

COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL  
RELATIONS AND RESEARCH POLICY  
ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

# Office of Communications and Public Affairs

- David M. Stone, Executive Vice President for Communications, and members of his staff
- Columbia's website
- Effort to improve the functionality of mobile platforms
- Ongoing effort to make sub-level sites more uniform with the parent site (Columbia.edu)
- Established a mechanism for departments, centers and even individual faculty members to create more uniform sites

# Effort Reporting

- Provost John Coatsworth, EVP of Research G. Michael Purdy, et al.
- Effort reporting and compensation for effort not spent on funded research projects, including time spent writing new grants
- New language in the Faculty Handbook emphasizing the necessity of departmental funding for time spent performing other non-sponsored activities
- New language for the Faculty Handbook would be online by the end of December 2016 and would be printed in the new edition

# Government and Community Relations

- Maxine Griffith, Executive Vice President for Government and Community Affairs, and staff
- Community relations seemed to be going well with excitement about the opening of the Jerome L. Greene Science Center.
- Main concern was government affairs, particularly the administration and Congress's plans for research funding
- Many questions but no clear answers
- Serious concern expressed about potential cuts to next year's budgets for research funding agencies

# Research Funding

- Rudina Odeh-Ramadan, Associate Vice President for Research Administration
- Total costs for all awards (government and foundation) to the University FY 2016 were approximately \$1.06 billion, increased from \$941.1 million FY 2015
- Five large grants were funded in total that year rather than over the usual five-year period
- Despite Columbia's success in research funding, the committee is concerned about future significant cuts

# Federal Research Funding Concerns

- Adjusted for inflation, FY2016 research funding is essentially equal to FY2009
- Administration's has proposed significant cuts to environment and climate research
- Administration's has proposed 18% NIH cut next fiscal year
- Cutting facilities and administrative fees
- Given the potential magnitude of federal research funding reductions, "business as usual" approach of may not be adequate
- Impact on reputation of Columbia University
- Committee feels that a University-level effort to explore mechanisms to respond to potentially huge reductions in government research funding may be warranted

# SPS and External Reputation

- Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences David Madigan, SPS Dean Jason Wingard, SPS students
- Concern that the proliferation of degree programs in SPS without adequate academic oversight can threaten the Columbia brand and external reputation
- Discussions about SPS Programs on Chinese social media site:
  - “As long as you complete the reading and project, you can have B+.”
  - “It can be seen that pros are mainly brought by Columbia itself, not from SPS.”
  - “Pros: great location, ivy league title and relative decent GPA”
  - “Cons: vague curriculum setting, weak career service and unstable courses quality”
- Committee unanimously approved document urging senate to take up matter of academic oversight at SPS and how its degree programs are affecting the University’s reputation