**Peter Palese**is a Professor of Microbiology and the Chair of the Department of Microbiology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. His research is in the area of RNA-containing viruses with a special emphasis on influenza viruses. He has been a pioneer in the field of reverse genetics for negative strand RNA viruses, which allows the introduction of site-specific mutations into the genomes of these viruses. This technique is crucial for the study of the structure/function relationships of viral genes, for investigation of viral pathogenicity and for development and manufacture of novel vaccines. In recent years most of the efforts by Dr. Palese and by his collaborators at Mount Sinai, Dr. Adolfo Garcia-Sastre and Dr. Florian Krammer, have been directed at developing a Universal Influenza Virus Vaccine. Since the beginning of 2020, there has been a shift in directions as work on COVID-19 vaccines has become central to the research of Dr. Palese.