

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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SETTING OF SCIENCE PRIORITIES IS FOCUS OF HOUSE HEARING *JA*

On April 7, the House Science Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Rick Boucher (D-VA) held the first of two hearings on setting federal science priorities. The focus of this hearing was evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system for setting science priorities. To make this assessment, the subcommittee brought together Bernadine Healy, Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Walter Massey, Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), who was accompanied by James Powell, a member of the National Science Board (NSB) and Chief Executive Officer for the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia.

Healy described the NIH strategic planning process undertaken during the past year to bring "predictability and stability" to the agency's functioning and to establish priorities within NIH. She noted the participation of all NIH Institutes, Centers, and Divisions (ICDs), as well as the external community, in identifying the five "trans-NIH objectives" that ultimately formed the framework for the Strategic Plan: 1) Critical Science and Technology; 2) Research Capacity; 3) Intellectual Capacity; 4) Stewardship of Public Resources; and 5) Public Trust. Healy underscored the important role of the external science community and the institute advisory councils throughout the process.

In describing the priority-setting mechanisms of the NSF, Massey noted that underlying all of them is "the drive for scientific and technical excellence and progress." The most fundamental priority-setting mechanism in this regard is the merit review process, he said, but others include input from the scientific, engineering, and education communities; the National Science Board; advisory committees; professional societies; and the National Research Council. He called this a "bottom-up" process.

Massey described planning within NSF as a "continuous process" based on these "bottom-up" mechanisms. He mentioned that he had also created a new Office of Planning and Assessment and instituted a new long-range planning process "that

will take more fully into account new opportunities in science, technology, and education and that will be more responsive to changing national and international needs."

Massey Cites Role of Congress

Massey then moved from NSF to a discussion of priority-setting across federal agencies and branches of government. He described interagency cooperation as a "formidable task," and credited the revitalization of the Federal Coordinating Council on Science, Engineering, and Technology (FCCSET) with bringing some measure of coordination to it. But, he said, "priority-setting at the Federal level is not exclusively an Executive Branch activity, for Congress ultimately determines national priorities and resource allocations." He then charged Congress to reexamine "its own processes for identifying and supporting research priorities," especially problems that result 1) from having divided jurisdiction for the Federal R&D enterprise among numerous committees, and 2) from having single year appropriations for multi-year projects.

Questions from subcommittee members began with Rep. George Brown (D-CA), chairman of the full Science, Space, and Technology Committee, who asked what criteria should be used within the

INSIDE UPDATE...

- NRC Committee Examines Doctoral Education
- COSSA Testimony Promotes Social Science Research on Rural America
- House Hunger Committee Begins Hearings on Welfare Reform
- Robert Sweet Ousted at OJJDP
- Kosters Named to Head Bureau of Labor Statistics
- OSAP Director Named Acting Administrator of ADAMHA
- Social Science Volunteers Sought
- Sources of Research Support: Public Health Service

agencies for priority-setting. Healy identified two general criteria: "pressing public need, and extraordinary opportunity." Massey suggested as an external criteria that we also look at what we are not funding and what we are losing by not funding it.

Chairman Boucher set the tone for the rest of the discussion by focusing on the question of whether more federal centralization and coordination is necessary for priority-setting, and whether this would best be done by formalizing the FCCSET structure, or by extending the role of the National Science Board beyond NSF.

Powell suggested that both were possible, in that the NSB had the expertise, but FCCSET had the big-science coordination experience. For him the issue would be "how the NSB fits into FCCSET," given that it is not now involved directly in it.

Healy, on the other hand, expressed reservation about formalizing the FCCSET structure, since "its role is coordination, not policy-setting." She also said that the nature of the NIH as more mission-oriented than NSF, and as "more than science," would make it difficult to be "under a science-only umbrella" of the NSB. In sum, she suggested that a new mechanism was necessary to bring all agency heads together to discuss science policy issues regularly, and that it would need to "have the ears of Congress and the President."

In making this latter point, Healy noted that this was the first time as NIH Director that she was invited to speak before the Science Committee, and

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that within the federal government in general, health is not recognized as high a priority as science.

Massey agreed with Healy that enhancing the role of the NSB was not the best idea, (especially since it is not established statutorily as an advisory board, but rather as a component of NSF itself) but he disagreed about FCCSET. He argued that it was the appropriate trans-agency mechanism, that anything could be done within its structure to improve its coordinating function, and that an additional structure was, therefore, not necessary.

NRC COMMITTEE EXAMINES DOCTORAL EDUCATION HS

The National Research Council's (NRC) "Committee for the Study of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States" held its second formal meeting on April 7 and 8. The Committee is conducting a three-year study of doctoral programs in America's universities and predates its work on an earlier NRC study published in 1982, An Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States. The new Committee hopes to move beyond the 1982 work and develop multi-dimensional measures of graduate program quality.

Brendan Maher, Dean of the Graduate School at Harvard, who co-chairs the committee with Marvin Goldberger of UCLA, chaired the April meeting. Alan Fechter, head of the Office of Scientific and Engineering Personnel (OSEP), served as an advisor to the committee, and Pamela Flattau OSEP's Director of Surveys and Studies, is the acting study director. (A list of the committee can be found on p. 3)

The committee is organized into ad-hoc panels to develop various phases of the three-year study. In addition, the staff is working on outreach to organizations and the public concerned with the outcomes of the study. The committee will meet three times a year -- April, July and December -- through 1994.

Much of the discussion on the first day focused on the committee's Faculty Survey, an attempt to use peer-review ratings to measure the effectiveness of graduate programs. This "reputational" approach was compared to the recent "rankings" published by U.S. News and World Report. The ad-hoc panel on Questionnaire Design chaired by Norm Bradburn,

Director of the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), and the ad-hoc panel on the Faculty Survey, chaired by Lincoln Moses of Stanford, reported that it was clear that the questionnaire design panel was uncomfortable with the questions from the previous survey (1982), but there was little consensus on what else to ask. Jonathan Cole, Provost of Columbia, and a member of the panel, was concerned about how this survey would differ from the U.S. News report. He argued for more information about the peer "raters" and he urged moving beyond "reputation" effects to multi-dimensional measures. The ad-hoc panel will continue to explore alternative questions.

Moses' panel, which is concerned with the logistics of conducting the survey, hopes to get the questionnaire to respondents by January. It is a mail survey with a telephone reminder follow-up. Each university has a coordinator, usually the Dean of the Graduate School, who helps select the sample of raters. Which fields will be rated is still open, although the thirty-two fields included in the 1982 study will probably be rated again. Panel members expressed concern about response rates in an era when cooperation with survey research has declined.

A number of committee members argued for enlarging the raters to include representatives from outside institutions, e.g. small liberal arts faculty, industrial sector, award winners, NIH study sections, and NSF panel members. It was agreed that the characteristics of the 1982 raters would be analyzed, and that an effective reputational survey of the industrial sector will be attempted.

The committee will also utilize other data besides the survey to measure program effectiveness. For example, a representative from The Institute of Scientific Information presented ISI's capacity for measuring faculty citations, and Sarah Pritchard of the Association of Research Libraries described measures of library resources.

Other factors to be measured are program size, student characteristics, faculty characteristics, and institutional environment. Under discussion is a combination of old measures and some new ones that will undergo pilot testing.

Underlying the two days of discussion were the larger questions of the value of such an undertaking, including questions of who would use the data and for what purposes. Jules Lapidus, President of the Council of Graduate Schools and former Graduate School Dean at Ohio State, noted that the 1982

Committee for the Study of Research Doctorate Programs

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| Marvin Goldberger (co-chair) UCLA Physics | Elsa Garmire Center for Laser Studies USC Physics |
| Brendan Maher (co-chair) Harvard University Clinical Psychology | Philip Griffiths Inst. for Advanced Study Mathematics |
| Richard Atkinson UC-San Diego Mathematical Psychology | Gardner Lindzey Ctr. for the Advanced Study in Behav. Sciences Psychology |
| Norman Bradburn Nat'l Opinion Rsrch. Ctr. University of Chicago Social Psychology | Pamela Mellon UC-San Diego Molecular Biology |
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| John D'Arms University of Michigan Classics | Stephen Stigler University of Chicago Statistics |
| Jane S. de Hart UC-Santa Barbara History | James H. Wyche Brown University Bacterial Genetics |

study was used for institutional promotion and institutional change. Bob Rosenzweig, President of AAU, reminded the panel that in an era of resource constraints, the results of this study will be utilized for important administrative decisions. Along with some others, Rosenzweig argued for case studies to develop qualitative pictures of what schools are doing right in their graduate training.

The committee will meet next in Irvine, CA in July, where many decisions about the study will be made.

COSSA TESTIMONY PROMOTES SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ON RURAL AMERICA HS

As it has done for the past five years, COSSA presented testimony to both the House and Senate agriculture appropriations subcommittees advocating increased funding for social and behavioral science research on rural America. In 1991, previous efforts achieved success with a first-time appropriation of \$4 million for the Markets, Trade and Policy (MTP) component of the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants (NRI) program of the Cooperative State Research Service.

This year's testimony was prepared by Sam Cordes, Professor of Agricultural Economics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and submitted to the House Rural Development, Agriculture and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee chaired by Rep. Jamie Whitten (D-MS), and the Senate Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee chaired by Sen. Quentin Burdick (D-ND).

Cordes noted that the administration has requested an increase of \$52.5 million (from \$97.5 million to \$150 million) for FY 1993. However, only \$1 million of the increase is slated for MTP, which Cordes claimed was insufficient to meet the extremely broad range of subject matter for research under this element of the NRI program. These include: assessing potential international markets for agricultural and forest commodities; estimating the sensitivity of U.S. exports to changes in cost of production, fiscal policies, trade policies, monetary exchange rates, and global restructuring; assessing technologies to determine the benefits and costs of adopting new agricultural production methods; identifying new ways of improving the social and economic well-being of rural families and communities; determining the forces that have an impact on population change and employment in rural America; and identifying strategies for diversifying local economies in rural America. Given this wide agenda, COSSA has recommended \$11 million for MTP research.

The testimony also called for inclusion of social science perspectives in all the components of the NRI, since the program was designed to "place significant emphasis on multidisciplinary research." Cordes expressed particular concern over the omission of research on "policy and economic decisions" from the water quality section of NRI.

This exclusion is disturbing, according to Cordes, since major issues associated with water quality include those in which social scientists specialize, such as: measuring the monetary and non-monetary trade-offs among competing social policy objectives; and understanding the complex decision-making framework that encourages or discourages farmers to adopt new agronomic techniques.

In addition, the testimony raised a number of social, economic, institutional, and policy questions facing rural America that "social scientists have a comparative advantage in researching." Primary among these is the basic question of how Federal policies have an impact on the economic health and social well-being of rural communities and families.

Faced with difficult fiscal constraints the appropriations committees will need strong encouragement to increase any program for FY 1993 beyond its FY 1992 level.

HOUSE HUNGER COMMITTEE BEGINS HEARINGS ON WELFARE REFORM JA

Declaring that welfare will become the "whipping-boy" of the current Presidential campaign, Rep. Mike Espy (D-MS), Chairman of the Domestic Task Force of the House Select Committee on Hunger, convened the first of three hearings on the welfare reform debate. The April 9 hearing, titled, "Federal Policy Perspectives on Welfare Reform: Rhetoric, Reality, and Opportunities," focused on the debate at the federal level; subsequent hearings will look at state and local perspectives, and the views of poor people themselves.

The first hearing brought together four scholars of welfare policy who agreed that reform was necessary, but presented different recommendations. Isabel V. Sawhill, Senior Fellow at the Urban Institute, began by stating that "the current welfare system may have outlived its usefulness: We may need to replace it, not to reform it." She cited the public's obvious dislike for welfare, as manifest in the adoption of punitive policies among many states and the "stinginess" of the federal government.

Sawhill credited the 1988 Family Support Act (FSA) with moving welfare reform in the right direction by placing greater emphasis on work and on the primary responsibility of families, including fathers. But, she said, the FSA fell short in two significant ways: first, by missing the opportunity to

create a two-generational model -- by, for example, including developmental early child care for all eligible children -- and second, by failing to create a job or wage subsidy component. Sawhill suggested that if we had both of these, we could replace the current system with a temporary wage subsidy program.

A different approach was offered by Robert Rector, a researcher at the Heritage Foundation, who stated more baldly that the "welfare system we have in the U.S. is a failure." Rector claimed that the U.S. is now spending 4 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on welfare, which he defined as "the 75 means-tested programs at the federal, state, and local level." He suggested that welfare reform must begin with an understanding of two types of poverty: "material," which includes substandard housing, malnutrition, and other manifestations of economic impoverishment; and "behavioral," which includes "illegitimate" births, illicit drug use, lack of educational motivation, and other anti-social behaviors. Rector claimed that while "in reality, there is little material poverty in the U.S.," behavioral poverty has increased tremendously as a result of our "check-in-the-mail" welfare system. He characterized requirements of the current system that discourage work and marriage among AFDC recipients as the "incentive system from Hell."

Rector identified four basic methods of reforming the welfare system: 1) reduce welfare benefits to non-working single mothers; 2) require able-bodied welfare recipients to work or perform community service in exchange for benefits; 3) provide greater tax relief to low income working families; and 4) provide universal health coverage to poor and working families through tax credits and vouchers for medical insurance.

Current System Not Meeting Basic Needs

Mark Greenberg, Senior Staff Attorney at the Center for Law and Social Policy in Washington, DC, summarized the fundamental problems of the current welfare system as that it "does not provide enough assistance to meet basic needs, does not provide enough assistance to help people succeed in the labor market, punishes poor families for working and punishes poor families for being married." He then described a number of state initiatives designed to reform the system, but which have proven to be more punitive than effective, for example, terminating AFDC benefits after six or nine months even if a family still needs assistance.

ROBERT SWEET OUSTED AT OJJDP

MB

Robert Sweet has been removed from his position as Administrator for the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Gerald Regier, currently the Acting Administrator at the Bureau of Justice Assistance, has been named interim head of OJJDP.

Sweet's dismissal, which occurred on April 10, was done, in the words of a Justice Department official, "to improve the efficiency of the office." At this time it remains unclear what effect Sweet's firing will have on the ongoing Congressional reauthorization of OJJDP. In addition to training and technical assistance programs, OJJDP supports social and behavioral science research.

The fourth, and final panelist, Michael Sherraden, a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, suggested that instead of focusing on "monthly income and level of consumption associated with it," as he claimed most welfare analysts do, we should advocate an "asset accumulation" focus, by encouraging property ownership. He argued that ownership translates into "citizenship, participation, investment, and economic growth," and that an "asset-based domestic policy would combine social welfare and economic development to create a more democratic capitalism."

As examples of asset-based policies, Sherraden identified proposals for home ownership of public housing units (advocated by Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Jack Kemp); the development of microenterprises and self-employment among welfare recipients; raising current AFDC asset limits from \$1,000 to \$10,000; and the creation of Individual Development Accounts (IDA)--"optional, earnings-bearing, tax-benefitted accounts" restricted to designated purposes.

While the specific recommendations of the panelists differed, all agreed that the current welfare system is in serious need of overhaul, if not replacement. Each identified the disincentives to marriage, work, and asset-accumulation built into the AFDC program as key to the problem, and each

argued for the creation of programs that provide incentives rather than punishments for employment, marriage, and accumulating savings.

KOSTERS NAMED TO HEAD BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS *HS*

Marvin Kosters, resident scholar and, since 1987, director of economic studies, at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), has been nominated by President Bush as the new Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Kosters will succeed Janet Norwood, who resigned in 1991 to join the Urban Institute.

Kosters, nominated for a four year term, has also served as director of the Center for the Study of Government Regulation (1976-86) at AEI, where he has also been a member of the Board of Editors of Regulation and the AEI Economist. He served previously in the Office of the Assistant to the President for Economic Affairs (1974-75), as Counselor to the Chairman and associate director for economic policy at the United States Council of Living Council (1971-74), and as senior staff economist for the Council of Economic Advisers (1969-71).

The new commissioner spent four years as an economist at the RAND Corporation (1965-69), and has taught at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Chicago.

He currently serves on the Research Advisory Board for the Committee for Economic Development and the National Advisory Committee for the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin. He has been a consultant to the Department of Labor and spent two months there in 1971 as the Associate Manpower administrator for Policy, Evaluation and Research in the Manpower Administration.

Kosters is the author of numerous articles and reports on American jobs and wage and income trends. He has also been a frequent witness on Capitol Hill. He earned a B.A. from Calvin College in Michigan and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Chicago. Kosters faces Senate confirmation before he officially assumes his new duties.

OSAP DIRECTOR NAMED ACTING ADMINISTRATOR OF ADAMHA *JA*

Effective April 1, 1992, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Louis Sullivan, appointed Elaine M. Johnson, Ph.D. acting administrator of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), pending Presidential appointment and Senate confirmation of a permanent administrator. Since 1988, Johnson has been Director of ADAMHA's Office of Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP), and previous to that she was deputy director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

Johnson received her bachelor's degree from Morgan State University and her master's and doctorate in social work from the University of Maryland. She has more than 20 years of experience in substance abuse treatment, prevention and research. Her appointment follows the controversial resignation of Frederick Goodwin (see Update, March 23, 1992), and the retirement of ADAMHA deputy administrator, Robert Trachtenberg.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT *MB*

Social science volunteers, particularly in the Washington area, are invited to participate in Senior Scientists and Engineers (SSE), a program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. SSE would welcome volunteer economists, psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and other social scientists to complement the natural scientists, mathematicians, and engineers who have been involved in the program to date.

SSE volunteers have recorded technical texts for visually impaired persons and helped with demonstrations, instruction, and tutoring in Washington area public schools and museums. They have been invited to prepare case studies and reports for the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee and the Science Policy Research Division of the Congressional Research Service. Other volunteer opportunities are being developed.

For further information, please contact Patricia Curlin, AAAS, 1333 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, phone: (202) 326-6664.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE KC

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the agency for further information or application materials. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

Agency for Health Care Policy and Research

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) invite qualified researchers to submit new and supplemental applications for research projects that focus on the distribution of the elderly population across geographic areas; the factors influencing this distribution; and the social, economic and health services impacts of these distributions.

Application Procedure: Applicants are to use the research project application form PHS 398 available from the Office of Grants Inquiries, Division of Research Grants, National Institutes of Health, Westwood Building, Rm. 449, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 496-7441. Individual fellowship applicants must use PHS 416-1. Five copies of the application must be mailed to: Division of Research Grants, National Institutes of Health, Westwood Building, Rm. 240, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Eligible Applicants: Applicants for research grants may be made by public and private, for-profit and non-profit organizations, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, or laboratories. Women and minority investigators, in particular, are encouraged to apply. Foreign institutions are welcome to apply but are advised to consult NIA or AHCPR staff before applying and are strongly encouraged to apply in collaboration with a U.S. institution.

Funding Mechanism: The primary mechanisms for support of this initiative are the research project grant (R01), program project grant (P01), First Independent Research Support and Transition (FIRST) Award (R29), and individual fellowships (F32), (F33).

Review Process: R01, R29, F32, F33 and K04 applications will be reviewed for scientific and technical merit by an appropriate Initial Review Group of the Division of Research Grants. All other applications (K01, P01, and R13) will be reviewed by an appropriate Institute review group. Secondary review will be by the corresponding National Advisory Council. Applications compete on the basis of scientific merit.

Deadlines: Receipt dates for Research Project Grant, Career Development Award, and FIRST Award applications are February 1, June 1, and October 1 of each year. Those for the individual fellowship (F32, F33) applications are January 10, May 10, and September 10.

Contact: For further information, contact:

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