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Hackney nominated for Washington job

The announcement was expected. He would head the National Endowment for the Humanities.

By Howard Goodman
Inquirer Staff Writer

President Clinton yesterday nominated University of Pennsylvania president Sheldon Hackney to head the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The announcement had been expected.

Hackney, 59, has been at Penn since 1981. He is a professor of history who regularly teaches undergraduates in addition to serving as the school's 21st chief executive.

He said in a brief statement that he was "pleased" by the nomination "and if confirmed by the Senate, I will be honored to serve."

Hackney, a soft-spoken man who shies from the spotlight, was not on campus yesterday and was unavailable for comment. His prepared statement alluded to possible steps he would take to effect his resignation.

"Considering the implication that my possible departure has for Penn and its leadership, I have been giving the matter a great deal of thought," Hackney said in the statement. "I will have more to say about it at the end of this week."

Barbara Beck, a Penn spokeswoman, said a search committee would be formed to find a successor should Hackney resign. Penn's trustees
Penn president is nominated for NEH post

President Clinton yesterday also nominated Michael Shapiro, a Washington lawyer, as the endowment's general counsel.

The National Endowment for the Humanities serves as liaison between the federal government and the academic community.

Hackney would leave a large university with 22,400 students, 4,200 faculty members and a budget of $1.5 billion for a federal agency of just 300 employees and a budget of less than $180 million.

The NEH does have clout. Last year, it made 2,199 grants totaling nearly $160 million to libraries, museums, colleges and individual scholars.