

Annual Research Report 2010–2011

An interview with Sandra L. Martin, PhD



Dr. Sandra Martin

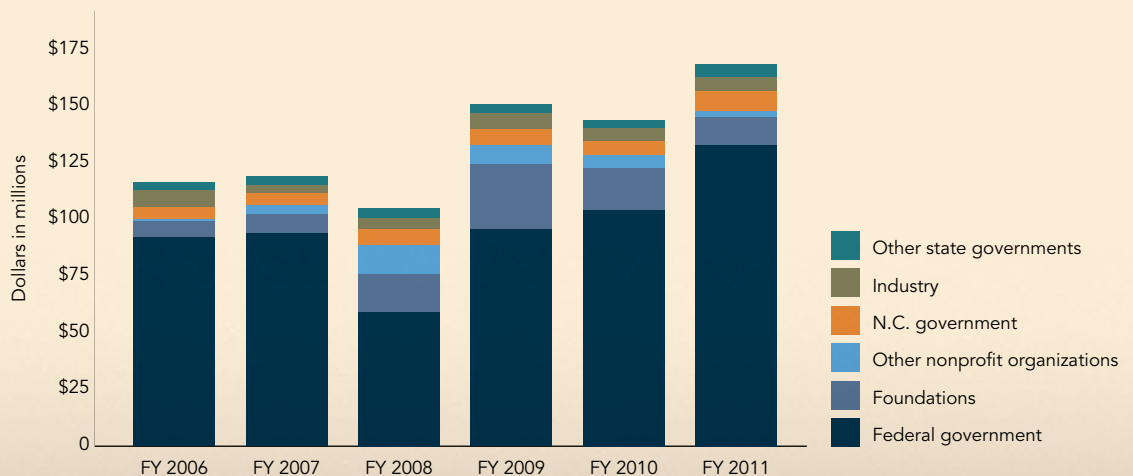
Martin has served since 2007 as associate dean for research at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. Having joined the School's faculty in 1990, she is professor and associate chair for research in the Department of Maternal and Child Health. Recent honors include UNC's Carolina Leadership Council Faculty Mentoring Award for 2010 and nomination for the Best Paper of Year Award (2011) from the journal *Violence Against Women* for her work on "Substance use by soldiers who abuse their spouses."

How would you characterize the School's research efforts over the past year?

We are doing very well. We received \$165 million in grants and contracts this year to fund an amazingly broad and rich research program. We averaged 2.65 grants/contracts per faculty member — which is impressive, considering how much work goes into writing proposals. About 80 percent of our research was funded by the federal government. The fact that we don't know how much federal support will be available in coming years underscores the importance of our individual and corporate donors.

Types of funding for grants and contracts awarded to principal investigators at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health (fiscal years ending June 30)

The majority of external funding in fiscal year 2011 (80 percent) was from the federal government.



How has the economy affected funding for School researchers?

There is no doubt that this economy is very challenging, but I'm so pleased to tell you that this year, our faculty members have been awarded a record amount of research funding—quite an accomplishment in light of today's harsh economic realities. What does one say about research that continues to be supported despite a decrease in the overall research dollars available from funders? I see it as testament to the innovative and important nature of the research being done here at Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Is there opportunity for students to be involved in faculty members' research at the School?

Absolutely. The research conducted at our School not only helps to find solutions to some of the most vexing public health problems; it also serves as an ideal training ground for our students. Most of our research projects include student research assistants. Working alongside faculty members, students get real-world research experiences—valuable training that will help them to develop into independent researchers.

What about funding for students?

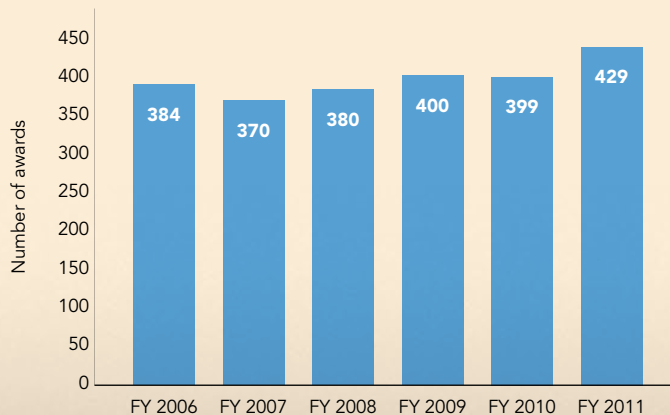
Our faculty members have a strong track record in the area of training-grant funding, awards that help to fund many of our students' educational experiences. This year, we received more than \$4.4 million for training grants from the National Institutes for Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other nonprofit agencies.

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Our training grants focus on infectious disease, maternal and child obesity, environmental health, cancer, health disparities, toxicology, mental health services and systems, and reproductive, perinatal and pediatric health. The grants provide support to cover tuition and stipends as well as training-related activities for our graduate students and postdoctoral fellows so they can enter the workforce as highly trained leaders in the field of public health.

Number of awards for grants and contracts to principal investigators at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health (fiscal years ending June 30)

Principal investigators at the School were awarded 429 grants and contracts during fiscal year 2011, an average of 2.65 per faculty investigator.



Dollars awarded from grants and contracts to principal investigators at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health (fiscal years ending June 30)

Members of the School's faculty were awarded \$165 million for grants and contracts in fiscal year 2011.

