

## MEETING OF FEBRUARY 27, 2015

President Lee Bollinger called the Senate to order shortly after 1:15 pm in 104 Jerome Greene Hall. Fifty of 98 senators were present during the meeting.

**Minutes and agenda.** Hearing no objections to the agenda or to the proposed minutes of February 6, the president declared both adopted.

**President's remarks.** The president said one of the initiatives that Suzanne Goldberg, the new EVP for University Life, will be taking on is a major research project on young people and their attitudes and behaviors concerning sexual harassment and assault. He said this will be one of the few serious efforts—maybe the only effort—to do research on these questions, led by some Columbia faculty. Prof. Goldberg was also working on the issue of race and the university.

*Global centers and alumni relations.* The report on the global centers and their role for alumni later in the meeting reminded the president how successfully the global centers have settled into the life of the university. Their basic purpose—to help Columbia faculty and students understand the world better—is being fulfilled. They have a long way to go, the president said, but they have enormous potential. Eight is clearly the right number of global centers for the time being, and Columbia has done well to avoid the pitfalls of branch campuses that have entangled some peer institutions. It's critical for this university to grasp the inter-connectedness of the world, its reciprocal influences, and the global problems that have to be solved. And the only way to understand and affect these connections is to be out in the world, not just in offices and research labs in New York City.

The president praised both administrators who would be speaking later: EVP for Global Centers Safwan Masri, for building the many relationships that have enabled the centers to succeed, and Vice President for Alumni Relations Donna MacPhee, for helping to establish the sense of an alumni community beyond individual schools through the Columbia Alumni Association, which didn't exist when the president arrived at Columbia.

*Genomic Medicine Institute.* The president said the other main agenda item, the resolution to establish the Institute of Genomic Medicine, is part of the precision medicine initiative. He said the head of the new institute, David Goldstein from Duke, is a transformative figure in the field. The precision medicine initiative, under the leadership of Tom Maniatis, is only a year old, but many projects are underway, some of which will unite the uptown and downtown campuses.

*Email privileges for retired medical faculty.* Referring to a question from the previous meeting about an administration announcement that email privileges for retired medical faculty would be discontinued, the president said complicated legal questions are involved. The goal of

current discussion is to find a way to restore these email privileges within the framework of the law. He was optimistic that this goal could be reached.

**Executive Committee chair's remarks.** Sen. Sharyn O'Halloran (Ten., SIPA) said the Rules Committee had revised its timeline for producing a new set of Rules of Conduct. The original date for a draft revision, March 13, had been moved back to March 27. As previously planned, public discussion will take place in April, starting with the April 2 plenary. The goal is to vote on a new set of Rules at the final plenary on May 1. She asked senators to offer feedback on the various drafts to be circulated. She said it was crucial to get new Rules in place by the start of the fall semester. She thanked the Rules Committee for its work.

*Climate survey.* Prompted by Sen. O'Halloran, Provost John Coatsworth explained that the American Association of Universities, working with the polling service Westat, would be distributing a survey to all Columbia students on April 6. He hoped that as many students as possible would fill out the poll (which takes 20-30 minutes), to provide as accurate a picture as possible of the incidence of sexual misconduct on campus, so that the university can target interventions and responses to reduce it as much as possible. The survey will be anonymous. Similar polls are being distributed on 25-30 campuses across the country, and each institution will see the results of its own poll in September, as well as summary results for all the polls. Both sets of results will be made public. He asked senators to help assure the best possible return on the survey.

Sen. O'Halloran urged student senators to use their hard-earned privilege to communicate with their constituents through mass emails to help boost participation in the climate survey.

*Student quality-of-life survey.* Sen. Will Zvara (Stu., Bus.), a co-chair of the Student Affairs Committee, said that following up on the initial quality-of-life survey of two years ago, the Student Affairs Committee on February 26 released the 2015 edition across the university, in partnership with the Behavioral Research Lab at the Business School, and the offices of the president and provost. So as not to overlap with the climate survey, SAC put in a lot of work to release the QoL survey earlier. All students across 20 Columbia schools and affiliated institutions would be receiving the survey shortly.

Sen. Zvara said the present survey was a streamlined and improved version of the 2013 survey. The question list is much shorter, with new specific demographic questions involving military veterans, students with families, religious traditions, and other subjects. SAC believed the data would be even better this time around, and the response so far had been fantastic. In 2013 just over 6,000 students completed the survey; this time, the survey had 2,500 responses on the first day. The 2015 survey was well on its way to surpassing its predecessor.

Sen. O'Halloran thanked SAC for its work.

### **Committee reports.**

*Alumni Relations annual report* (Sens. Dan Libby and Kurt Roeloffs, co-chairs). Referring to a [PowerPoint presentation on the screen](#), Sens. Libby and Roeloffs presented their report. Then they introduced the next two speakers.

*Presentation from Safwan Masri, Executive Vice President for Global Centers and Global Development, and Donna MacPhee, Vice President for Alumni Relations, on the Global Centers as platforms for alumni engagement.* Using another [PowerPoint](#) that was projected on a screen, EVP Masri and VP MacPhee made their presentation.

Sen. Libby thanked the guests. He asked for their general thoughts on how the Global Centers and the Columbia Alumni Association will evolve over the next 20-30 years.

EVP Masri said Columbia seems to be a pioneer in the kind of global programs it has established. Later in the spring Columbia will host a group of peer institutions in a conference on this subject. He said the Columbia approach will have succeeded if it becomes clear in 8-10 years that the Global Centers have become a permanent, even indispensable, feature of the university. This may already be occurring, if recent contacts from faculty recruits from peer institutions who are attracted to Columbia's Global Centers are any sign.

Another trend may be the growth of regional networks around Columbia's Global Centers, which may have virtual as well as physical "nodes." So Columbia may branch out from its Global Center in Nairobi, Kenya, setting up small offices in northwest or southern Africa. EVP Masri stressed that new networks of this kind would cost the university nothing because they would be entirely supported by alumni and other partners around the world.

EVP Masri also stressed the flexibility and the nimbleness of the organizational structure of the centers. If things get uncomfortable at any one location, Columbia can leave very easily.

Sen. Daniel Savin (Research Officers) asked if the CAA had established something like a speakers' bureau to make it easy for traveling faculty and researchers to speak to alumni groups in distant corners of the globe.

VP MacPhee invited Columbia academic officers traveling around the world to contact the CAA, which also does outreach for this purpose from time to time. But she acknowledged that they sometimes miss some opportunities of this kind.

Sen. O'Halloran said she has worked successfully with VP MacPhee in setting up contacts abroad. She hoped to see more of a proactive approach from the CAA to making these connections in future.

She thanked the guests for their presentation.

#### **New business.**

[\*Resolution to Establish the Institute for Genomic Medicine\*](#) (Education). Education Committee co-chair Letty Moss-Salentijn said recent advances in genomic sequencing will make it possible to develop prevention and treatment strategies that will take individual variability into account. She said Columbia has the intellectual strength not only in genetics but in disciplines ranging from pediatrics, systems biology, and medicine to cancer genetics and data analysis to establish an institute strong enough to make Columbia a leader in the field of personalized or precision medicine.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn said the Education Committee had favorably reviewed the proposal. She said a “friendly” amendment had been added by Senate parliamentarian Howard Jacobson to the version of the resolution that senators had received in their paper packets. She offered to read the friendly amendment, which concerned the technicalities of founding an institute, but this step was judged unnecessary by the group.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn introduced Lee Goldman, P&S dean and EVP for Health and Biomedical Sciences, and asked him to speak to the proposal.

Dean Goldman said he would proceed on the professor’s assumption that the group had read the relevant material ahead of time. He invited questions.

Sen. Brennan Rhodes-Bratton (Stu., Public Health) recognized the importance of the opportunities for interdisciplinary research and improved health that the institute offered. But she expressed concern that a narrow focus on the precision medicine initiative may lead the university away from the kind of focus on social determinants of health and issues of poverty that is found in the approach known as fundamental cause theory. She urged that as the university pursues genomic medicine, it should continue to seek solutions through social science and public health. She asked where such opportunities could be found in the genomic medicine initiative.

Dean Goldman replied that pursuing precision medicine does not mean that the university will ignore other aspects of health and disease. An early step in the initiative will include genomic testing of relatively large and diverse populations. This will begin to provide a sense of genomic differences across populations as determinants of health. For example, much of what we think we know about the normal genome comes from testing of people of European descent. One of the first initiatives of incoming institute director David Goldstein will be to conduct genomic sequencing in other populations, including that of Washington Heights, the neighborhood surrounding CUMC.

Dean Goldman also recognized that the genome is only one of many determinants of health. Another is the epigenome, which also includes what happens to someone during his or her lifetime, and which the new institute will also study.

He added that the activities of the new institute will not put the rest of the university into hibernation. The Medical Center will continue to pursue a wide variety of programs, some focusing on the individual, others on entire populations.

There being no further discussion, Sen. O’Halloran called for a vote. The Senate approved the resolution without dissent, but with three abstentions.

[2015 Senate Reapportionment Report](#) (Elections Commission). Elections Commission chair Samuel E. Roth (Nonsen., Stu., Law) presented the report. He said the only change recommended in the allocation of Senate seats was a reduction of one seat in the delegation of the Arts and Sciences tenured social sciences delegation, and the addition of one seat in the A&S tenured natural sciences delegation. Mr. Roth said there are now vacant seats in the social

sciences delegation, so no one will have to give up a seat. There are to be no changes among the student or nontenured faculty seats.

Mr. Roth said that to apportion the 42 tenured seats, the Elections Commission used what's called the method of equal proportions, which Congress has used to reapportion the House of Representatives since 1950, and which his predecessor Ben Brickner used to reapportion the Senate in 2010, after making a thorough comparison of methods.

As for the student seats, Mr. Roth said, the Senate allots three seats to the most populous student body, two seats to the next two most populous student bodies, and one seat to each of the rest.

Mr. Roth mentioned two issues that deserve further consideration sometime during the five years before the next reapportionment. The first is part-time students, of whom the university has nearly 5,000. Consistent with past practice, these students were not counted in the apportionment, even though, in many cases, they're entitled to vote in Senate elections and run for Senate seats. In addition, the university's attitudes are ambivalent on whether or not they should be counted.

Sen. Paco Kang (Stu., P&S) asked how including the count of part-time students might affect the apportionment of student seats. Mr. Roth said the answer depends on exactly how these students would be counted. But there certainly would be changes. For example, the schools of Engineering and of Continuing Education both have large numbers of part-time students.

Mr. Roth said the second significant policy question that the commission singled out for further consideration involves other student populations, including visiting students, of whom there are about 1,000. He saw no reason to think that they're less affected by the work of the Senate than other students.

Sen. O'Halloran then called for a vote. The Senate unanimously approved the 2015 Reapportionment Report, including its recommendations for reallocating seats.

She then adjourned the meeting shortly before 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Mathewson, Senate Staff