
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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This Week . . .

NRC Study on Track: Full Speed Ahead
Department of Defense Drafts Policy on Export Controls
Conference Committee Approves Peace Academy
COSSA Holds Congressional Seminar on Why Americans
Don't Vote
Education Regulations May Impede Research
House Science and Technology Committee Approves Outline
for Science Policy Study
Sources of Research Support: Department of Education

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NRC STUDY ON TRACK: FULL SPEED AHEAD

The National Research Council's Committee on Basic Research in the Behavioral and Social Sciences met on September 21-22 in Washington to examine the initial response to the Committee's call, issued in late June, for recommendations from the field on the areas of emphasis for the Committee's study, A TEN-YEAR OUTLOOK ON RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES IN THE BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. According to Dean R. Gerstein, the study director, and other observers, the committee members at the recent meeting were impressed and excited by the number and quality of ideas received to date.

This NRC study differs from others in several respects. It is prospective, unlike for example the Committee's earlier report, BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH: A NATIONAL RESOURCE (1982), which was a summary assessment of the scientific value, significance, and social utility of behavioral and social science research. Ten years is an unusually long period of projection for scholarly fields, especially where the analysis is focused substantively, rather than on manpower or

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Dell H. Hymes, *President*

David Jenness, *Executive Director*

employment patterns. Finally, the TEN-YEAR OUTLOOK report is intended to be selective, emphasizing scientific frontiers, leading research questions, unsolved but tractable scientific problems, and new resources needed over the next decade for rapid progress on fundamental problems. Some previous large-scale studies, like the NRC's BASS report (1969), were organized by discipline, providing a picture of the established body of knowledge and practice in each major field but paying little detailed attention to "growth stocks" in research.

In seeking initial recommendations from the scholarly-scientific community, the NRC sent out over 2500 letters to university-based scientists, members of professional societies, federal grant and fellowship recipients, editors of professional and scientific journals, and many others. A wide network of possible respondents was achieved in part through the co-sponsorship of the study by the Social Science Research Council and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. The study process itself will take approximately two years, and cost over half a million dollars. Support has been committed by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Russell Sage Foundation, and the National Institutes of Mental Health, Child Health and Human Development, and Aging.

Considerable interest attends the progress of the project. There have recently been published several long-range, agenda-setting reports on the status and momentum of major branches of knowledge -- for example, geography and earth sciences, mathematics, and astronomy and astrophysics.

The present and past directors of the NSF, the principal federal agency charged with sustained support for basic research, have emphasized the need for priority-setting within the science community, if effective and orderly planning for scientific and technological advances is to occur. Edward A. Knapp, who left the Foundation in August 1984, wrote in Science:

In research fields that incorporate a number of different disciplines, it is especially important that investigators develop a clear-cut consensus as to what needs to be done and how to do it. This helps unify the research community, bringing developments in various disciplines to the scrutiny and attention of colleagues in other fields. This, in turn, builds bridges between disciplines and helps generate exciting new approaches to old problems. Carefully considered priorities also help decision-makers in the executive and legislative branches of government make the choices that affect scientific work and the health of the scientific community.

The present director, Erich Bloch, has made similar statements in recent weeks. The Foundation expects the study report, available in mid-1986, to make some impact on the pattern and extent of its program decisions in behavioral and social science.

As for the NRC committee's present progress, over 500 responses have been received -- most of them, according to Gerstein, closely reasoned and detailed. Many of them outlined more than one major topic for possible close inspection by the Committee. Thus there should be no trouble in arriving, as the Committee plans to do, at 20 to 25 substantive areas which working groups of scientists will explore in greater depth. These focal topics and working groups will probably be known by the end of 1984. Study director Gerstein encourages those who have not responded to the Committee's invitation to do so in the next few weeks, since such responses may still have specific influence on how the topics and groups are finally determined.

Comments and recommendations should be addressed to Dr. Dean R. Gerstein, National Research Council, JH-853, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC 20418.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DRAFTS POLICY ON EXPORT CONTROLS

The Working Group on Export Controls of the DOD/University Forum, an advisory body of Defense Department officials and representatives of several major research universities, met recently to discuss DOD's proposed policy for the control and export of scientific information. A draft policy statement was presented which recommends that the dissemination of fundamental research be controlled by classification. This policy represents a reversal of an earlier proposal, which allowed for various degrees of restriction on the distribution of research results in "gray" areas (not classifiable but of potential military use) -- restrictions which could be imposed before or after a contract was let. Generally, the research community prefers a clean-cut situation in which research studies are either subject to classification or are free to enter the literature or be shared with other researchers.

The Working Group also discussed what should be the definition of "fundamental" research. The majority opinion of the group was that "research conducted by a university on campus in DOD budget categories 6.1 (basic research) and 6.2 (exploratory development) shall be presumed to be fundamental research."

Pending approval of the proposal by the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), the export control guideline will be instituted by DOD and also given to other federal agencies as a model for their own extramural research programs.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE APPROVES PEACE ACADEMY

The House-Senate conference committee on the Department of Defense authorization bill gave final approval to the creation of a United States Institute of Peace. The institute is authorized to distribute \$16 million over two years to universities, research groups and private scholars to promote the study of international diplomacy, mediation and conflict resolution. The institute's mission will be to coordinate peace programs; it will have no authority to make policy or settle disputes. Both the House and Senate are expected to approve the measure. (See "Senate votes to Establish Peace Academy," COSSA Washington Update, June 29, 1984.)

COSSA HOLDS CONGRESSIONAL SEMINAR ON WHY AMERICANS DON'T VOTE

Over 40 congressional staff, federal officials and political scientists attended a September 21 seminar on "Why Americans Don't Vote." The seminar was sponsored by COSSA as part of its continuing effort to inform policymakers about recent research in the social and behavioral sciences. Raymond Wolfinger, professor of political science at the University of California, Berkeley, spoke about increasing voter turnout by making registration easier for people who move. Dr. Wolfinger is Director of the State Data Program for the University of California System, and also chairs the Board of Overseers of the National Election Studies, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

The seminar was co-sponsored by the American Political Science Association (APSA) and co-hosted by Rep. Al Swift (D-WA), Chairman of the House Task Force on Elections, and Rep. William M. Thomas (R-CA), ranking member of the Task Force.

Dr. Wolfinger discussed why voter turnout is so low in the United States, compared with other countries. Although only 53 percent of the voting age population actually went to the polls in the 1980 general election, 87 percent of those who were registered voted. A prime target for increasing voter registration is the large group of people who have moved recently. Only 48 percent of those who had moved in the previous two years voted in 1980. Movers resemble the general population in terms of income, education, level of political interest, party preference, and race, but are slightly younger. Because registering to vote is not likely to be high on the list of priorities for people who are settling in a new location, many do not register before the deadlines.

Dr. Wolfinger suggested making registration automatic when one turns in a change of address form at the post office, or linking registration to actions that are an intrinsic part of moving, such as connecting utility services. Such a system would be inexpensive to implement and would potentially increase the number of voters by several million. That would not benefit one political party or another: "probably the differences in beliefs and political orientations of the voters with higher turnout would be exactly the same as they are today," Dr. Wolfinger said.

EDUCATION REGULATIONS MAY IMPEDE RESEARCH

New regulations of the Department of Education (ED) could have significant implications for educational research and experimentation. The new rules seem to extend provisions of the 1978 Hatch Amendment that requires schools to obtain parental consent before students can participate in federally funded research or experimentation involving "psychiatric or psychological examination, testing or treatment."

In response to comments on the proposed rules, issued February 22, the Department has further defined "psychiatric or psychological examination or test" as "a method of obtaining information, including a group activity, that is not directly related to academic instruction and that is designed to elicit information about attitudes, habits, traits, opinions, beliefs, or feelings." "Psychiatric or psychological treatment" is defined as "an activity involving the planned, systematic use of methods or techniques that are not directly related to academic instruction and that is designed to affect behavioral, emotional, or attitudinal characteristics of an individual or group." These definitions are the only provisions of the final regulations, issued September 6, on which comments can be made.

The final regulations also cover the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), which were not included in the proposed regulations. The Education Department stated in its response to comments on the proposed rules that "[s]ince the National Institute of Education and the National Center on Educational Statistics fund research and data-gathering activities, it is extremely unlikely that Congress intended to exclude them from coverage." Educational researchers are concerned that this may be a misinterpretation of congressional intent.

The final regulations are problematic for several reasons. There is concern that the definitions of "psychiatric or psychological examination, testing or treatment" misuse technical terms, leading potentially to overly broad interpretation of the regulations. Because comments on these definitions will be accepted until November 5, it is still possible that they will be changed. Most research will probably not be affected, since researchers already obtain parental consent for projects involving individual students. However, it may affect studies designed to evaluate school systems or programs that involve students but do not require their participation as individuals. Internal school evaluations, which may include information on characteristics of a school's own students, could also be impeded. Instructional materials used in any research or experimentation program or project, which is defined as "any [federally funded] program...designed to explore or develop new

or unproven teaching methods or techniques," are to be made available to parents for their inspection. Thus, the requirements for parental consent and inspection with regard to research and experimentation could have an impact on the development of teaching techniques and curricula.

Although the intent of the regulations is to set up a procedure by which parents and children can complain about violations of the Hatch Amendment, the rules are stated broadly enough that they could dampen the entire climate for educational research. In particular, certain kinds of evaluation, such as sociological or anthropological research necessitating data-gathering at the individual level but without interaction with the students, could come to seem problematical, so that funding for such research and access to research sites would be limited.

HOUSE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE APPROVES OUTLINE FOR SCIENCE POLICY STUDY

On September 26, the Task Force appointed by House Science and Technology Committee Chairman Donald Fuqua (D-FL) to establish an agenda for the Committee's two-year study of science policy in the United States approved an outline draft that included the following questions regarding the social and behavioral sciences:

In making decisions about the support of the social and behavioral sciences by the federal government what criteria should apply? To what extent do the social sciences help the nation make informed use of the discoveries and technologies produced by the physical and life sciences? What contributions to national priority setting should the social sciences be making that they are not now making? What is the role of the government in facilitating or inhibiting the contributions of the social sciences to issues of national importance? To what extent should support distinguish between the individual disciplines within the field of social and behavioral sciences? To what extent has past social and behavioral science research in any of the disciplines contributed to the formulation of social or other policies and what are the prospects for the future?

The study will also focus on the goals and objectives of national science policy, the institutional framework for the conduct and support of research, education and manpower questions, the impact of science on "the information age," the regulatory environment for scientific research, funding mechanisms, and the role of Congress in science policy making.

The Committee is also interested in conducting an analysis of the contributions of the social and behavioral sciences to society. They would welcome suggestions on how to go about such a study. Suggestions can be sent to the COSSA office, 1200 17th Street, NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20036.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for more information.

Fulbright-Hays Training Grant Programs
(Office of Postsecondary Education)

The Fulbright-Hays Training Grant Programs of the Office of Postsecondary Education consist of four programs which provide funding for research and study abroad as well as exchanges. The Faculty Research Abroad Program offers opportunities to faculty members of institutions of higher education for research and study abroad in modern foreign languages and area studies. The Foreign Curriculum Consultants Program brings specialists from other countries to the U.S. as resource persons for an academic year to assist selected institutions in planning and developing curricula in modern foreign languages and area studies. The Group Projects Abroad Program provides grants for training, research, and study abroad by groups of individuals engaged in a common endeavor. The Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program offers grants for graduate students to engage in full-time dissertation research abroad in modern foreign languages and area studies. For the Faculty Research Abroad and Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Programs, priority will be given to projects within the Western Hemisphere that focus on the Caribbean Basin, including Central America, in the disciplines of economics, geography, history of the 19th and 20th centuries, political science, sociology, and languages and literature of peoples whose languages are not commonly taught in the U.S..

FY 1985 Funds Available: The FY 1985 appropriation for these programs has not yet been determined. However, up to \$1.3 million from the FY 1984 special foreign currency appropriation will be available for FY 1985.

Funding Mechanisms: Grants

Review Process: Peer review

Disciplines Funded: anthropology, economics, geography, history, linguistics, political science, sociology, languages and area studies

Restrictions on Awards: Awards for the Faculty Research Abroad Program may range from \$3,500 to \$60,000. Awards for the Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program are based on the cost of living in the host country.

Deadlines: Applications must be submitted by November 16, 1984

Contact:

Faculty Research Abroad - Marion Kane, 202/245-2761
Foreign Curriculum Consultants - Gwendolyn Lark, 202/245-2794
Group Projects - Ralph Hines, 202/245-2794
Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad - John Paul, 202/245-2761

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CONTRIBUTORS

University of California, Berkeley
 University of California, Los Angeles
 University of California, Santa Barbara
 Carnegie-Mellon University
 Center for Advanced Study in the
 Behavioral Sciences
 Center for International Studies,
 Duke University
 University of Colorado
 Columbia University
 Cornell Institute for Social and
 Economic Research
 Cornell University

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CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS
 1200 SEVENTEENTH STREET, N.W., SUITE 520, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036