

University Senate

Proposed: May 1, 2015

Adopted: May 1, 2015

**RESOLUTION TO HONOR STEPHEN A. RITTENBERG
ON HIS RETIREMENT**

WHEREAS, Stephen A. Rittenberg, a young Angeleno, a graduate of U.C. Santa Barbara, came to Columbia in 1967 to earn a doctorate in history; and

WHEREAS, the following April he found himself occupying Fayerweather Hall to protest the war in Vietnam and other grievances; and

WHEREAS, this sojourn at the confluence of the First Amendment, the threat of mob rule, and the sudden fragility of a two-century-old bastion of higher learning was to mark him for life; and

WHEREAS, he specialized in modern Indian history, learning Hindi, Urdu and a little Pashto, traveling in that country and writing about the Indian independence movement; and

WHEREAS, he became an instructor in 1976 and then an assistant professor, moving into administration as associate provost in 1982; and

WHEREAS, Columbia discovered his deep reserves of organization, attention to detail, patience and judiciousness; and

WHEREAS, in his eventual position as vice provost, the university has depended on him to oversee a number of its core functions, notably tenure reviews, appointments and salaries; nontenured faculty service; academic grievances; reviews of existing programs and proposals for new degrees and certificates; and services to international students and scholars; not to mention the ever-growing demands of government accreditation; and

WHEREAS, at various times he faced confrontations with protesters over questions such as ethnic studies and the rights of the Minutemen to speak on campus; and

WHEREAS, he delights in data, having taught himself FoxPro from a standing start and having gone on to develop his own applications for statistical analysis of university populations; and

WHEREAS, though called an observer on the Senate Education Committee, he has been an essential participant, with an unequalled grasp of the minutiae of course credits, distribution requirements and faculty-student ratios, as well as the overarching mission of the pursuit and transmission of knowledge; and

WHEREAS, in a development he attributes to karma, he has served for more than two decades as Rules Administrator under the Rules of University Conduct governing protests and demonstrations and supervises policies on campus alcohol consumption, thereby inescapably working within the system; and

WHEREAS, his productivity is such that his responsibilities have been apportioned among five different offices; and

WHEREAS, he is known for his compassion, kindness, and approachability;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that on the occasion of his retirement, we honor Stephen A. Rittenberg for his extraordinary service to the University and its Senate.

Proponent: The University Senate