

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

Volume XIII, Number 1

January 10, 1994

## LOOKING FORWARD TO 1994: BUDGET LIMITS CONTRAIN OPTIONS

Although Congress remains out of session until January 25 and the President will soon embark on a European trip, final preparations are being made for the budgetary and policy battles that are likely to loom large in 1994.

President Clinton is scheduled to deliver his State of the Union address on January 25, followed by the release of his FY 1995 budget on February 7. In late December, Office of Management and Budget director Leon Panetta previewed the upcoming budget. The budget bill passed in the summer of 1993 provides a hard freeze on discretionary spending outlays in FY 1995, causing Panetta to announce that 9 of the 14 Cabinet departments will suffer real reductions from their FY 1994 levels.

According to Panetta, the President is still committed to granting increases to those agencies deemed important to the nation's economic competitiveness. The OMB director said that this includes health research supported by NIH, fundamental scientific research supported by NSF, and technology development supported by the National Institutes on Standards and Technology. Education and training programs will also gain special budget protection, according to the OMB director. Congress, of course, may have other priorities.

In addition to the usual battles over spending priorities, the major battle for the President in 1994 will be health care reform. Many congressional committees will hold hearings and weigh competing proposals, with the expectation that some reform bill will emerge by the end of the year. It appears welfare reform will shift to the back burner until a resolution is reached on health reform. Reinventing government, through modernization of equipment and attrition of federal workers, will continue.

For science and technology offices the new year brings special challenges. A preview follows:

## Office of Science and Technology Policy

The new National Science and Technology Council will hold its first meeting soon and its nine committees will begin to operate to coordinate overall S&T policy, efforts in which Vice President Al Gore and presidential science adviser John Gibbons will play major roles.

The new President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology (PCAST) will be named soon, and the 15 member body is expected to include a number of social and behavioral scientists.

OSTP continues to add staff, with a new Assistant Director for the Social and Behavioral Sciences likely to be named in February. The immediate focus for M.R.C. Greenwood, Associate Director for Science, is a two-day forum in late January that will bring together over 100 distinguished scientists to generate a document concerning science that would parallel last year's White House document "Technology for America's Economic Growth, A New Direction to Build Economic Strength."

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### National Science Foundation

Neal Lane begins his first full year as Director. A Deputy Director will be nominated soon, and it is quite likely the person could be a social/behavioral scientist. As a favored agency in the President's budget, NSF could be a target for those members of Congress who want to rearrange priorities.

In addition, the Foundation owes Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), chair of the appropriations panel in the Senate that oversees NSF, a report on its implementation of her recommendations for NSF to conduct more strategic research. Another NSF report on implementing the Human Capital Initiative is also due to the Maryland Senator. On the House appropriations side, Richard Malow, long time Chief Clerk of the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Subcommittee has departed his post.

The House Science, Space and Technology Committee will return to the NSF reauthorization after the release of the budget. The Senate's attention span for this issue may be relatively short and will not occur until after the House has acted.

### National Institutes of Health

Harold Varmus begins his first full year as Director, and implementation of the Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research still remains a pressing issue. Efforts to appoint a search committee to find a director for the office have lagged. According to the legislation creating the office, a report is due to Congress in February, describing support for behavioral and social science at NIH.

#### CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community. Update is published fortnightly. Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$60; institutional subscriptions, \$120, overseas mail, \$120. ISSN 0749-4394. Address all inquiries to COSSA, 1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: (202) 842-3525, Fax: (202) 842-2788

### Other Issues

The reauthorization of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement remains unresolved from 1993. With Congress focused on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act could OERI get lost again? The directorships of the Census Bureau, National Institute of Justice, and Bureau of Justice Statistics remain unfilled. This year, Congress may reauthorize the Office of Justice Programs which houses NIJ and BJS. The proposed reorganization of the research offices at the Department of Agriculture should become reality. The Census Bureau will continue to prepare for the 2000 Census and try to satisfy its appropriators disgust with the Bureau for the 1990 operation. Finally, an information infrastructure applications bill may yet emerge from the Senate with a provision for social implications research.

Members of Congress will continue to announce their retirements, some to seek other offices, and other Cabinet officers may follow Les Aspin out of the government. With congressional and key state gubernatorial (CA,NY,TX and FL) elections looming, political sensitivities will be heightened as well.

### NSF AND SBE SEEK APPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUMENTATION PROGRAM

The Academic Research Infrastructure Program received one of the major increases in the National Science Foundation's FY 1994 budget, and one half of the program will spend \$55 million to support the acquisition or development of major research instrumentation. Although there was some concern that the social, behavioral and economic (SBE) sciences would be omitted from the competition, (see *Update*, December 13, 1993) the solicitation announcement (NSF 93-172) includes specific provisions to improve the prospects of awards to SBE scientists.

The program will assist in the acquisition or development and maintenance and technical support of major research instrumentation that is not usually available through other NSF programs. Proposals may be for a single instrument, a large system of instruments, or multiple instruments that are used to address a common research problem. The research activities utilizing this equipment need not be supported by NSF or the Federal Government. A

list of assorted equipment without a common research theme will not be reviewed.

Although most awards will range from \$100,000 to \$2 million, because many SBE research tools cost less, an exemption has been made, and the floor for these awards will be \$40,000. SBE proposals will be reviewed by a peer review panel of SBE scientists. A 30 percent of total costs matching or cost-sharing requirement has been included. The match need not be defined solely for the instrument purchase.

Proposals may be submitted by institutions of higher education, independent nonprofit research institutions, research museums, and legally incorporated consortia thereof. Although a limit of two proposals per institution is allowed, if SBE proposals are not submitted by the institution, they may be sent -- prepared in accordance with competition guidelines -- directly to the most relevant program within SBE. **The deadline for proposals is March 15, 1994.**

In addition, since SBE has no instrumentation program of its own, it has discussed the possibility of initiating one. The predecessor to the Foundation's SBE Directorate, the Biological, Behavioral and Social Science (BBS) Directorate, received slightly over \$1 million of a \$35 million BBS instrumentation program. SBE seeks advice and expressions of interest from members of the social, behavioral and economic science community for an SBE instrumentation program.

For further information contact Dr. John Yellen, Archaeology Program, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230; Phone: 703/306-1759.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDY PROGRAM FINALLY UNDERWAY**

After two years of bureaucratic delay and a congressional brush with elimination, the National Security Education Program (NSEP) is operational, with NSEP officials distributing applications for study in the 1994-1995 academic year.

Passed by Congress in October 1991, the NSEP sought to convert up to \$150 million in intelligence funds to a self-perpetuating trust fund to support international exchanges and area studies. From its inception, the program was impeded by a technical flaw in the enacting legislation, administrative

delays, and concerns over NSEP's being location in the Defense Department.

For much of 1993 NSEP was on the brink of elimination for what many perceived as retaliation for the bill's chief architect, Senator David Boren (D-OK), becoming an outspoken critic of President Clinton's tax and budget proposals. The authorizing and appropriating panels in the House voted to disband the program, and only a last-minute compromise with the Senate saved it. The compromise reduced the trust fund by \$17 million.

Congress gave the NSEP the authority to spend up \$24 million of the trust fund in Fiscal Year 1994, and the NSEP staff are now receiving applications for undergraduate scholarships, graduate fellowships, and institutional grants to develop advanced expertise in languages and knowledge of regions not widely studied by Americans.

Another hurdle for the NSEP to clear is the naming of the 13 member board that approves all the program's grants. Seven members have seats by virtue of their government position, with the White House selecting the remaining members from outside government. While these six have yet to be nominated, those actively involved with NSEP say some if not all of the nominations are imminent.

For more information contact the National Security Education Program, P.O. Box 47103, Washington, D.C. 20050-7103, phone: (703) 696-1991.

## **CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY REDESIGN IMPLEMENTED**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of the Census have completed a major redesign of the Current Population Survey (CPS) the source of the nation's statistics on the labor force, total employment, unemployment, and persons not in the labor force. The revised version will be used by CPS interviewers on a regular basis for the first time in January 1994 and is expected to create a slight increase in the reported unemployment rate in February.

The CPS began in 1940 and has seen changes to its questionnaire and sample size (from 8,000 to the present 60,000) over the years. Faced with significant societal changes in the 26 years since the last revision of the questionnaire -- the continuing growth of service sector jobs; the more prominent

### **NIMH TO HOLD MINORITY TRAINING PROGRAM IN HIV/AIDS RESEARCH**

The National Institute of Mental Health will be sponsoring a minority training program in HIV/AIDS research. The postdoctoral opportunity will be conducted through the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan.

The program, which will run from May 31 through August 30, 1994, will produce a scholarly proposal for funding or publication in the area of HIV/AIDS. The application deadline is February 15, 1994. For more information, contact Barbara Guthrie, Program Coordinator, Institute for Social Research, P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248, phone: (313) 763-0045.

role of women, particularly mothers in the workforce; more part-time work and the less permanent attachment of workers to their employers -- the need for a new survey instrument was apparent. In addition, new techniques in survey research and data collection procedures provide opportunities to gather more precise information about the labor force.

The new survey will collect information using computer assisted interview techniques. Utilizing improved labor force classifications, questions have been tailored and made more precise for particular types of workers and labor market situations. In addition, the new instrument will allow for better data on people who work two or more jobs and better tracking of individuals over time. This will provide improved support for analyses of job creation and movements in and out of employment and unemployment.

Testing of the new instrument and new collection procedure during 1992-93 produced statistically significant increases of one-half of one percent in the unemployment rate for all workers. BLS attributes this to a number of factors: 1) gender bias in the current CPS that caused some unemployed women to be misclassified as not in the labor force. For example: the old CPS asked "What were you doing most of last week working or something else, going to school or something else, keeping house or something else?" The new version asks "Last week, did you do any work for either pay

or profit?" 2) structure and wording of current inquiries about layoffs caused some of these people to be omitted or misclassified; and 3) new wording of the "looking for work" question may result in fewer people classified as "discouraged workers" and more folks categorized as unemployed.

For further information about the revised CPS contact Dr. Thomas Plewes, Associate Commissioner, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 202/606-6400.

### **NAS CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA ACCESS PANEL ISSUES REPORT**

The National Academy of Science's Panel on Data Confidentiality and Data Access, chaired by George Duncan, Professor of Statistics at Carnegie Mellon University, recently issued a report on the tensions faced by federal statistical agencies between protecting the confidentiality of respondents and the need for access to data for policy decisions and research. The recommendations reflect the tradeoffs necessary to make the statistical system work.

The recommendations include:

- ◆ enacting legislation to protect all data collected and maintained by federal agencies for statistical purposes from mandatory disclosures for any other purposes;
- ◆ increasing interagency data sharing under carefully controlled circumstances;
- ◆ providing survey respondents with clear explanations of the conditions and consequences of their participation, including possible linkages with other data sets;
- ◆ encouraging participation by statistical agencies in research projects on statistical disclosure analysis;
- ◆ enforcing legal sanctions against users, both external and agency employees, who violate requirements to maintain the confidentiality of data; and
- ◆ improving access of external users to statistical data, including continued widespread release, with minimal restrictions on use, of microdata sets with no less detail than currently provided.

The report, *Private Lives and Public Policies*, produced under the sponsorship of the National Research Council and the Social Science Research Council, examined a decentralized federal statistical system where over 70 agencies have a role in collecting data from individuals, households, farms, businesses, and governmental bodies and disseminating those data for a variety of statistical purposes.

The 12 member panel was guided by three principles: 1) democratic accountability, the recognition that the public needs access to information on the effectiveness of government policies to determine responsibility; 2) constitutional empowerment, the ability of citizens to make informed decisions about political, economic, and social questions; and 3) individual autonomy, the capacity of members of society to function as individuals, uncoerced and with privacy.

The report is available from the National Academy Press 202/334-3313 or 1-800-624-6242.

In addition to the NRC/SSRC report, the *Journal of Official Statistics*, published by Statistics Sweden (Volume 9 No.2 1993) devotes its entire issue to questions of confidentiality and access. Many of the people associated with the report are authors of the articles in this special volume.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PUBLISHES STUDY OF YOUTH INDICATORS

As the nation continues to focus on the problems and potential of its young people, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Department of Education has issued its third biennial statistical compilation, *Youth Indicators 1993: Trends in the Well Being of American Youth*.

The volume provides data that, according to NCES Commissioner Emerson Elliot, "is central to long-term policy debates on education issues." The data focus on the home life of young people, providing indicators of marriage and divorce, births to unmarried women, children of single parents, housing conditions, the living arrangements of young people, father's and mother's employment, income and poverty, federal aid to families, and college costs.

In addition, data examining school enrollment, school performance, and extracurricular activities,

### EDITOR'S NOTE: INDEX AVAILABLE

This is the first issue of *Update* for 1994. *Update*, published bi-weekly, is written and produced by the COSSA staff and covers federal policies and debates relevant to social and behavioral scientists.

We welcome your questions, comments, and ideas for future issues. Our address is 1522 K Street, N.W., Suite 836, Washington, D.C. 20005, phone: (202) 842-3525, fax: (202) 842-2788.

A topical index for the 1993 editions of *Update* is now available. Please contact COSSA to obtain a copy.

including employment and spending patterns of teenagers, produce more statistical portraits of America's youth.

A section on health indicates that although young people are generally healthy, problems exist, usually as a result of behavior rather than disease. The report displays data on AIDS knowledge and awareness, physical fitness, tobacco, alcohol and drug use, and violent crime victimization.

Measures of volunteerism, religious beliefs, crime participation, and attitudes compared to their parents exhibit indicators of citizenship and values. Finally, the educational and employment aspirations of young people are displayed.

Although the report presents useful data, some of it longitudinal, NCES acknowledges the linkages with more subtle measures of youth's behavior and performance are harder to ascertain. Assessments examining perceptions of youth with regard to their friendships, their future, the influence of adults, and the ability to cope with adversity are more difficult to measure. Perhaps another attempt at a major American teen survey (one was cancelled by the Bush administration because of its questions about sexual behavior) would provide greater insight into this aspect of youth in America.

For more information on the report, contact NCES at (202) 219-1828. Copies of the study are sold through the U.S. Government Printing Office.

## HELPING CONGRESS; SUPPORT AGENCIES DISCUSS USE OF RESEARCH

The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) recently held a luncheon seminar in conjunction with its annual meeting where staff from the General Accounting Office (GAO), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and the Congressional Research Service (CRS) explained the missions of their agencies and their use of social and behavioral science research.

Joe Delfico, Director, Income Security Issues, began the seminar with an overview of the General Accounting Office (GAO), and said that the GAO relies on many disciplines. "In the past, it has been slanted towards psychology and sociology, but economics is now the dominant discipline," he said. With the GAO testifying 100 to 200 times a year and often on short notice, Delfico said there is not a lot of time to do research. Currently, projects average 10 months to a year, down from an average of 15 months. He expects next year the average will be only 5 months to complete a project, and added that there is no time for experimental design work. "Members want quick answers on the impact programs are having in their districts," Delfico stated.

Janice Peskin, an economist and Principle Analyst for Human Resources and Community Development of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), identified three areas of budgetary analysis which the CBO provides: 1) five year budget projections and cost estimates for every bill from a committee as well as estimates for floor amendments; 2) economic forecasting; and 3) policy analysis of programs that effect the budget. She said that research is performed by statisticians and economists and is almost entirely quantitative, and that the CBO tries to ensure their work is complimentary, not duplicative. The CBO may also use findings from outside studies that provide new national data on policy relevant issues and that quantify important relationships, she added.

Ruth Wassem, a historian on staff with the Congressional Research Service (CRS), explained that CRS works exclusively for Congress, conducting research, analyzing legislation, and providing information at the request of committees, Members and their staffs. "From January-August, 1994, CRS completed over 420,000 requests, 45% were for analysis. Approximately 4,600 were customized,

## COSSA STAFF ADDS INTERN

COSSA is pleased to announce the arrival of Elizabeth Harrell, who will be interning at COSSA through May of this year. Harrell, who holds a B.A. from the College of Wooster, is currently enrolled in The George Washington University's graduate program of Public Policy and Women's Studies and will be focusing on health and behavior issues while at COSSA.

personal briefings," Wassem reported. "This work is confidential, and CRS gives a lot of advice," she added. Reflective of the priorities of the new administration, Wassem stated that the "domestic policy workload had increased dramatically." True to her discipline, she expressed her sensitivity to the providing "the big picture over time" in her research.

Invited, but not present at the seminar, was the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), a fourth Congressional Support Agency. OTA's task is to provide early warnings and analyses of emerging, difficult, and often highly technical issues, clarifying for Congress both the range of policy options and the potential impacts of adopting each of these options.

For information regarding CBO reports, call (202) 226-2809; for GAO reports, (202) 512-6000; for OTA reports (202) 224-8996. Contact your Congressperson for CRS data.

## CORRECTION

The Fiscal Year 1994 funding level for educational and cultural exchanges supported by the U.S. Information Agency was incorrectly listed in the appropriations chart in the December 13, 1993 issue of *Update*. The correct figure is \$242.0 million.

## **SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH**

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.

### **Centers for Behavioral Science Research**

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) invites applications for Centers for Behavioral Science Research (CBSR). The purpose of such a Center is to provide a unified, integrated research environment in which to pursue novel and focused questions in basic behavioral science related to mental health. It is expected that this mechanism will encourage investigators from a variety of disciplines and approaches to contribute the full range of expertise and advanced technologies available in the basic behavioral sciences.

**Letter of Intent:** Applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of intent, by **February 10, 1994**. The letter of intent should include a title of the proposed Center, the name, address, and telephone number of the Center Director, descriptive titles of the Core(s) and Individual Research Projects, names of other key personnel, and participating institutions.

**Application Procedure:** Form PHS 398, Application for Public Health Service Grant, is to be used in preparing a formal application for support. However, applicants must follow the page limitations as outlined in the RFA. The application kit is available through the applicant institution's office of sponsored research; from the Office of Grants Information, Division of Research Grants, National Institutes of Health, Westwood Building, Room 449, Bethesda, MD 20892, telephone 301-594-7248.

**Funds Available:** It is estimated that up to \$1 million total costs will be available in fiscal year 1994 to support one or two centers, with an anticipated average total cost (including indirect costs) of approximately \$500,000 per award. However, the exact amount of funding available will depend on appropriated funds, the quality of applications, and program priorities at the time of the award.

**Mechanism of Support:** The Centers will be supported by the specialized center (P50) grant mechanism, which provides funding for multidisciplinary and multi-investigator approaches to the investigation of specific and complex research problems requiring the application of diverse expertise and methodologies. This RFA is a one-time solicitation. Support may be requested for a period of up to five years. Future unsolicited competing continuation applications will compete with all investigator-initiated applications and will be reviewed according to the customary peer review.

**Deadlines:** Applications must be received by April 20, 1994.

**Contact:** Direct requests for the RFA, the letter of intent, and inquiries regarding programmatic issues to: Dr. Lynne Huffman, Division of Neuroscience and Behavioral Science, NIMH, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 11C-10, Rockville, MD 20857, (301) 443-3942. All fiscal inquiries are directed to: Diana Trunnell, Grants Management Branch, NIMH, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 7C-15, Rockville, MD 20857., (301) 443-3065.

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Society for the Scientific Study of Sex  
Southern Sociological Society  
Southwestern Social Science Association  
Speech Communication Association  
The Institute for Management Sciences

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