The success of Penn Arts & Sciences— in everything that it does— rests unquestionably on its ability to attract and retain faculty of the highest caliber.

The School works to ensure that we take advantage of every opportunity to strengthen our faculty, from maximizing the impact of each new faculty hire to providing appropriate support, incentives, and mentorship at every stage of their careers, to inviting scholars and leaders from outside the University into our classrooms.

The giving opportunities described here will support the eminent teacher-scholars who carry out the work that is the School’s true raison d’etre: the creation and dissemination of new knowledge that deepens our understanding and ultimately transforms our society and our world.

Endowed professorships recognize extraordinary scholars like Angela Duckworth, Rosa Lee and Egbert Chang Professor of Psychology, a 2013 MacArthur “Genius” Fellow who researches perseverance and self-control. Duckworth’s 2016 book, Grit, enjoyed prolific coverage in both the media and academic circles and she is leading a new University initiative called Behavior Change for Good, focused on understanding how to make behavior change stick.
Honor Exceptional Work

For faculty members who have achieved great distinction, there is no higher honor Penn Arts & Sciences can bestow than an endowed professorship. This recognition universally acknowledges the work of accomplished teachers, mentors, scholars, and thought leaders. It lifts them to new levels of renown and effectiveness, and encourages bold, inventive research. Endowed professors, at all levels, have the School’s strongest expression of support, and, through teaching and research, extend the School’s influence beyond campus.

An endowed professorship is an indispensable tool for both recruiting distinguished faculty and retaining and rewarding current faculty who are among the best in their fields. Appointment to such a position does more than elevate a professor’s reputation; it provides support that moves current research forward, and enhances the ability to secure future funding. In addition, the affirmation inherent in this honor often empowers the faculty member to take the risks necessary to produce groundbreaking work. For donors, an endowed professorship is a permanent connection to the making of new knowledge and to the University.

Endow a Penn Integrates Knowledge Professorship with a gift of $5 million

Penn Integrates Knowledge (PIK) professors hold joint appointments in two schools and exemplify excellence in multidisciplinary scholarship and learning. PIK professors are remarkable for their drive to solve complex, real-world problems and deepen the University’s rich tradition of collaboration across disciplinary boundaries.

Endow a Professorship with a gift of $3 million

Endowing a professorship in perpetuity ensures that, for generations to come, a succession of academic pioneers will hold this named position, advance knowledge in their fields, and leave their marks on the most pressing issues of their times.

Endow a Presidential Professorship with a gift of $1.5 million

Presidential professorships are held by a distinguished faculty member for a five-year term, allowing a constant infusion of new talent and fresh perspectives.

Presidential professorships are awarded to exceptional scholars of any rank. Daniel Gillion, Julie Beren Platt and Marc E. Platt Presidential Professor of Political Science, researches racial and ethnic politics, public policy, and the American presidency. Governing with Words: The Political Dialogue on Race, Public Policy, and Inequality in America, was awarded the 2017 W.E.B. Du Bois Book Award from the National Conference of Black Political Scientists.
Invite New Voices

Visiting scholars, artists, and practitioners complement the substantial expertise of our faculty. These positions create opportunities for our students to learn from a wider spectrum of talented, passionate people and for our faculty to work alongside experts who otherwise would not be at the University.

Endow a Professor of Practice with a gift of $1.5 million

Professors of Practice are leaders outside of academia. As successful and innovative practitioners in their respective fields, their experiences and perspectives are an invaluable resource to our undergraduate and graduate students. These positions allow departments to tap into a well of expertise not traditionally part of a university education to create powerful collaborations between academic and practical experts.

Endow a Visiting Professorship with a gift of $1.5 million

Visiting professors are prominent scholars from other universities who are invited to join the School for a semester or academic year. Through research and teaching, they engage our students and faculty, supporting cross-university collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

Fund an Artist-in-Residence with an endowed gift of $1.5 million

Artists-in-residence are outstanding visual artists, actors, musicians, writers, and other creative practitioners who are based in departments and centers and work with students and faculty. They act as mentors and collaborators, as well as showcase their creative work with exhibitions, readings, or public performances. Artists-in-residence consider academic, social, and cultural questions in light of their creative practices and are vital voices in our community.
Faculty fellows like Ileana Pérez-Rodríguez, Assistant Professor of Earth and Environmental Science and Elliman Faculty Fellow, help advance the School’s research priorities. Her research focuses on the interactions of microorganisms and earth materials and how organisms use energy and materials, work that advances the School’s commitment to energy research.

Support Early Promise

Supporting emerging academic leaders and nascent research projects is a priority for the School. This investment in the creation of new knowledge distinguishes Penn Arts & Sciences and ensures our faculty will continue to be leaders and innovators.

Fund a faculty fellowship with a term gift of $500,000

Faculty fellowships accomplish the same goal as an endowed professorship but on a temporary basis. Term funds provide support for one of the School’s exceptional scholars for a period of five years, and are important in rewarding faculty who are in early or mid-career. Faculty fellowships are integral to the School’s ongoing effort to pursue scholars who focus on big ideas and generate collaboration across the disciplines.

Support faculty research funds with an endowed or term gift of $125,000 – $500,000

Dedicated faculty research funds enable scholars to begin innovative projects; to support needs such as research assistants, equipment, and supplies; or to travel to professional conferences. In today’s funding climate, which is challenging even for established scholars, such flexible and assured support is highly valued. These funds enhance the School’s ability to recruit and retain faculty by providing a dedicated source of research support and are a demonstration of the School’s commitment to supporting and promoting faculty at key moments in their research careers.

To learn more about supporting faculty, please contact Deb Rhebergen, Vice Dean for Advancement, at 215-898-9942 or drheberg@sas.upenn.edu.