
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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HIGHER EDUCATION ACT RECOGNIZES FIELD INITIATED RESEARCH

On September 22 the House-Senate conference completed its work on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965. For the first time it addressed field initiated education research studies as a separate activity.

The Committee's report stated: "In recent years there has been a sharp decline in support for research activities outside of the work conducted by the educational labs and centers. This decline suggests that sparse and less diverse information will be available on which to base future decisions about education. The Committee believes there is a growing need for independent research and through this new emphasis, it is hoped that important new avenues of inquiry and contributions to the field of educational research will be provided."

Although only \$500,000 is authorized as a floor for this research, compared to \$34.8 million minimum for the labs and centers, it does recognize what COSSA, the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences have lobbied for during this reauthorization. The bill also specifies separate budget lines for the labs, centers, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Center for

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The Consortium 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.

Risa I. Palm, *President*

David Jenness, *Executive Director*

Education Statistics, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and the aforementioned field initiated studies.

The reauthorization affirms the reorganization of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) implemented by the Department of Education in mid-1985. It also affirms the downgrading of the National Council on Educational Research from a policy-making to an advisory group. In addition, the Secretary of Education is required to publish proposed research priorities in the Federal Register every two years with a period of sixty days for public comment.

Other parts of the reauthorization create new support programs for graduate education, new intensive summer language institutes, a study to assess the weaknesses and strengths in international studies and foreign language studies in the U.S. and the feasibility of creating a National Endowment for International Studies, and various changes in student aid programs. The United States Institute of Peace was also reauthorized for two years as part of this bill.

REPORT EXCORIATES CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

"The overriding issue for the Department of Education and the Center for Statistics is one of intent, commitment, and leadership." This conclusion from a scathing report by a National Research Council panel to evaluate the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) was a major focus of discussion at the September 22 meeting of the Advisory Council on Education Statistics.

The most important need, according to the report's editor Daniel Levine, is to improve the quality of the data that the Center collects and reports. One observer quoted by the report noted: "if the data continue to be as inaccurate in the future as they have in the past, all other issues are moot." The Center also needs to establish standards, increase the accuracy and timeliness of its reports (the 1985-86 edition of the Condition of Education reports data from 1982), and hold people accountable for their work.

The NCES is now the Center for Education Statistics (CES) in the reorganized Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) at the Department of Education. Both Assistant Secretary Chester Finn and CES Director Emerson Elliott claim many of the recommendations the report puts forth are already being implemented. Elliott told the Council he has involved users more than ever in determining data needs, improved the dissemination of data availability, and established technical advisory groups. Most importantly, Elliott, Finn, and Secretary William Bennett have presented their program vision of the future for CES to Congress and the CES staff. The FY 1987 OERI budget request included a large increase for CES to begin repairing the data

base and implementing a grand design to collect and disseminate education data. As of this writing, Congress has not agreed to the increase and will once again level fund education statistics.

The Advisory Council, chaired by Stanley Rothman, Professor of Political Science at Smith College, agreed with Elliott's view that the new CES has been improved. Members of the Council argued that education statistics needs the same independence (i.e., move it out of OERI -- a suggestion Finn did not appreciate) and budgetary support as the other federal statistical agencies, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). BLS receives close to \$170 million a year and NCHS about \$52 million, while CES is slated to receive \$8.7 million in FY 1987. The report acknowledged the Center's need for more resources, but warned that without fundamental changes in the way CES operates the additional resources would be squandered.

CIES URGES MORE FULBRIGHT APPLICATIONS FROM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

At a recent meeting in Washington, Cassandra Pyle, Director of the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), the organization that administers the academic Fulbright program, commented that overseas positions earmarked for social scientists are generally difficult to fill because of a paucity of applications from American social scientists.

The situation varies among countries and programs and is much more evident in slots emphasizing teaching (rather than research). In general the problem for established social scientists is that the grants do not come close to matching U.S. salaries and interfere with consulting income. Recent Ph.D.s and younger scholars often do not apply because the overseas assignment is not counted in tenure (or generally, promotion) and many feel they cannot risk the absence.

An examination of the problem underscores a policy issue for both the disciplines and the universities. Pyle feels that, if used effectively, a term or academic year abroad that a Fulbright offers can revitalize faculty; enhance the networks of formal and informal contacts overseas; enhance the quality of foreign scholars visiting U.S. institutions; improve lecturing and commitment to students; and, in general, increase interest in international aspects of academic work.

At a time when many universities are reexamining how to maintain a strong and vital faculty, use of Fulbright awards can produce 'recharged' faculty who are better able to relate to real issues and to place their work at the home institution into a world context. Pyle concludes that if institutions are interested in revitalizing their faculties, they will need a more flexible attitude towards academic exchange opportunities.

ADJOURNMENT DELAYED: CONGRESS CHUGS ON

Congress was supposed to end its session on October 3. It now appears that it will be in session until at least October 10 and possibly beyond. The Senate is bogged down with over 180 amendments to the Continuing Resolution (CR), the huge bill that will fund the government in FY 1987. This is not to be confused with the stop-gap CR that was passed on September 30 to fund the government for one week, thus avoiding a costly shut-down of the federal government. Once the Senate finishes its version of the CR it must reconcile many differences with the House version and, more importantly, both houses must negotiate with the White House to achieve a spending bill for FY 1987 the President will not veto.

In the meantime, both houses must finish work on the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1986 which is the vehicle for meeting the GRH deficit target without triggering the automatic sequester provisions. Aside from the various gimmicks Congress is using to meet the target, there will be a small across-the-board cut totaling \$1 billion in FY 1987 appropriations for all agencies not exempt from GRH. Thus, once Congress finishes with the CR, those appropriations figures will be reduced slightly.

The Conference Committee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations has finished conferencing, although staff is busy at work figuring out how to reconcile what they did with the requirements of the CR and Reconciliation. Other issues noted in Update in the past few weeks -- NSF appropriations, Fulbright Program appropriations, the Agresto nomination -- remain on hold.

WEST GERMANS SEEK TO COUNTER ANTI-SOCIAL SCIENCE POLITICS

A delegation of West German scientists, scholars, and senior educational administrators from the Education and Science Union (Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft) visited Washington last month as part of the 200,000-member trade union's study of higher education and research in the U.S.

At the request of GEW leaders, COSSA brought together representatives of several science and education organizations to discuss trends in federal support of universities and research with special reference to educational and social science research.

The group was especially interested in learning more about strategies American scientists and educators developed to counter a political atmosphere in which, for ideological reasons, governmental support for social science and educational research is targeted for sharp reductions or elimination. Early in the two-hour discussion it became clear that in the German context where virtually all university-based researchers are direct federal employees, an organized response to government policy must utilize very different strategies than those which have evolved in U.S. higher education and the research community.

FEDERAL RESEARCH SUPPORT: INSIDE THE FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER

From time to time the Update publishes articles aimed at providing an interpretive, in-depth look at certain federal agencies or programs of particular significance for the social and behavioral science community. In this issue we examine the Fogarty International Center, the division primarily responsible for coordinating international activities at the National Institutes of Health.

The Fogarty International Center for Advanced Study in the Health Sciences (FIC) is one of the 'Research and Support Divisions' of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). It was created to further international collaboration in the health and behavioral sciences through programs, conferences, and seminars; postdoctoral fellowships for research in the U.S. and abroad; and exchange programs for U.S. and foreign scientists. (See 'Sources of Research Support' in this issue for a description of the Senior International Fellowships program.) FIC serves as the coordinating agency for NIH biomedical, behavioral, and related research activities at the international level and serves as the focal point for foreign visitors to the NIH.

Although details vary within the individual programs, proposals to FIC are reviewed by the NIH Division of Research Grants. Before assignment to study sections, however, FIC staff review applications to determine if they are eligible for support. Social and behavioral scientists are advised to contact the appropriate FIC program officer prior to submission to determine agency interest and also to make clear how their project relates to FIC and NIH missions.

In theory, the various FIC programs can support projects on any topic that is appropriate to the NIH mission (of uncovering new knowledge to advance health) as long as it has an international component. Thus, FIC programs are open to social and behavioral scientists. Although FIC program announcements specify support for the 'behavioral sciences,' the definition does include the social sciences. Proposals in psychology are eligible unless the project is one that clearly addresses an area that falls under the purview of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration.

Although individuals may not 'apply,' social and behavioral scientists should be aware that they are eligible to participate in the Scholars in Residence Program which is housed and coordinated by FIC. Only NIH scientists or former Fogarty scholars may nominate candidates for the Scholars in Residence Program. About 12 scholars receive invitations each year. The program invites international scholars to come to NIH for advanced study in a scientific environment that fosters the development of innovative approaches to research. Fogarty

Scholars in Residence have a unique opportunity to study subjects of their own choosing and to interact with NIH scientists. Ideas and information can be exchanged through collaborative research, lectures and seminars, and the preparation of books, monographs, or other reports.

One of the problems encountered by some social and behavioral scientists seeking FIC funding is a covert bias against these disciplines. FIC staff report receiving proposals that are methodologically weak from the "soft sciences" and researchers lacking distinguished track records. As one branch chief commented, social scientists "are more likely to have published in Redbook than in scientific journals." While this perception can be found in varying degrees in most NIH institutes, the social science community has not made a sustained effort to improve its image at Fogarty, perhaps because its programs are not widely known.

COSSA and other organizations succeeded last year in convincing the Congress to include language in the NIH reauthorization bill specifying that social and behavioral scientists be appointed to NIH advisory councils. Since the Fogarty Center is authorized separately, the advisory council guidelines do not apply. The FIC did not have a chartered advisory board until 1984. The 10-member advisory board does not have any social or behavioral scientists as members, and none are included in the current slate of nominees. At a recent meeting of the board, however, the advanced studies working group suggested that a future priority for FIC activities should be in the area of health and behavior, with particular emphasis on understanding behavior and how to modify it, epidemiological studies, and disease prevention.

How can social and behavioral scientists participate more fully in FIC activities? Available opportunities need to be promoted more widely in U.S. institution's colleges of arts and sciences. Social scientists will have to be aggressive in contacting FIC program staff and clarifying the relevance of their research to the overall NIH mission. An appeals process has recently been instituted at NIH to resolve cases where scientists feel their applications have received unfair or inappropriate reviews. This is one mechanism social and behavioral scientists may utilize to ensure that their proposals are reviewed fairly.

Nominations of qualified social and behavioral scientists for the Fogarty advisory board should be sent to Dr. Coralie Farlee, Assistant Director for Planning and Evaluation, FIC, Bldg. 38A, Room 605, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20892.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER

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

Senior International Fellowships
(Fogarty International Center)

The Senior International Fellowships (SIF) program of the Fogarty International Center provides opportunities for study or research in a foreign institution by U.S. scientists whose professional stature is well recognized by their peers and nominating institution. The SIF is intended to enhance the exchange of ideas and information about the latest advances in the health sciences, both basic and clinical; permit U.S. scientists to participate abroad in ongoing study or research in the health sciences; and improve the research, educational, and clinical potential of the U.S. nominating institution.

Prospective applicants must have a clear understanding with the foreign host institution about the goals of the fellowship and the work to be pursued. Recipients of a fellowship will be expected to bring to the host institution the intellectual stimulation, knowledge, and professional background that will make it a mutually beneficial experience for the fellow and the foreign host.

To be eligible, an applicant must have a doctoral degree in one of the biomedical, behavioral, or health sciences; have at least five years' postdoctoral experience; be nominated by the academic dean or appropriate U.S. institutional official; hold a full-time appointment on the staff of the nominating institution; and be invited by a nonprofit foreign institution.

Proposals are not accepted for brief observational visits, attendance at scientific meetings or formal training courses, independent research projects within the host country, or full-time clinical, technical, or teaching services.

Funding Mechanisms: Fellowships are awarded for a period of 3 to 12 months. Awardees receive a maximum stipend of \$15,000, plus a foreign living allowance of \$15,000 per year, transportation costs, and a home institutional allowance of up to \$2,000.

Deadlines: January 10, May 10, and September 10

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