September 18, 2018

Unacceptable Attacks on Science

The Trump administration's disregard for and assault on science have been well documented by the AAUP, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and others. Now President Trump himself has attacked the credibility of a study by George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health. He falsely claimed that the study, which found some 2,975 excess deaths in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria hit the island in September 2017, was "done by the Democrats in order to make me look as bad as possible."

The AAUP takes no position on the accuracy or inaccuracy of the GWU study or, for that matter, of any other scientific research. But such research can be properly evaluated only by qualified experts through open channels of review and debate. Studies of this sort must not become political footballs. For the president of the United States to accuse scholars of political bias, without a shred of evidence, is an unacceptable assault on independent research and the academic freedom of scientists.