
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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SCIENCE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARS COSSA ON NSF FUNDING

In testimony before the Science, Research, and Technology Subcommittee of the House Science and Technology Committee COSSA asked for the restoration in real dollars of funds for social and behavioral science research at the National Science Foundation (NSF). Dr. Henry Aaron, testifying on behalf of COSSA, reviewed the spending cuts of FY 1981 and FY 1982 in social and behavioral science research efforts. He said he was pleased that data base development was being emphasized in the FY 1985 budget, but he also reminded the Subcommittee that individual investigator research projects, a seed-bed of social science research and training, have declined enormously in recent years.

Stressing that research conducted in the 'social and behavioral sciences has an important impact on problems the nation faces, COSSA requested that any increases in the funding

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Dell H. Hymes, *President*

Roberta Balstad Miller, *Executive Director*

levels for NSF's Research and Related Activities be earmarked for social and behavioral science research. COSSA also asked that the Subcommittee set a goal that FY 1986 funding for the social and behavioral science research programs at NSF would be at FY 1980 levels in FY 1986 dollars.

At the conclusion of the hearings, Representative Doug Walgren (D-PA), Chairman of the Subcommittee, expressed an interest in specific examples of the impact of the budget cuts on social and behavioral science research. If anyone has such information, please write or call COSSA (202/234-5703).

WORKGROUP MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NIMH BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) should increase its support for behavioral science research. This is the conclusion drawn by members of a workgroup convened by the National Advisory Mental Health Council who reviewed the Behavioral Sciences Cluster Group report on behavioral science research at NIMH and discussed their findings at a recent meeting of the Council. Although NIMH lacks the resources to support research in all areas, the decision to focus future research on health and behavior was seen as especially important for the Institute. The workgroup also concluded that while the report identified important areas for behavioral research, such as cognitive processes, emotions and temperament, the effects of social processes on mental disorders, and the consequences of life stresses and family relations, it could not set priorities because all research areas were considered important.

Other recommendations by the workgroup included: 1) using data gleaned from past behavioral investigations as the basis for further study; 2) supporting the development of new methodology in behavioral research; 3) promoting relations between Institute staff and researchers in the behavioral field through workshops, conferences, and communication of research results; 4) studying the composition of proposal review panels to ensure that proposals are competently and fairly evaluated; and 5) increasing technical assistance to behavioral researchers in developing proposals.

The Institute plans to implement as many of the recommendations as possible, and NIMH officials promised to report on their implementation at future Advisory Council meetings.

R & D TAX CREDIT UPDATE

Two subcommittees of the Senate Finance Committee, the Subcommittee on Taxation and Debt Management and the Subcommittee on Savings, Pensions and Investment Policy, held hearings on February 24 on proposals to make permanent and expand the tax credit for investment in research and development (R&D) first passed as part of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. (See COSSA Washington Update, January 27, 1984.)

The legislation (S. 2165) sponsored by Senator John Danforth (R-MO) specifically excludes social science research from the tax credit. COSSA submitted written testimony to the subcommittees objecting to four features of the bill: 1) the exclusion of the social sciences from the R&D tax credit; 2) the exclusion of the social sciences from qualifying for the credit for basic university research; 3) the exclusion of the social sciences from qualifying for the use of donated scientific and technical equipment; and 4) the exclusion of social science graduate students from the provision exempting scholarships, fellowships, grants and loan forgiveness from gross income.

A similar bill (H.R. 4475) has been introduced in the House by Representative James Shannon (D-MA). Both bills, if they are to become law, are expected to be part of a larger tax package that may emerge from Congress later this year.

For copies of the COSSA statement, write or call the COSSA office (1755 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202/234-5703).

ORAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR RESEARCH CENTER TO BE ESTABLISHED

Because of the growing importance of social and behavioral science research in understanding dental disorders and treatments, the National Institute of Dental Research (NIDR) has announced plans to establish at least one -- and possibly two -- centers for multidisciplinary research on behavioral and social aspects of oral disease epidemiology, etiology, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

The Institute currently supports social and behavioral research in such areas as dental fear and anxiety, adherence to preventive regimens, social and psychological effects of facial-altering treatment and orthodontistry, and the diffusion and adoption of new technological information into dental practice. In FY 1983, the Institute spent approximately \$2.6 million on social and behavioral science research, research training, and pain-related research.

KEEPING THE CONGRESS INFORMED: THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

This is the fourth and last in a series of articles about the "four support arms" of Congress, those agencies that provide non-partisan information and research to individual Members of Congress and congressional committees. Previous issues of the COSSA Washington Update have presented articles on the Congressional Research Services (CRS), the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). This issue discusses the services provided by the General Accounting Office (GAO).

The General Accounting Office

Known as the watchdog of Congress, the General Accounting Office (GAO) was established in 1921 to help reduce waste and inefficiency in the federal government by auditing and evaluating programs, activities, and financial operations of federal departments and agencies. Although the term "accounting" in the GAO title may conjure up visions of visored auditors poring over agency ledgers, the investigative concerns of GAO actually extend far beyond financial issues.

Congress depends upon GAO and its over 5,000 employees to keep it informed about the operation of federal programs for which it has oversight jurisdiction. In FY 1982 alone, GAO issued 949 reports to the Congress and federal agency officials, testified 177 times before congressional committees, and provided written comments on proposed legislation 357 times. Titles of recent GAO reports range from "DOD Can Combat Fraud Better by Strengthening its Investigative Agencies" and "The Census Bureau Needs to Plan Now for a More Automated 1990 Decennial Census" to "Federal Funding of Long-Term Care for the Elderly." The GAO estimates that \$5.9 million was saved by the federal government by implementing GAO recommendations.

GAO is headed by the Comptroller General of the United States, who is appointed to a 15-year term by the President. The Senate must confirm the appointment of the Comptroller General.

A list of GAO publications is published twice a year. GAO reports, testimony, and speeches are available from:

U.S. General Accounting Office
Document Handling and Information Services Facility
P.O. Box 6015
Gaithersburg, MD 20760
202/275-6241

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.

National Institute of Handicapped Research
Fellowships Programs

The National Institute of Handicapped Research (NIHR) was established to provide for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the conduct of research and related activities for the rehabilitation of handicapped individuals. The Fellowships Program provides for stipends awarded in two categories: Distinguished Fellowships for individuals with seven or more years of experience and a Ph.D. or other terminal degree; Merit Fellowships for individuals with less experience and some graduate training.

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the Research Fellowships Program is to build research capacity by providing support to highly qualified individuals to perform research on the rehabilitation of disabled persons.

FY 1984 Funds: NIHR expects to award 5 Distinguished Fellowships with stipends of \$30,000 each and 5 Merit Fellowships with stipends of \$25,000 each. Additional awards may be made later in the year.

Funding Mechanisms: A Fellowship award in either category will include a fixed stipend and a flat rate allowance of \$1,500 to be used for expenses in connection with the Fellowship.

Review Process: Peer review

Disciplines Funded: There are no restrictions on disciplines but the researcher must have experience in handicapped rehabilitation. Examples of appropriate fields are psychology, sociology, social work, speech pathology, and special education.

Success Ratio: In FY 1983, 17 of 88 applicants received awards.

Deadline: Applications for fellowships must be mailed or hand delivered by April 16, 1984.

Contact: Ms. Rheable Edwards
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Washington, DC 20202
202/245-3189

COSSA ANNOUNCES NEW CONTRIBUTORS

COSSA is pleased to announce four new contributors: Cornell University, Duke University's Center for International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, and Ohio State University. With the addition of these four institutions, the number of COSSA Contributors rises to 33. For information on how an institution can become a COSSA Contributor, please contact Roberta Balstad Miller, Executive Director, COSSA, 1755 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202/234-5703.

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