kumar Saha; Hindi: Rajendra Prasad; History: Ashin Dasgupta; Mathematics: Syamadas Mukhopadhyaya; Philosophy: Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya; Physics: Meghnad Saha; Political Science: A.K. Fazlul Huq; Sociology and Social Anthropology: Benoy Kumar Sarkar; Statistics: Anil Bhattacharya.

A STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A SPECIAL STATUS

[Terms of Reference No. 11: To explore whether Presidency should continue to be a State university or seek the status of a Central university or aspire to be counted as one among the new innovation universities.]

In light of the measures taken by the Chief Minister along with the Education and Finance Departments, we reiterate that our first preference is to allow Presidency University to flourish as a state university with a special status with due acknowledgement of its unique heritage. If there are insurmountable fiscal, financial or legal obstacles to providing competitive salaries and benefits within the state university system, we would like representatives of the state government to discuss with us and the university authorities ways in which Presidency as a center of excellence can achieve parity in these respects with the top central institutions. Our shared goal is to build a world-class educational institution located in West Bengal. Meanwhile, the state government should permit Presidency to supplement the total emoluments of exceptional faculty from its own resources. We also recommend instituting prizes and incentives for faculty who have articles accepted in top international referred journals, publish books from leading university presses, or receive international recognition for new discoveries or inventions. The newly amended PU Act allows the University to utilize funds raised from sources other than the state government “for providing honorarium to the teachers of the University for their outstanding performances in the field of research, publications, etc. with the approval of the Governing Board”.

AN EFFICIENT AND ATTRACTIVE ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

[Terms of Reference No. 10: To suggest ways of making rich library resources available to faculty and students, building laboratories for scientific research, and equipping the campus with state-of-the-art information technology.]

We are glad that with the support of an infrastructure development grant from the state government and some funding from the UGC it has been possible to begin the renovation of the old campus. This work should be undertaken with a sense of utmost urgency. The Biological Sciences CRIF space should be readied in six months and the Physics CRIF covering a larger space completed within a maximum of two years.

The second campus will have research labs, classrooms, lecture theaters, faculty housing, Ph.D. student housing, a conference center and an administrative support building. A boundary wall around the second campus should be constructed on a priority basis. We recommend that the new campus be constructed in three phases. It would be feasible to fully construct Phase 1A and a good part of Phase 1B to make the second campus functional by the time of the bicentennial in 2017. Phase 1A will have a total usable floor area of 2,55,088 square feet at a total cost including construction and interior fitment of Rs 84 crore – Rs 42 crore for 2014-2015 and Rs 42 crore for 2015-2016. We recommend that the foundation stone be laid on Foundation Day, January 20, 2014, Phase 1B will have a total usable floor area of 88,176 square feet at a total cost of Rs 30 crore – Rs 15 crore in 2016-2017 and Rs 15 crore in 2017-2018. The total cost for construction and internal fitment over ten years will be Rs 468 crore. The phasing takes into account both a realistic pace of construction and funds availability.

We recommend planning for an environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing campus with green buildings, taking into account the Eco-park just across the highway. In addition to the state and the center, funding should be actively sought from private donors with naming opportunities for buildings, floors of buildings, halls, classrooms and laboratories.

THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

[Terms of Reference No. 1: To craft an appropriate governance structure for Presidency University enabling its most distinguished alumni to play a positive role in restoring it to a position of academic excellence.]

We welcome the amendment to the Presidency University Act passed by the state legislature in March 2013 providing for a governance structure recommended in our fourth report. The notification of this amendment in the Gazette dated June 12, 2013, has been sent to Presidency University on July 19, 2013 and received on July 23, 2013.

THE PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY ACT

[Terms of Reference No. 2: To propose amendments to the Presidency University Act, as necessary, to facilitate achieving its goals of excellence and equity.]

Now that the University has received the Gazette notification, the statutes of Presidency University will have to be drawn up in consonance with the new provisions of the Act. The transitory provisions of the Act need to stay in place until the Appointed Day to be announced by the state government.

STATUTES AND UNIVERSITY OFFICERS

[Terms of Reference No. 1: To revise and frame Statutes of the University as they relate to its governance structure, the process of appointing the Vice-Chancellor and other officers of the University, and the conduct of academic affairs.]

With the Gazette notification having reached their hands on July 23, 2013, the University authorities should frame the statutes, ordinances and regulations as expeditiously as possible.

Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar has been highly successful in her leadership role since her appointment on October 18, 2011. Our meeting with 76 faculty members on July 16, 2013, provided ample evidence of how much she is admired. The talented young faculty members who have recently joined the University have full faith in her and keenly want to see her at the helm. She has both the academic vision and the fund-raising ability that are required of University leaders in today's world. We need continuity and stability at Presidency until and beyond the Appointed Day. On the advice of Professor Amartya Sen, we unanimously and respectfully request the Chancellor in consultation with the Education Minister to extend Malabika Sarkar's term as Vice-Chancellor until June 30, 2015, by invoking the relevant provisions of Sections 55 and 57 of the Presidency University Act. This will be in the best interest of a new university where the first constitutions of authority have not yet been completed. After the Appointed Day a high-powered search committee should be instituted under the terms of the PU Act to conduct a national and international search for a distinguished Vice-Chancellor to take charge from July 1, 2015, for a four-year term. This will make for an orderly transition once the University has reached a steady state.

We are grateful to Shrimati Mamata Banerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister, for the courtesy extended to the Chairperson and her decisions regarding land for the second campus, the Distinguished University Professorships and the guaranteed annual supplements for faculty in the form of research and professional development funds as well as moving expenses for faculty from outside West Bengal.

**TOWARDS A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY RENAISSANCE:
THE FUTURE OF BENGAL'S PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY
Fifth Report of the Presidency Mentor Group, July 2013
FULL REPORT**

PREAMBLE

Exactly two years since we began our deliberations to come up with a set of recommendations on how to **reshape Presidency as a center of excellence**, we are pleased to present our fifth report. Our first, second, third and fourth reports were submitted in August 2011, January 2012, August 2012, and January 2013 respectively. **Our aim remains the transformation of Presidency University into a world-class research and teaching institution by the time of its 200th anniversary in 2017. In this, our fifth, report, we offer our assessment of what has been accomplished in the last two years. Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar has played an exceptional leadership role and Presidency University owes a deep debt of gratitude to her. We suggest the outline of a roadmap of what needs to be done in stages to keep up the momentum towards reaching our goal in about three and a half years from now.**

The members of the Presidency Mentor Group gathered in Kolkata on July 15 and 16, 2013, for a formal meeting. We reviewed the implementation of our first four sets of recommendations and formulated a number of new suggestions that are put forth in this succinct fifth report, which should be read together with our more wide-ranging and elaborate first four reports. This report has been given final shape after further consultation among PMG members by phone and email. We trust it will be given the same serious consideration as our earlier reports.

ACTION TAKEN AND TO BE TAKEN ON THE FIRST FOUR PMG REPORTS

1. We are pleased that the Chief Minister and the Government of West Bengal have accepted our recommendation that Presidency should be a unique state university with a special status to be nurtured as **a center of excellence**.
2. We had recommended recruiting half a dozen strong academic leaders in the natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities as **Distinguished University Professors**. Following a meeting with the PMG Chairman on January 2, 2012, the Chief Minister personally approved and announced four such positions at Presidency University named after iconic figures in the modern history of Bengal on January 4, 2012. These have been described as follows: Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Distinguished University

- Professorship in the Natural Sciences; Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore Distinguished University Professorship in the Humanities (in the field of literature and cultural studies); Swami Vivekananda Distinguished University Professorship in the Humanities (in the field of philosophy, broadly defined); and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Distinguished University Professorship in the Social Sciences (in the fields of economics, history and/or political science). The Chief Minister offered a fifth position named after Kazi Nazrul Islam and the Government of West Bengal accepted our suggestion to define this position to be in the field of Inter-Cultural Dialogue and Peace Studies. We recommend launching searches to fill these positions based on procedures described below in the section on recruiting an outstanding and diverse faculty. We re-iterate the recommendation we made in our third and fourth reports that two more Distinguished University Professorships in the natural and mathematical sciences be created as soon as possible.
3. Excellent progress has been made in recruiting an outstanding and diverse faculty capable of cutting-edge research and high-quality teaching that we had identified in our first report as the top priority. We are delighted that the state government approved and the university authorities adopted the transparent and rigorous selection process suggested by us. **The outstanding scholars who came as subject experts have seen for themselves what is happening at Presidency and this has enhanced the University's reputation throughout India and beyond. We wish to place on record our deepest gratitude to them for investing so much of their time and energy in the Presidency selection process.** We warmly congratulate Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar for conducting a gigantic and complex faculty recruitment process at the highest level of professional competence. More than 7000 applications were received. The first selection committee met on April 11, 2012. **Nearly 150 new faculty members of Presidency University have been selected in a period of 15 months.** Most have accepted and many have joined. The acceptance rate of offers has been very high as only 9 regretted in response to 160 offers extended. However, 8 faculty members left for various reasons, at least two citing dissatisfaction with the salary level. **As of July 14, 2013, 14 Professors and 107 Associate and Assistant Professors were working at Presidency and another Professor and 21 Associate and Assistant Professors had sent acceptances, making for a total strength of 143 faculty members and accounting for 43% of the total sanctioned faculty positions filled within a period of 15 months. The average age of the Professors who have joined is 53.2 years and the average age of the Associate and Assistant Professors who have joined is 36.5 years. A talented faculty with an average age of below 40 years bodes well for the future. We, therefore, have every reason to applaud both the process and the outcome of faculty recruitment conducted over the last 15 months. On July 15, 2013, the University Council ratified the appointment of twelve more faculty members.**

4. **In order to attract the best faculty to Presidency as a unique institution and center of excellence, we had emphasized the need to offer emoluments including medical and other benefits comparable and commensurate with central and central government funded institutions.** The decision of the Chief Minister to create a provision for a guaranteed annual supplement in the form of faculty research and professional development funds – Rs 4 lakh for Distinguished University Professors, Rs 3 lakh for Professors, Rs 2 lakh for Associate Professors, and Rs 1 lakh for Assistant Professors – is an important step in the right direction. Our conversations with the new faculty confirm that they find this scheme of incentives attractive. The offer of moving expenses for faculty relocating from outside West Bengal has sent the right signal about our intention to make Presidency a magnet for talent from across India and the world. Much more will need to be done to compete effectively with institutions in other states and central government funded autonomous institutions, such as, IIM-Kolkata, IIT-Kharagpur, ISI-Kolkata, Bose Institute, IISER-Kalyani and the central university Visva Bharati in our own state. **We urge the state government to find a way to fully implement our recommendations in this regard. Now that we are being successful in recruiting outstanding faculty with record of research and potential for research of genuine quality, our next challenge will be to retain them. We must attract and retain top-notch faculty with proven excellence in research at the international level. In the absence of complete parity with central institutes in regard to salary, allowances, and perquisites, it will be extremely difficult to recruit and retain the very best faculty, especially in the sciences. Presidency urgently needs to upgrade its infrastructure and research facilities. We are aware that other institutions in India have their eyes on the best scholar-teachers we are bringing to Presidency.** We commend Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar for arranging transit accommodation for faculty coming from outside Kolkata. In terms of medical benefits, we are glad to note that the university authorities are taking the lead among state universities in creating a cost-effective and high-quality group medical insurance scheme in which the employer will contribute a substantial fraction of the annual premium. The university needs to have an infirmary on campus as well as a day care center for children.
5. As part of dramatically upgrading the academic infrastructure, we had recommended the enhancement of IT capability on campus. **A new IT hub has been set up in the Baker Building.** We congratulate Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar for taking the initiative to create a new website, that enabled, among other things, candidates to file online applications for faculty positions. A very large number of candidates based in foreign countries were efficiently interviewed via video conference through a new streamlined system. **We appreciate the infrastructure development grant provided by the state government to begin the work of refurbishing the 100 year-old Baker Building and the setting up of suitable space for central**

research instrumentation facilities that we had recommended in our fourth report.

6. We had stressed the need for additional space in our earlier reports. We are grateful to the Chief Minister for taking personal interest in the matter. We thank the Government of West Bengal for providing a ten-acre plot at a good location in Rajarhat for Presidency's second campus. We provide detailed recommendations on this topic below in the relevant section of this report.
7. While several challenges remain and will have to be addressed in the future, the new sense of purpose in rejuvenating Presidency as a center of excellence and the substantive achievements of the last two years are encouraging.

A STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A SPECIAL STATUS

[Terms of Reference No. 11: To explore whether Presidency should continue to be a State university or seek the status of a Central university or aspire to be counted as one among the new innovation universities.]

In light of the measures taken by the Chief Minister along with the Education and Finance Departments, we reiterate that our first preference is to allow Presidency University to flourish as a state university with a special status with due acknowledgement of its unique heritage. This should not prevent Presidency from seeking additional financial support from various central government agencies, whether from the University Grants Commission, the Planning Commission for the 12th plan period, or a one-time special budgetary allocation from the central government as described in our first report. **If there are insurmountable fiscal, financial or legal obstacles to providing competitive salaries and benefits within the state university system, we would like representatives of the state governments to discuss with us and the university authorities ways in which Presidency as a center of excellence can achieve parity in these respects with the top central institutions. Our shared goal is to build a world-class educational institution located in West Bengal. Meanwhile, the state government should permit Presidency to supplement the total emoluments of exceptional faculty from its own resources. We also recommend instituting prizes and incentives for faculty who have articles accepted in top international referred journals, publish books from leading university presses, or receive international recognition for new discoveries or inventions. The newly amended PU Act allows the University to utilize funds raised from sources other than the state government "for providing honorarium to the teachers of the University for their outstanding performances in the field of research, publications, etc. with the approval of the Governing Board".**

We are most grateful to the state government for providing land for the second campus. The cost of building this new campus will be substantial. We will need clarity from the state government on the extent to which it will be able to support the infrastructure development needs of Presidency Universities between now and the 200th anniversary in January 2017 on a year-to-year basis. This will

enable the drawing up of proposals to seek supplementary special project support from the central government and set fund-raising targets from private sources.

AN OUTSTANDING AND DIVERSE FACULTY

[Terms of Reference No. 4: To define search procedures and the constitution of search committees to make the best faculty appointments at the levels of professor, associate professor and assistant professor in order to create an outstanding and diverse faculty.]

We had stated in our first report that the first 100 faculty appointments will be of critical importance in shaping the future of Presidency University. We are very pleased that the recommendations in our first and second reports about the recruitment process and the composition of selection committees were taken on board in designing the faculty recruitment drive that has taken place during 2012-2013. **With nearly 150 excellent appointments already made, we now have a talented and young faculty.**

The following sentences in our second report bear repetition as part of the mission statement of the new Presidency: “We envisage Presidency University as a path-breaking institution of higher learning that will have a judicious balance and synergy between research and teaching. Presidency must be a place where the faculty will carry out first-rate research at the level of top institutions in India and, in time, the leading institutions in the world. The faculty should be encouraged to offer research-based teaching and inspire students to undertake research.”

Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar skillfully conducted a gigantic faculty recruitment exercise with a skeletal staff. **The pace at which appointments have been made is just right. It would not have been possible to move any faster without compromising on quality.** We are glad that very high standards of excellence have been maintained in making the faculty appointments.

We had recommended that in addition to excellence due attention needs to be paid to the question of diversity. We are happy to note that very good appointments have been made at the assistant professor level in the scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, and other backward classes reserved categories. Attention also needs to be paid to under-represented minorities and the maintenance of a healthy gender balance on the faculty. **We noted in our first report that Muslims forming over a quarter of the population in our state accounted for less than 2% of Presidency teachers in mid-2011. This serious problem of under-representation has begun to be addressed and a number of appointments have been from under-represented minorities.** The male to female ratio is 80:20 among Professors who have joined and it is 72:28 among Associate and Assistant Professors who have joined. We would like to see an improvement in the gender balance through future appointments.

We recommend that a provision be made for short-listed candidates to give job talks in the future. Now that a critical mass of faculty has been assembled, the views of the current faculty members of the relevant department should be taken into account in making the appointments. Interviewing all applicants with basic qualifications is not conducive towards substantive interactions with the very best candidates. We encourage a public discussion on the need for short-listing so that both the executive and judicial branches of government appreciate the merits of a transparent and rigorous shortlisting process. Advertisements from now on may indicate preferences for particular specializations in order to build balanced departments with adequate coverage of essential fields of knowledge. This does not preclude any deliberate decision to excel in certain sub-fields by creating a genuine depth of faculty expertise in those areas.

We understand that there has been a delay in announcing the search for the Distinguished University Professorships as the salaries sanctioned by the government fall short of the minimum recommended by the Presidency Mentor Group. The university authorities should go ahead with these searches by augmenting what the government has provided from private sources, if necessary. We request the state government to approve this course of action. We urgently need exceptional scholars as Distinguished University Professors to provide academic leadership in the various branches of learning. While we are grateful to the Government of West Bengal for generously providing funds for these positions, these are not quite sufficient for the scholars of real stature that we wish to attract to Presidency. **As a matter of principle, the salary scales for these distinguished academic positions should be delinked from the grades and ranks of the higher bureaucracy.** We have been given to understand that the basic salary of the Distinguished University Professors cannot be more than the basic salary of the Vice-Chancellor, even though that is not necessarily the case in centers of excellence in India and abroad. The total emoluments should be at the same level with the best available in India for similar positions in central institutes. Presidency University should supplement the funds provided by the government from its own resources. **We recommend that the initial total emoluments for the Distinguished University Professors should be at least Rs 172,000 (Rupees One Lakh Seventy Two Thousand) per month – comparable with the top bracket of the higher academic grade in central institutions - with a provision of annual increments at a rate of 5% to 7%. The distinguished scholars should be assured adequate time for research.**

Announcements seeking nominations and applications for the five Distinguished University Professorships should be published in national newspapers as well as the *Times Higher Education Supplement* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. In addition, an announcement of the Jagadish Chandra Bose Distinguished University Professorship ought to appear in *Nature and Science*. The Vice-Chancellor should assemble five high-level Search Committees, each with a membership of three senior and eminent scholars in the relevant branches of learning. We note that the amended PU

Act provides for one nominee of the PMG on each of these five search committees and also on the fifteen search committees for Heritage Professorships (see below). We are sending the names of the PMG nominees on these search committees confidentially to the Vice-Chancellor.

We once again give below the texts for the announcements for the five Distinguished University Professorships, having made a small amendment for the Tagore Professorship:

1. Presidency University seeks nominations and applications for the Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Distinguished University Professorship in the Natural Sciences. Candidates may be theoreticians or experimental scientists in the disciplines of physics, chemistry, mathematics, and the life sciences or cutting-edge inter-disciplinary scholars in these fields. A very strong publication record in international refereed journals is required. A distinguished scholar with at least twelve years of teaching and/or research experience who has acquired national recognition and international stature based on her/his academic contribution to the philosophy of the subject will be selected on the recommendation of a Search Committee of senior and eminent scholars specially appointed to review the candidates' work and lifetime achievements. Letters of nomination and expressions of interest should be sent to Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar, Presidency University, 86/1 College Street, Kolkata 700073, India (Email: vc@presiuniv.ac.in).
2. Presidency University seeks nominations and applications for the Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore Distinguished University Professorship in the Humanities. Candidates may be discipline-based or inter-disciplinary scholars in the fields of literature and cultural studies. A very strong publication record with at least two books or critical editions published by reputable academic presses and articles in international refereed journals is required. A distinguished scholar with at least twelve years of teaching and/or research experience who has acquired national recognition and international stature based on her/his academic contribution to the philosophy of the subject will be selected on the recommendation of a Search Committee of senior and eminent scholars specially appointed to review the candidates' work and lifetime achievements. Letters of nomination and expressions of interest should be sent to Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar, Presidency University, 86/1 College Street, Kolkata 700073, India (Email: vc@presiuniv.ac.in).
3. Presidency University seeks nominations and applications for the Swami Vivekananda Distinguished University Professorship in the Humanities. Candidates may be discipline-based or inter-disciplinary scholars in the field of philosophy, broadly defined. A very strong publication record with at least two books published by reputable academic presses and articles in international refereed journals is required. A distinguished scholar with at least twelve years of teaching and/or research experience who has acquired national recognition and international stature based on her/his academic

- contribution to the philosophy of the subject will be selected on the recommendation of a Search Committee of senior and eminent scholars specially appointed to review the candidates' work and lifetime achievements. Letters of nomination and expressions of interest should be sent to Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar, Presidency University, 86/1 College Street, Kolkata 700073, India (Email: vc@presiuniv.ac.in).
4. Presidency University seeks nominations and applications for the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Distinguished University Professorship in the Social Sciences. Candidates may be discipline-based or inter-disciplinary scholars in the fields of Economics, History and/or Political Science. A very strong publication record is required. Historians and political scientists should have at least two books published by reputable academic presses and articles in international refereed journals. Economists should have articles in the top international refereed journals. A distinguished scholar with at least twelve years of teaching and/or research experience who has acquired national recognition and international stature based on her/his academic contribution to the philosophy of the subject will be selected on the recommendation of a Search Committee of senior and eminent scholars specially appointed to review the candidates' work and lifetime achievements. Letters of nomination and expressions of interest should be sent to Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar, Presidency University, 86/1 College Street, Kolkata 700073, India (Email: vc@presiuniv.ac.in).
 5. Presidency University seeks nominations and applications for the Kazi Nazrul Islam Distinguished University Professorship in Inter-Cultural and Peace Studies. Candidates may be discipline-based or inter-disciplinary scholars in the humanities or the social sciences. A very strong publication record with at least two books published by reputable academic presses and articles in international refereed journals is required. A distinguished scholar with at least twelve years of teaching and/or research experience who has acquired national recognition and international stature based on her/his academic contribution to the philosophy of the subject will be selected on the recommendation of a Search Committee of senior and eminent scholars specially appointed to review the candidates' work and lifetime achievements. Letters of nomination and expressions of interest should be sent to Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar, Presidency University, 86/1 College Street, Kolkata 700073, India (Email: vc@presiuniv.ac.in).

We are pleased to note that following our recommendation in our fourth report the state government has by an amendment to the PU Act provided for 15 department-based Heritage Chaired Professorships – one each in 15 departments – with salary levels higher than the full Professorships and lower than the Distinguished University Professorships. This will enable Presidency to recruit and retain senior scholars of great merit who have shown or are displaying interest in joining the Presidency faculty. We recommend that the Heritage Chaired Professorships be named as follows: Bengali: Suniti Kumar Chatterjee; Biological Sciences: Sibatosh Mukherjee; Chemistry: Prafulla

Chandra Ray; Economics: Amartya Sen; English: Gayatri Spivak; Geography: to be decided; Geology: Ajit Kumar Saha; Hindi: Rajendra Prasad; History: Ashin Dasgupta; Mathematics: Syamadas Mukhopadhyaya; Philosophy: Krishna Chandra Bhattacharya; Physics: Meghnad Saha; Political Science: A.K. Fazlul Huq; Sociology and Social Anthropology: Benoy Kumar Sarkar; Statistics: Anil Bhattacharya.

We reaffirm our hope that the search and selection procedure outlined in our first two reports and this one will give way to the normal rules of university autonomy and faculty self-governance by 2017. The current faculty should begin to play a role in recruiting their colleagues with the help of outside experts. In all well-established, reputable universities in the world, a fine faculty usually knows how to replenish and augment itself.

We recognize that it will still take some time to reach the full faculty strength and there are particular challenges in recruitment faced by departments like Economics and Mathematics. To bridge the gap Presidency University should invite very capable guest faculty through contractual appointments for fixed terms as described in our first report.

VISITING PROFESSORS

[Terms of Reference No. 15: To create a provision for short courses to be taught by distinguished scholars based in other parts of the world as visiting professors.]

Scholars based in different parts of the world have expressed interest in teaching short courses at Presidency. Even though recruitment of a permanent faculty had to be the first priority, steps should be taken to invite a few visiting professors to teach in January 2014 and in July and August 2014.

A TALENTED AND DIVERSE STUDENT BODY

[Terms of Reference No. 5: To refine and streamline the admissions process in order to recruit the most talented students from all sections of society and the process for awarding scholarships and providing financial aid on the basis of merit and need.]

We are pleased to note the significant rise in student interest in seeking admission to Presidency University. We reaffirm the principles that ought to undergird the students admissions process at Presidency were outlined in our first report – outreach to schools in many regions, undergraduate admissions tests of a high standard, open competition among graduates from all universities for post-graduate admissions, and due attention to diversity on the student body. The current male to female ratio in the student body is 59:41. We would like to see it as close to 50:50 as possible. We refer readers to our fourth report for our views about a common

admissions test for post-graduate admission to all state universities mooted by the Higher Education Council. **The University must have a Placement Cell and maintain records of students' progression.**

We are glad that the bar on students who had to discontinue study after the bachelor's degree for more than two years has been lifted at Presidency. This is an important step towards inclusive higher education and rectifying the gender imbalance in institutions of higher learning.

DEPARTMENTAL REORGANIZATION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY INITIATIVES

[Terms of Reference No. 6: To suggest innovative and efficient ways of organizing Departments and Schools of the University enabling both disciplinary and inter-disciplinary appointments and courses of study.]

Following our recommendation and a workshop involving the faculty and senior biologists, a consolidated Department of Biological Sciences has been formed. Since the various branches of the biological sciences are highly interlinked in the twenty-first century, we believe that Presidency University, especially its students, will benefit from the integration of different departments and centers into a single Department of Biological Sciences.

Theoretical computer science will form a new stream in a revamped Mathematics Department. A focus on linguistics, complexity theory and algorithms, neglected in other Indian institutions, may enable Presidency to quickly emerge as a leader in this area.

In view of the outstanding new scholarship in the field of social and cultural anthropology, the Department of Sociology should be formally renamed the Department of Social Anthropology and Sociology as soon as possible.

We reaffirm our recommendation that the departments be structured under two Faculties – the Faculty of Natural and Mathematical Sciences and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities – each with a Dean. We welcome the appointments of Professor Somak Roy Chowdhury and Professor Shanta Datta as Interim Deans of the two Faculties until permanent Deans are selected following the state government's announcement of the Appointed Day. **We continue to encourage two or three University-wide research initiatives and the future establishment of a School of Public Policy. There should be a School of Languages in Presidency University offering instruction in a broad range of classical and modern languages.**

AN INTELLECTUALLY EXCITING CURRICULUM

[Terms of Reference No. 7: To propose a curricular structure and an intellectually exciting curriculum with a balance of lecture courses, seminars and tutorials and to

provide detailed guidelines for innovative syllabi in the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities and the arts.]

We refer the reader to our second report that dealt in detail with this topic. We welcome the acceptance of our recommendation to eliminate the distinction between honors and pass courses and to give students the flexibility to change their honors subject based on aptitude and performance at the end of the first year.

As the PMG we simply suggested the need for Presidency University to return to its original vision of being an institution imparting a genuine liberal arts education, especially in the undergraduate college. We limited ourselves to prescribing a broad structure for the curriculum, leaving the faculty with a great deal of autonomy to fashion their own courses. We commend the work of the faculty curriculum committee chaired by Professor Somak Roy Chowdhury that has enabled our recommendation for curricular reform to be put into place for the incoming class of July 2013. We are especially happy with the new offering of ten general education courses in the first two years and the requirement that science majors must take at least two general education courses in the humanities or social sciences and vice versa. **Some departments have formulated syllabi in consultation with outside experts at workshops while others have not yet done so. We recommend that all departments send their syllabi for external review by three senior scholars in their discipline. The curriculum should be enriched by a process of continuous renewal.**

We had mentioned in our second report that our vision for Presidency would be easier to implement if we had a four-year bachelors' degree. However, cognizant of the cost implications of such a move, we had been somewhat tentative about making that recommendation. We had noted that Presidency could be a trail blazer in pursuing a 12 (school) plus 4 (bachelors) and then doctoral program with the masters being an exit option after graduate-level coursework for those not continuing with doctoral dissertation research. We have followed the debates over the introduction of a four-year bachelors' degree at Delhi University. Any such move in Presidency should be fully discussed by the faculty and implemented only after adequate preparations have been made. Any diploma after two years should not be considered in a unitary university, such as, Presidency, which is a center of excellence. The issue is whether one should continue with a three years' bachelors' degree or switch to four years. Presidency should take the lead in discussions about a four-year bachelors' degree that should ideally be a matter of state or national policy. Since a Masters' degree is still a requirement for a University job under UGC rules, such a degree can be awarded on the way to a Ph.D. and not just as an exit option.

THE UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE AND GRADUATE STUDIES

[Terms of Reference No. 8: To define the relationship between the undergraduate College and the post-graduate Departments and Schools.]

We continue to encourage a synergistic relationship between undergraduate and graduate studies, including the employment of post-graduate students as teaching assistants or fellows in undergraduate courses. We have now recruited a number of faculty members with a high research profile who will wish to have doctoral students of their own. As we build small, but high-quality, Ph.D. programs in different fields, it will be necessary to make provision for a number of multi-year research studentships to support doctoral students.

THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

[Terms of Reference No. 9: To devise the most suitable academic calendar and consider whether to adopt a semester-system or year-long courses.]

We once again recommend the introduction of an intensive monsoon semester in July and August in partial overlap of the regular first semester and a winter semester in January in partial overlap of the regular second semester in order to introduce courses by distinguished visiting professors.

AN EFFICIENT AND ATTRACTIVE ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

[Terms of Reference No. 10: To suggest ways of making rich library resources available to faculty and students, building laboratories for scientific research, and equipping the campus with state-of-the-art information technology.]

In our earlier reports we have already made several concrete recommendations regarding space and infrastructure in the old historic College Street campus. Of the three heritage buildings – the Main Building, the Baker Building and the Eden Hindu Hostel Building – in the old campus, it is the centenary of the Baker Lab in 2013. It needs thorough refurbishment not just for historical reasons: it urgently needs upgrading to attract and retain outstanding scientists at Presidency in the future. We recommended the setting up of two central research instrumentation facilities in our fourth report. We are glad that with the support of an infrastructure development grant from the state government and some funding from the UGC it has been possible to begin the renovation of the old campus. **This work should be undertaken with a sense of utmost urgency. The Biological Sciences CRIF space should be readied in six months and the Physics CRIF covering a larger space completed within a maximum of two years. Transit space for faculty in these departments may be provided in the building being occupied by the civil PWD and in temporary cubicles along the corridors of the Baker Building.**

We need the Registrar and Finance Officer to play an enabling and facilitating role and clear away unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles. The University has filled some senior administrative positions, namely, Registrar, Finance Officer, Assistant Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Dean of Students and Senior Systems Analyst. There is an urgent need to fill the non-teaching posts for which formal sanction has not yet arrived. We request immediate action on the part of the state government in this regard.

The library should think of remote access and plan wi fi links. It may look for funds from the Union Ministry of Information Technology for in-house digitizing. A proposal has to be prepared for the treasures that PU libraries possess. We need to look at the opportunities provided by the National Knowledge Commission and the National Mission for Libraries (headed by Professor Deepak Pental) toward this end. The latter has drawn up a proposal for a National Virtual Library, which is now being assessed by the IT Ministry.

The second campus will have research labs, classrooms, lecture theaters, faculty housing, Ph.D. student housing, a conference center and an administrative support building. We had envisioned the recreation of the College Street atmosphere in one quarter of the second campus, albeit without the clanking and clattering of trams and other vehicular traffic. This would be a pedestrian zone with lively and well-designed cafes and bookshops. We would like this part of the campus to be open to the public. The other parts where academic facilities and residences are located will be private and more secure. **A boundary wall around the second campus should be constructed on a priority basis.**

We now recommend, having solicited the views of an architectural consultant, that the new campus be constructed in three phases. It would be feasible to fully construct Phase 1A and a good part of Phase 1B to make the second campus functional by the time of the bicentennial in 2017. Phase 1A will have a total usable floor area of 2,55,088 square feet at a total cost including construction and interior fitment of Rs 84 crore – Rs 42 crore for 2014-2015 and Rs 42 crore for 2015-2016. We recommend that the foundation stone be laid on Foundation Day, January 20, 2014, Phase 1B will have a total usable floor area of 88,176 square feet at a total cost of Rs 30 crore – Rs 15 crore in 2016-2017 and Rs 15 crore in 2017-2018. Phase 1C will have a total usable floor area of 2,01,436 square feet at a total cost of Rs 67 crore – Rs 33.5 crore in 2018-2019 and Rs 33.5 crore in 2019-2020. Phase 2 will have a total usable floor area of 3,90,888 square feet plus landscaping and site development for a total cost of Rs 152 crore - Rs 76 crore in 2020-2021 and Rs 76 crore in 2021-2022. Phase 3 will have a total usable floor area of 2,60,091 square feet and an open air theater at a total cost of Rs 135 crore - Rs 70 crore in 2022-2023 and Rs 65 crore in 2023-2024. **The total cost for construction and internal fitment over ten years will be Rs 468 crore (see Appendix and Drawings). The phasing takes into account both a realistic pace of construction and funds availability.**

We recommend planning for an environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing campus with green buildings, taking into account the Eco-park just across the highway. In addition to the state and the center, funding should be actively sought from private donors with naming opportunities for buildings, floors of buildings, halls, classrooms and laboratories.

A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

[Terms of Reference No. 12: To establish a University development office and recommend a process to vet private gifts for endowed chairs, research funds, fellowships, scholarships, and physical infrastructure that might augment government funding and grants.]

The Vice-Chancellor's Fund for Excellence has made a good beginning. Presidency as an institution of national eminence can receive tax-exempt gifts within India. A Friends of Presidency entity under Section 501 (C) of the tax code is in the process of being set up in the United States. We reaffirm our recommendation to engage a professional and experienced fund-raiser, perhaps on a commission basis, to build a corpus and mobilize resources for current use. A clear scaled set of gift opportunities need to be defined for private donors who may wish to give for buildings as well as named chairs, fellowships, etc.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER UNIVERSITIES

[Terms of reference No. 13: To suggest cross-registration agreements with other universities and colleges and partnerships or exchanges with other research institutes in West Bengal and India.]

We had outlined possible cooperative arrangements with other institutions in our earlier reports. Given the historical ties between Presidency College and Sanskrit College since the nineteenth century, we had recommended exploring mechanisms of recreating a special relationship between Presidency University and Sanskrit College, possibly as an affiliated college, in order to strengthen the study of Sanskrit as well as the classical and modern humanities. Its implementation will resuscitate Sanskrit College and pave the way for the building of an outstanding Humanities Center under the auspices of Presidency University.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

[Terms of reference No. 14: To help create international partnerships and exchanges with select, outstanding colleges and universities in other parts of the world.]

We once more endorse the Vice-Chancellor's efforts to establish strategic partnerships with a few leading foreign universities in various fields. The arrangement with Trinity College, Dublin, will benefit our students. We need to look both east and west in forging these relationships and be highly selective in signing any MoUs. We welcome the decision to take part in the Bangalore conference on the future of liberal arts education being organized by Yale University and Pomona College in January 2014.

THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

[Terms of Reference No. 1: To craft an appropriate governance structure for Presidency University enabling its most distinguished alumni to play a positive role in restoring it to a position of academic excellence.]

We welcome the amendment to the Presidency University Act passed by the state legislature in March 2013 providing for a governance structure recommended in our fourth report. The notification of this amendment in the Gazette dated June 12, 2013, has been sent to Presidency University on July 19, 2013 and received on July 23, 2013.

THE PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY ACT

[Terms of Reference No. 2: To propose amendments to the Presidency University Act, as necessary, to facilitate achieving its goals of excellence and equity.]

Now that the University has received the Gazette notification, the statutes of Presidency University will have to be drawn up in consonance with the new provisions of the Act. The transitory provisions of the Act need to stay in place until the Appointed Day to be announced by the state government. It may be possible to set the Foundation Day, January 20, 2014, as the target date for the Appointed Day.

STATUTES AND UNIVERSITY OFFICERS

[Terms of Reference No. 1: To revise and frame Statutes of the University as they relate to its governance structure, the process of appointing the Vice-Chancellor and other officers of the University, and the conduct of academic affairs.]

With the Gazette notification having reached their hands on July 23, 2013, the university authorities should frame the statutes, ordinances and regulations as expeditiously as possible.

Vice-Chancellor Malabika Sarkar has been highly successful in her leadership role since her appointment on October 18, 2011. Our meeting with 76 faculty members on July 16, 2013, provided ample evidence of how much she is admired. The talented young faculty members who have recently joined the University have full faith in her and keenly want to see her at the helm. She has both the academic vision and the fund-raising ability that are required of University leaders in today's world. We need continuity and stability at Presidency until and beyond the Appointed Day. On the advice of Professor Amartya Sen, we unanimously and respectfully request the Chancellor in consultation with the Education Minister to extend Malabika Sarkar's term as Vice-Chancellor until June 30, 2015, by invoking the relevant provisions of Sections 55 and 57 of the Presidency University Act. This will be in the best interest of a new university where the first constitutions of authority have not yet been completed. We further request the state government to sanction the supporting officers and staff she needs for the efficient functioning of the University.

After the Appointed Day a high-powered search committee should be instituted under the terms of the PU Act to conduct a national and international search for a distinguished Vice-Chancellor to take charge from July 1, 2015, for a four-year term. This will make for an orderly transition once the University has reached a steady state.

CONCLUSION

The Presidency Mentor Group warmly appreciates the success of the faculty recruitment process and the beginning of much-needed infrastructure development. We look forward to the journey towards 2017 and beyond. The Chairperson wishes to record his deep gratitude to Professor Amartya Sen for his sage advice on all matters.

Acknowledgements

The Presidency Mentor Group warmly thanks the Chancellor, H.E. M.K. Narayanan, Governor of West Bengal, for his keen interest in the rejuvenation of Presidency and congratulates Professor Malabika Sarkar, Vice-Chancellor of Presidency University, for her dynamic leadership. Mr Anirban Chakrabarti, Assistant Registrar, has been exemplary in providing logistical support for PMG meetings. We thank all the other officers and faculty of the University for their valuable contributions.

We are grateful to Shrimati Mamata Banerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister, for the courtesy extended to the Chairperson and her decisions regarding land for the second campus, the Distinguished University Professorships and the guaranteed annual supplements for faculty in the form of research and professional development funds as well as moving expenses for faculty from outside West Bengal. We thank Shri Amit Mitra, Finance Minister, for providing

financial sanction for the above and Shri Bratya Basu, Education Minister, for supporting the cause of Presidency's quest for excellence. We thank Shri Vivek Kumar, Principal Secretary, Higher Education, for facilitating the infrastructure development grant from the state government.

We thank Shri Partha Ranjan Das, architect, for his expert opinion on space and architecture and for his drawings. Above all, we are immensely grateful to the distinguished scholars in various disciplines who have spent long hours over several days interviewing candidates and selecting excellent scholar-teachers for Presidency University. Their help with our search and selection process has been invaluable and they have our most profound appreciation for their efforts.

We welcome the broad public interest and support of our endeavor. Hindu College began its journey nearly two centuries ago as a collective citizens' initiative. The same spirit of service is required to rebuild Presidency University as a unique center of excellence in India and a world-class institution by its bicentennial in January 2017.

Sugata Bose (Chair), Isher Judge Ahluwalia, Abhijit Banerjee, Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, Swapan Chakravorty, Nayanjot Lahiri, Rahul Mukerjee, Himadri Pakrasi, Ashoke Sen

APPENDIX 1
Prepared by PARTHA DAS & ASSOCIATES

July 15, 2013

APPROXIMATE COST OF CONSTRUCTION FOR THE PROPOSED 2ND
CAMPUS FOR PRESIDENCY UNIVERSITY AT RAJARHAT NEW TOWN

Phase – IA

Total usable floor area	19,579 Sqm.	=	2,10,670 Sq.ft.
 Basement car parking			 =44,418 Sq.ft.
			<hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/>
	Total		=2,55,088 Sq.ft.
			<hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/>

Approx. construction cost @ Rs. 3,000.00 / Sft.=Rs. 76,52,64,000.00 Say Rs. 77 crore

Cost of furniture and interior fitment @ Rs. 500.00/ Sft. for 60% of 2,10,670 Sft. or 1,26,402 Sft. = Rs. 6,32,01,000.00 Say Rs. 7 crore

Phase – IB

Total usable floor area	-6,252.78 Sqm.	=	76,275 Sq.ft.
 Basement car parking			 = 11,901 Sq.ft.
			<hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/>
	Total		= 88,176 Sq.ft.
			<hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/>

Approx. construction cost @ Rs. 3,000.00 / Sft.=Rs. 26,45,28,000.00 Say Rs. 27 crore

Cost of furniture and interior fitment @ Rs. 500.00/ Sft. for 60% of 76,275.39 Sft. or 45,765 Sft. = Rs. 2,64,52,800.00 Say Rs. 3 crore

Phase – IC

Total usable floor area - 17,550.9 Sqm. = 1,88,847. Sq.ft.

Basement car parking = 12,590 Sq.ft.

Total = 2,01,436 Sq.ft.

Approx. construction cost @ Rs. 3,000.00 / Sft.=Rs. 60,43,08,000.00 Say Rs. 61 crore

Cost of furniture and interior fitment @ Rs. 500.00/ Sft. for 60% of 1,88,847Sft. or 1,13,308 Sft. = Rs. 5,66,54,000.00 Say Rs. 6 crore

Phase – II

Total usable floor area - 29,945 Sqm. =3,22,218 Sq.ft.

Basement car parking = 68,670 Sq.ft.

Total = 3,90,888 Sq.ft.

Approx. construction cost @ Rs. 3,000.00 / Sft.=Rs. 117,26,64,000.00 Say Rs. 117 crore

Cost of furniture and interior fitment @ Rs. 500.00/ Sft. for 60% of 3,22,218 Sft. or 1,93,330 Sft. = Rs. 9,66,65,000.00 Say Rs. 10 crore

Cost of landscaping, site development and service infrastructure
= Lump Sum Rs. 25 crore

Phase – III

Total usable floor area - 21,714 Sqm. = 2,33,643 Sq.ft.

Basement car parking = 26,448 Sq.ft.

Total = 2,60,091 Sq.ft.

Approx. construction cost @ Rs. 3,000.00 / Sft.=Rs. 78,02,73,000.00 Say Rs. 78 crore

Cost of furniture and interior fitment @ Rs. 500.00/ Sft. for 60% of 2,33,643 Sft. or 1,40,186 Sft. = Rs. 7,00,93,000.00 Say Rs. 7 crore

Cost of open air theatre, site development, service infrastructure and landscaping
= Lump Sum Rs. 50 crore

Therefore total cost of construction is as follows:

Phases	Civil	Interior	Other costs	Total
Phase - IA	Rs. 77 crore	Rs. 7 crore	-	Rs. 84 crore
Phase - IB	Rs. 27 crore	Rs. 3 crore	-	Rs. 30 crore
Phase - IC	Rs. 61 crore	Rs. 6 crore	-	Rs. 67 crore
Phase - II	Rs. 117 crore	Rs. 10 crore	Rs. 25 crore	Rs. 152 crore
Phase - III	Rs. 78 crore	Rs. 7 crore	Rs. 50 crore	Rs. 135 crore
Total	Rs. 360 crore	Rs. 33 crore	Rs. 75 crore	Rs. 468 crore

Time Schedule

Assuming that separate contractors will be engaged for each building, the schedule of completion for different phases may be as follows:

Phase - I	-	6 years
-IA	-	2years
-IB	-	2years
-IC	-	2years
Phase - II	-	2 years
Phase - III	-	2 years

All the buildings may be made ready for occupation in 10 years. Some amount of cleaning, soft and hard landscaping and service infrastructure may be completed in the 9th year.

The peripheral road, boundary wall and the electrical sub station will have to be completed in the 1st phase.