New Senior Leadership Appointments

Amy Fairchild Appointed New Chair of the Department of Sociomedical Sciences

Over the summer, Linda P. Fried, MD, MPH, dean and DeLamar Professor of the Mailman School of Public Health, appointed Amy Fairchild, PhD, MPH, associate professor of Sociomedical Sciences, as the new chair of the Department of Sociomedical Sciences for a two-year term.

Dr. Fairchild is both an accomplished historian and an insightful policy analyst. Her first book, *Science at the Borders: Immigrant Medical Inspection and the Shaping of the Modern Industrial Labor Force* established her reputation as a leading young researcher in the history of public health. She also has published *Searching Eyes: Privacy, the State, and Disease Surveillance in America*, as well as articles in lead history journals, such as the *Journal of Social History* and the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, and in some of the most prestigious public health, medical research, and science journals, including *Science*, the *American Journal of Public Health*, *Public Health Reports*, *Health Affairs*, *JAMA*, and the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Dr. Fairchild is a winner of the University’s Presidential Award for Teaching Excellence.

After leading the Department for seven successful years, Richard Parker, PhD, professor of Sociomedical Sciences, international core director of HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies, and director of the Center for Gender, Sexuality, and Health, stepped down to give greater focus to his substantial research portfolio and his work as Director of the Center for Sexuality, Gender and Health.

“During the past few months, I have worked closely with Dr. Fairchild as she has led the Department while Dr. Parker has been on sabbatical, and through these interactions have developed a deep respect for her ability as a leader,” said Dr. Fried. “She speaks forcefully for the needs of her Department while always maintaining a clear vision of what is best for the overall School.”

Melissa Begg Named Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Programs

On October 1, Melissa Begg, ScD, professor of clinical Biostatistics, and co-director of the Irving Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, assumed a new role as associate dean for
Interdisciplinary Programs at the Mailman School of Public Health. Dr. Begg represents the School on the health sciences campus by leading and facilitating the development of interdisciplinary, cross-school educational and research programs.

“In her new role, Dr. Begg works to enhance the Mailman School’s leadership in health research and education by identifying opportunities for partnerships between departments and schools,” said Dr. Fried.

In addition to continuing her work in promoting excellence in statistical education, Dr. Begg is working to create new synergies and advances, enrich the University’s translational research initiatives through the expertise and population-based approaches of the public health sciences, and ensure rigorous cross-disciplinary training as a key to the important discoveries in health research in the future.

Dr. Begg earned her doctorate in biostatistics from the Harvard School of Public Health in 1989. At the Mailman School, she has made significant contributions to research in the areas of oral health, mental health, and statistical methods. In 2000, Professor Begg assumed the role of director of academic programs for the Department of Biostatistics. Her excellence as an educator has been formally recognized on multiple occasions: in 2005, she was appointed to the CUMC Glenda Garvey Teaching Academy; in 2006, she received both the Mailman School’s Teaching Award from the graduating class and the University’s Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching. She was elected to the Board of the Association for Clinical Research Training in 2008.

Robyn Gershon Appointed Associate Dean for Research Resources

Dr. Fried announced that Robyn Gershon, DrPH, professor of clinical Sociomedical Science (and Nursing) will be the new associate dean for Research Resources in the Mailman School of Public Health. Starting November 1, Dr. Gershon will oversee the implementation of a set of strategies recently identified by the faculty as necessary for a smooth and well-functioning research infrastructure at the School. In her new role, Dr. Gershon will work to generate a more streamlined and responsive support infrastructure for the preparation and submission of grant applications.

“I am delighted that Dr. Gershon has agreed to lead this initiative and be part of our exceptional team of associate deans at the Mailman School,” said Dr. Fried. “Dr. Gershon brings her considerable experience on all aspects of grant development and management to this new position and she will be a strong advocate for an effective and efficient research management infrastructure.”

Dr. Gershon is an established independent investigator with an impressive record of external funding and scholarly productivity. Internationally recognized as a leader in the field of occupational health and safety, her numerous studies have involved an interdisciplinary perspective bringing together clinical, behavioral and social sciences. Her primary research focus has documented the risk factors for and consequences of workplace exposure in high risk work
settings. Her most recent work has focused on preparedness and management of urban disasters. Dr. Gershon has been the recipient of several awards, including a special commendation by the Fire Department of the City of New York for her valuable assistance on the development of the new high rise fire safety codes. As principal investigator on the World Trade Center Evacuation Study, her findings helped to inform important new regulations, and earlier work has also impacted several federal and state guidelines and standards.