On Campus

Cole and Cohen to Return to Teaching

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Provost Jonathan Cole and David H. Cohen, vice president and dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, have both announced plans to step down and return to teaching.

Jonathan Cole ’64C ’69GSAS has served as Columbia’s provost since 1989. At the request of President Bollinger, Cole has deferred his move until the 2003–2004 academic year.

The change will be the latest in a 43-year career spent entirely at Columbia. “The provost of provosts,” as Alison Richard, provost of Yale University, recently described him, began as a history major at Columbia College, earned a Ph.D. with highest honors in sociology, and, as a member of the Columbia faculty, went on to explore the nature of quality in scientific research and discovery. In 1987 he was named vice president for arts and sciences and Quetelet Professor of Social Science. In 2001 he became John Mitchell Mason Professor of the University, one of Columbia’s highest distinctions.

Cole is recognized in the academic world as a major force behind Columbia’s renaissance of the last fifteen years. Above all he has focused on recruiting and retaining a world-class faculty. As vice president and then as provost, he has collaborated with other administrators and deans to strengthen tenure review, reform the budget process, and invest in departments and multidisciplinary programs that take advantage of Columbia’s location in New York. To create new opportunities for basic research and biotechnology transfer, he worked to establish the Audubon Research Park in Washington Heights.

On other fronts, Cole spearheaded the modernization of Columbia’s libraries, a massive effort that included complete renovation of Butler Library, expansion of online services, and development of a remote storage facility shared with Princeton

and the New York Public Library. He has developed policies for research universities on the ownership of intellectual property, creating a structure that produced revenues for the University of more than $150 million this year. On the international scene, he was instrumental in developing the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America at Columbia, an intellectual and cultural exchange center; and in renovating the facilities and expanding the programs at Reid Hall, Columbia's French studies program in Paris.

David H. Cohen came to Columbia in 1995. He oversees 29 departments of instruction in the humanities and physical and social sciences, as well as Columbia College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the School of International and Public Affairs, the School of General Studies, Continuing Education, and the School of the Arts. He also holds a faculty appointment as professor of biological sciences and of psychiatry.

He has published about 100 scientific articles, chapters, and abstracts; chaired the Society for Neuroscience and the Association of American Medical Colleges; and served as associate editor of two major journals—while building eminent careers in both neuroscience and university administration. According to Cole, Cohen has strengthened graduate education across the boards, while reviving departments, building interdisciplinary collaborations and joint appointments, balancing the budget, and improving faculty relations by furthering close collaboration and faculty governance.

Cohen earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard in 1960 and his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in 1963. He spent the next year as a National Science Foundation postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Physiology and the Brain Research Institute at UCLA, and then began a teaching career that led him from Western Reserve to the chair of neurobiology at SUNY–Stony Brook and then to the chair of neuroscience at the University of Virginia. Before coming to Columbia, he was provost at Northwestern University, and prior to that, vice president for research and dean of the graduate school there. Under his leadership, Northwestern nearly tripled its research budget and nurtured multidisciplinary projects across the university.



Guide to school abbreviations