Quest.” He will teach in the doctoral seminar for second-year students in religion in the spring, and he will retain his office in FAS’s Barker Center for the Humanities.

The new dean has worn numerous administrative hats, including director of the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies and chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Since 1991 he has also been master of Currier House; his wife, co-master Barbara Graham, is associate director of the Harvard University Library for administration and programs. Their son, Powell, 14, is a freshman at Roxbury Latin.

The Grahams expect to decide by Christmastime whether to stay on at Currier after this academic year. The Divinity School has been without a permanent dean for the past four years, and faculty and students express some sentiment that a sense of stability would be encouraged should the Grahams take up residence in the deanery on Francis Avenue, close by the school. (Graham’s predecessor in the office, although at his request he was not called “dean,” was Father J. Bryan Hehir, a diocesan priest whom all knew was on loan and could at any time be assigned elsewhere. He now heads Catholic Charities USA in Virginia [see “A Divinity Activist,” November-December 2001, page 76].)

Graham may be the first person without ministerial training to lead the school. He is a church-going Protestant whose religious beliefs do not match up exactly with any denomination. “Study of other religions introduces a certain degree of relativism in one’s own self-understanding of what faith is about,” he says. “I don’t see one tradition having a monopoly on truth. I’m enough of a historian to feel that religious communities and theologies are humanly conditioned efforts to apprehend whatever is beyond our apprehension. To recognize the contingency of the human side of religious faith still leaves open all sorts of possibilities on the transcendent side, things that we’re not given to know and can only speculate about in the end, or judge from our own experience ultimately.

“I have some difficulty with organized religion in general,” Graham adds. “Organizations tend to get wrapped up in themselves, rather than in their object and purpose. It’s a problem for every institution.”

Graham hopes to lead his faculty to reconsider the school’s complex mission, to recruit new colleagues, to overhaul the curriculum as need be. How will he fare in a school described by some observers as strangled by organized dogmas?

Three years ago, List professor of Jewish studies Jon D. Levenson ’71, Ph.D. ’75, was quoted in these pages (see “The 30 Years’ War,” September-October 1999, page 57) as saying, “In the old days, one was required to believe certain theological dogmas: the incarnation of God in Jesus, the Resurrection, and so on. Now the school requires that one subscribe to radical feminism, to inclusive language, to their views on homosexuality and affirmative action….Political correctness is the new orthodoxy.”

“I am not sympathetic to dogma of any kind,” says Graham. “The great privilege—and therefore responsibility—that we in the university have is precisely the readiness to listen to every point of view and not disparage it. We may refute it, and be as vehement as we have to be, as long as we are doing that on the playing field of ideas. “Debate will always be heated in the area of religion,” he believes. “People will feel their faith challenged by challenges to particular ideas. The key thing is respect for one’s interlocutors. That makes it possible for people to clash with each other without it becoming an irrational matter of conformity to dogma.

“One of the sad facts of history is that those who have been oppressed tend to become oppressors. We see it around the world all the time [and] in the intellectual world as well. But in my brief time at the Divinity School,” says Graham, “I haven’t seen the emergence of orthodoxies that anyone is demanding people conform to. The potential is there in several different areas, no question. But I like to think that both students and faculty in the end will opt for rational debate rather than oppression of any particular viewpoint.”

Professorial turnover at the school “is possibly going to be not massive, but notable, in the next five to 10 years because of the age of the faculty,” says Graham. “We have a heavily tenured faculty, and that means we need a lot of new blood.” He cites three outstanding faculty appointments in the past year—in American Christian history, in Buddhist studies, in Meso-American and Latino-Christian studies—and hopes to add seven or eight junior and senior people in the next two years. “That will immediately change the demographics of a faculty of just under 40 people,” he notes.

Certain obvious fields must be covered by new hires, but Graham subscribes to the “Red Auerbach system of selection,” a reference to the man who put together some superb basketball teams for the Boston Celtics. “We don’t worry so much about the positions they play. We want really outstanding individuals, and if we insist upon hiring only outstanding faculty, we’ll be all right.

“The last big surge that this school experienced, in the late 1950s and ’60s, happened,” says Graham, “because a variety of young scholars came to the school at the same time and built the strongest New Testament department probably in the world and strong theology studies. There followed a period when, arguably, this was the place where everybody wanted to come. I think that’s possible again.”

A Cluster of (Scholarly) Stars

The Radcliffe Institute, spreading its wings as a center for advanced study affiliated with a major research university, is extending the reach of its fellowship program literally to the edge of the cosmos. A “cluster” of seven fellows appointed for the 2002-2003 academic year plans to pursue studies in theoretical physics, astronomy, and planetary sciences. As such, it melds several of the institute’s interests: promoting research at the frontiers of knowledge—and crossing institutional boundaries in the process; supporting the work of women in science; building bridges to Harvard’s faculties; and enabling promising young scholars to advance professionally and intellectually.

The intersection of physics, astronomy, and astrophysics proved an ideal starting point, says Barbara J. Grosz, Radcliffe’s dean of science and Higgins professor of natural sciences in the Faculty of Arts and
Physics professor Lisa Randall looks forward to “very fruitful” research collaborations with the cluster of scientists at the Radcliffe Institute.

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The idea of assembling a group of fellows in these fields took shape quickly last fall. Lisa Randall, Ph.D. ’87, formerly at MIT, had just joined Harvard as professor of physics. Her research interests are grounded in particle physics and problems concerning gravity as they are understood in the theoreticians’ multidimensional models of space. Wrestling with those issues has drawn her into cosmology, searching in the evolution of the universe for clues that might support various theories about the nature of matter and fundamental forces, or evidence—increasingly emerging from probes of space—that might provoke new theoretical possibilities. (Recent discoveries concerning the dark matter and dark energy that pervade the universe have sparked vigorous work across all these fields, challenging notions of the origins of the universe, its later expansion, and its current four-dimensional appearance.)

Collaboration among scientists in different disciplines “can be very fruitful today,” Randall says, as data stream in from satellites and observatories and as new theoretical work unfolds. “It’s a very rich area at this point, and ripe for some new developments.” Several colleagues, such as professor of astronomy Abraham Loeb and professor of physics Andrew Strominger, were working on related problems. But as Randall would quickly learn—or recall, from her doctoral studies—the University’s departmental boundaries do not always, or promptly, align with promising directions for intellectual inquiry. Physics is based in the Jefferson Laboratory, near Harvard Yard, while the Center for Astrophysics is housed on the far side of the former Radcliffe dormitories—practically light years away.

In time, the converging concerns of the physicists and cosmologists might give rise to a new academic locus for common work on campus. But for now, Randall says, the Radcliffe Institute’s fellowships are a swift way “to help get that started” because “interdisciplinary research can more readily happen” there by dint of its flexible fellowship appointments.

As Randall and her colleagues sketched their needs and hopes, Grosz had just assumed her Radcliffe duties. With the institute’s application deadline for fellows looming, she and Randall’s group conceived a way to interest scientists around the country. And in a whirlwind round of solicitations, they attracted a core group, especially of particle physicists, who can spend at least a semester at Radcliffe this academic year. The fellows range from recently minted doctors to senior faculty members. Among them are Kathryn Benson, Ph.D. ’91, assistant professor of physics at Emory University; string theorists Raphael Bousso, from the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Amanda Wensley Peet, assistant professor of physics and mathematics at the University of Toronto; and Maria T. Zuber, Griswold professor of geophysics and planetary sciences at MIT, who explores the formation of planets’ crusts and surfaces.

Grosz pioneered a variety of flexible arrangements to make this initial cluster feasible and to strengthen its ties to Harvard faculty members. Some of the fellows will be resident for only one semester, to accommodate their other commitments. Radcliffe is underwriting travel expenses for the fellows who need to return to their laboratories or other facilities to sustain their research during their time at the institute. It is bringing in other expert scientists as short-term visitors to complement the resident fellows’ work: University of Maryland astrophysicist Eve Ostriker ’87, for instance, is visiting monthly this fall. And the fellows have offices together at Putnam House, in Radcliffe Yard, to facilitate their own interactions. “Our goal,” Grosz says, “is to have exciting interactions.”

Randall, an institute fellow herself in the fall, is helping to make that happen, increasing connections between the other fellows and Harvard scholars. She lists promising subjects for collaboration: bringing current astral measurements to bear on competing theories about the universe and issues in particle physics; probing the relevance of models of extra-di-
mensionality to theories of the universe’s shape and terrain; and grappling with the level of dark energy thought to exist in the universe today. Those beginnings, she hopes, will “launch more interaction between astrophysics and theoretical physics” at Harvard.

Randall notes that it is “good to get science in the door at Radcliffe right away,” early in its incarnation as an institute for advanced study. For Grosz, who has long led efforts to support women in science at Harvard and elsewhere, opportunities like this figured in her decision to take on the science deanship (see “Radcliffe Ramps Up,” September-October 2001, page 58).

Now, with one science cluster in place, she reaps off follow-up possibilities, spanning FAS, the medical and public-health schools, and the schools of business and government: computational biology, computer security, the environment, bioengineering. “There is just no end to the scientific problems we need smart people to address,” she says—and common to all of them are the possibilities for progress that come from getting people “to see Radcliffe as a place where they can try new things and bring new groups of people together.”

**Messenger from Pakistan**

**Amid what** administrators and police said was the heaviest security ever for a Harvard speaker, Pervez Musharraf, president of Pakistan, told a packed audience at the Kennedy School of Government that the war on terrorism must reach deep to address the root causes of terror. Speaking at the first Institute of Politics Forum of the year on September 8—a day after most freshmen moved in and three days before the observance of September 11 (see page 51)—Musharraf presented his vision for Pakistan and addressed what he said he considers the biggest problems facing his nation in the years ahead—religious extremism and poor relations with India (which he said are at their “lowest ebb” in years).

Musharraf, an army general, has been the self-proclaimed president of Pakistan since June 20, 2001, and the country’s chief teaching him “a great deal about how Harvard really works.” Former Arts and Sciences financial associate dean Ann Berman will serve as acting vice president for finance.

**Law Beyond Borders**

William P. Alford, Stimson professor of law, is the new associate dean for the graduate program and international legal studies at Harvard Law School. An expert on Chinese law and on the resolution of international trade disputes, he oversees 200 students from several dozen countries enrolled in masters’ and doctoral programs. Alford succeeds Anne-Marie Slaughter, who accepted a deanship at Princeton (see July-August, page 84).

**Better Biology**

Cabot professor of biology Richard M. Losick—named a Harvard College Professor for excellence in teaching—is one of 20 research scientists nationwide to receive $1 million each from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to develop new, enhanced methods of undergraduate instruction. Losick, who teaches “Introductory Molecular Biology,” plans enriched first-year experiences for disadvantaged students, high-level research partnerships for more experienced students, and a program of computer animation to illustrate molecular processes in motion.

**After Winthrop**

Master Paul D. Hanson, Lamont professor of divinity, and his wife and co-master, Cynthia Rosenberger, who teaches at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, intend to leave Winthrop House next June. They will have served for a decade, after previously leading Dudley House. Both intend to focus on their teaching. Harry R. Lewis, dean of Harvard College, will initiate a search for their successors.