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NSF TASK FORCE TO RECOMMEND NEW DIRECTORATE FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Biology and the social/behavioral sciences are "two poles of disciplines and each deserves a directorate." With these words, the chairman of the National Science Foundation (NSF) task force on "Looking to the Twenty-First Century" announced the panel's intention to recommend a separate NSF directorate for the social and behavioral sciences.

NSF's Biological, Behavioral, and Social Sciences directorate (BBS) convened the task force to examine, among other things, the role of the social and behavioral sciences within BBS. The task force is chaired by Paul Magee, dean of biological sciences at the University of Minnesota, and is comprised of 12 biologists and eight social and behavioral scientists.

Before arriving at their consensus, task force members heard two full days of testimony on the need for a separate directorate. The strong, consistent, and persuasive message of a mobilized social and behavioral science community convinced the panel of the need for a new structure.

COSSA Testimony

COSSA Executive Director Howard J. Silver stressed to the panel the need for an assistant NSF director to represent the social and behavioral sciences. Such an officer, he said, "would have the organizational stature to make the case for these disciplines at the highest levels of NSF decision-making and would also be an effective spokesperson to Congress and the nation for these sciences."

Silver predicted that an assistant director would foster improved representation on the National Science Board and greater recognition in NSF publications and congressional testimony. Social and behavioral scientists would also get an advisory committee not shared with biologists and a seat on the Education and Human Resources Directorate Policy Committee. The latter will ensure that the social and behavioral sciences are included in the programs of that fast-growing directorate.

In addition to Silver, the task force heard from representatives of a wide variety of disciplines. Supporters of a new directorate included witnesses from linguistics, sociology, criminology, law and social science, operations research, econometrics, management science, political science, geography, international studies, statistics, and cliometrics (quantitative economic history). (For a listing of those witnesses who supported a separate directorate, see the box on page 3). Witnesses from anthropology, archaeology, history of science and neuroscience argued against separation.

Psychology Support

When the possibility of a separate directorate was last considered 10 years ago, many psychologists were wary of the proposal. This time around, while acknowledging their strong ties to biology, psychology witnesses joined the chorus of support for a new structure. As the American Psychological Association put it, "only by elevating representation of our scientific disciplines will we successfully compete and increase our funding capabilities and our potential contributions to science."

Cognitive scientists appeared before the committee in search of new home for their growing discipline, which is currently unrepresented in the BBS program structure. Witnesses voiced their willingness to join a new directorate separate from the biologists.

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Testimony from the Genetics Society suggested that social and behavioral scientists should join the "mainstream of biology." Economists and sociologists objected, however, that they have very little in common with biologists. Witnesses supporting the separate directorate criticized the notion that a new structure would preclude interaction between social/behavioral scientists and biologists.

No Protection from Biologists

Charles Schultze, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and newly-elected member of the COSSA Board of Directors, disputed the argument that biology successfully "protected" social and behavioral science during the budget cutting of the past decade. "If being the recipient of a 32 percent cut in the real value of NSF research support, while the NSF budget advanced by 20 percent, represented success, what in the name of heaven would failure have been?" Schultz asked the panel.

Those social and behavioral scientists on the task force who were present for the hearings – Risa Palm (who chaired the crucial working group), Steve Anderson, Nancy Cantor, Joan Huber, Anne Krueger, Charles Plott, and Peter Rogerson – made clear their intention to support a separate directorate. Through informal discussion with their biology colleagues, these members succeeded in forging a consensus in support of a separation recommendation.

The recommendation will be part of a final task force report due April 1. The committee will reassemble on January 13-14 to begin the process of drafting that report and will produce an interim version by January 31.

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As the separate directorate debate moves from if to how, a number of questions remain. What will be the title of the new directorate? (Some have argued for social and behavioral science, others want cognitive, economic, and psychological science in the name.) How many divisions with how many programs will fill out the new structure? Will anthropology be part of the new directorate, despite its testimony in opposition to the new structure? Will certain programs supporting cognitive, economic and psychological research - once part of BBS and now located in the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate - return to the new directorate? How will neuroscience and animal behavior research fit into the new directorate? Answers to these questions will be hammered out during the next few months.

Following the report in April, the decision to create a new directorate will rest with incoming NSF Director Walter Massey (assuming his confirmation by the Senate, which is expected in February or March of next year). Massey will need the support of the National Science Board and the approval of the Office of Management and Budget. In addition, NSF oversight committees on Capitol Hill must be persuaded not to veto the idea. The task force recommendation, then, is a small but significant step down a long road still strewn with hazards.

(For further discussion of the task force and its recommendations, see sections of the COSSA Annual Meeting story on page 5.)

DEMOCRATS CHOOSE BROWN FOR SCIENCE PANEL CHAIR, PRICE FOR APPROPRIATIONS SLOT

Members of the new House of Representatives met December 3-5 to select leaders for the upcoming 102nd Congress. Lawmakers elected two friends of social and behavioral science to new positions: Rep. George Brown (D-CA) to the chair of the Science, Space and Technology Committee and Rep. David Price (D-NC) to an open seat on the Appropriations Committee.

Brown's elevation stems from a musical chairs game begun by the ouster of Rep. Glenn Anderson (D-CA) from the helm of the Public Works and Transportation Committee. Present Science Committee Chairman Robert Roe (D-NJ) assumed the

public works spot, opening the science chair for Brown.

Brown has been a valuable congressional ally for the social and behavioral sciences. During the last Congress, he co-sponsored a bill to create a separate directorate for social and behavioral sciences at the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Price to Appropriations

Price, a former political science professor at Duke, joined the important Appropriations Committee as one of four new members. Reps. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), David Skaggs (D-CO), and Larry Smith (D-FL) also claimed seats as the Democrats expanded their margin on the committee from 35-22 to 37-22.

From his seat on the Science Committee, Price has been a key advocate for social and behavioral science at NSF, often questioning former director Erich Bloch about the foundation's commitment to these sciences.

In other organizational action, both Democrats and Republicans re-elected their top leaders – Speaker Tom Foley (D-WA), Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO), Majority Whip William Gray (D-PA), Minority Leader Robert Michel (R-IL), and Minority Whip Newt Gingrich (R-GA). Some junior Republican posts saw contested elections, reflect-

ing the continued unrest among House GOP members. Democratic turmoil surfaced in the removal of Anderson and House Administration Committee Chairman Frank Annunzio (D-IL).

Finally, Rep. William Ford (D-MI) was elected chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, replacing retired chairman Augustus Hawkins (D-CA). Ford's election was widely expected.

NSF FY 1991 OPERATING PLAN: SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES GET MIXED TREATMENT

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has forwarded its FY 1991 operating plan to Congress. The outline allocates the agency's \$2.316 billion appropriation among various directorates and divisions. Results for the social and behavioral sciences are mixed.

The Social and Economic Science (SES) Division in the Biological, Behavioral, and Social Sciences Directorate (BBS) received an 8.4 percent increase amounting to \$2.7 million. The Behavioral and Neural Science Division received a 4.4 percent boost totalling \$2 million. The 3 biological divisions within BBS each received a 6 percent increase ranging between \$3 million and \$4 million.

Social and Behavioral Scientists Testifying in Support of a New NSF Directorate

Ronald Abler, Association of American Geographers

Linda Bartoshook, American Psychological Association

Marilynn Brewer, Society for Personality and Social Psychology

Shari Diamond, Law and Society Association

Steve Fienberg, American Statistical Association

James Greeno, Cognitive Science Society

Carl Harris, Operations Research Society of America/The Institute of Management Sciences

Earl Hunt, Federation of Cognitive, Psychological and Behavioral Sciences

Alan Kraut, American Psychological Society

Joan McCord, American Society of Criminology

Warren Miller, American Political Science Association

Barbara Partee, Linguistic Society of America

Roger Ransom, Cliometrics Society

Bruce Russett, International Studies Association

Charles Schultze, Econometrics Society

Howard J. Silver, Consortium of Social Science Associations

V. Kerry Smith, Southern Economic Association

William Julius Wilson, American Sociological Association

The overall increase for BBS was 7.4 percent. This figure compares to 13.1 percent for Geosciences; 9.6 percent for Computer, Information Science and Engineering; 8.0 percent for Science, Technology, and International Affairs; 7.7 percent for Engineering; and 5.4 percent for Mathematics and Physical Sciences. (This last figure, however, shrinks to 1.1 percent if decreases for major research equipment are included).

The Science and Technology Centers program received \$15 million spread across the five major research directorates. Within BBS, the allocation for centers almost doubled. Rumor has it that NSF has approved 14 centers, but it remains to be seen whether any are slated for the social or behavioral sciences.

Education Gets Big Boost

At the direction of congressional appropriations committees, the Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR) allocated a 46 percent increase for teacher preparation and enhancement. EHR also provided a 38 percent increase for materials development, research and informal science education; a 21 percent increase for undergraduate science education; a 31 percent increase for research career development; a whopping 106 percent increase for studies, evaluation and dissemination (from \$4.37 million to \$ 9 million); and a 146 percent increase for human resources development programs.

Congress has 30 days to comment and suggest changes to the allocation plan, but lawmakers seem unlikely to raise any major objections.

In other NSF news: the General Services Administration has announced that the foundation will move its headquarters to Arlington, Virginia in 1993. A \$5.5 million appropriation to pay for the move was denied by Congress this year.

EDUCATION DIRECTORATE ADVISORY PANEL CONSIDERS STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategy was the topic at a recent advisory panel meeting for the National Science Foundation's Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR). Meeting November 29-30, the committee met to discuss EHR's strategic plan and the progress of initiatives currently underway.

In his report to the committee, EHR chief
Luther Williams emphasized the directorate's commitment to improving math and science performance among American students at all educational
levels. To this end, EHR has focused its initiatives
on teacher preparation and enhancement, including
recruitment of minorities and women to math and
science professions. EHR has increased its research
and training grants to help improve this recruitment.

EHR is also focusing on evaluation and dissemination of educational products and programs, according to Williams. EHR is working, he said, with the Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology and with groups implementing the National Education Goals toward developing programs with a measurable return.

Little Focus on Social Science

NSF officials did not indicate whether the social and behavioral sciences were included in these education efforts. In fact, the social and behavioral sciences were only mentioned twice during the committee's day-and-a-half of meetings. First, "attention to language arts, social science, and math" in the science curriculum was mentioned as one of six goals of the Precollege Math & Science Curriculum Development Project. And second, the AAAS Project 2061 "Science for All Americans" was described as a project that establishes connections across disciplines "including social science where relevant."

Otherwise, while the term "science" was never actually defined, the bulk of the meeting's discussion suggested that the directorate's focus is on physical and natural science.

OERI ANNOUNCES LAST SIX RESEARCH CENTER AWARDS

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) announced its final six awards in the research center competition. (For previous winners see UPDATE, November 16, 1990 and October 5, 1990). Listed below are the primary award recipients. Each center is expected to receive around \$1 million per year for five years.

- Center on Education Policy and Student Learning - Rutgers University
- Center on Learning to Teach Michigan State University
- Center on Postsecondary Learning, Teaching and Assessment - Penn State University

- Center on Student Learning University of Pittsburgh
- Center on Mathematics Teaching and Learning
 University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Center on Literature Teaching and Learning State University of New York at Albany.

The Center on Dissemination was not awarded and will be re-competed in 1991.

THE RITES OF DECEMBER: COSSA HOLDS 1990 ANNUAL MEETING

COSSA held its 1990 annual meeting on December 3 in Washington, DC. More than 60 representatives from COSSA Members, Affiliates, and Contributors gathered for the all-day session, which featured a keynote speech by Charles R. Schuster, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

Schuster, a psychologist, assured attendees that "the social sciences are alive and well at the National Institute on Drug Abuse." Pointing out NIDA's "unprecedented" budget growth during recent years, Schuster admitted that "I have been at NIDA when it has been easy to be the director." He predicted, however, that the institute is likely to see level funding for the foreseeable future.

Outlining NIDA activities, Schuster said the agency is charged with monitoring the status, nature, and prevalence of drug abuse in the United States. NIDA's various epidemiological studies help fulfill this mission, he said, but the agency could still do a "much better job" with this type of research. "We could be using our epidemiology to guide our etiological research more effectively," he admitted. Schuster said he plans to expand NIDA's epidemiological research and incorporate more analytic approaches.

Schuster also stressed the need to communicate more effectively the results of NIDA's research efforts. Many of the agency's data are complicated or ambiguous, he said, and cannot easily be explained to the public. NIDA is working with marketing experts to improve distribution of the agency's findings, he reported.

Turning to the "robust" problem of AIDS, Schuster pointed out that the disease increases at a rate of 14 percent per year among IV drug users. About one third of current AIDS patients are drug users, he said, and NIDA's drug abuse prevention efforts play an important role in the battle against AIDS. "We regard most of our activities in the prevention and treatment of drug abuse as being an AIDS prevention activity," he told the audience.

Schuster went on to outline NIDA's medications development program, suggesting that these activities tend to raise concern among social scientists. He contended, however, that medicinal treatments for drug abuse are only part of a larger behavioral treatment program. Medications can help facilitate behavioral treatments by reducing the patient's preoccupation with drugs; only when freed of that preoccupation can he or she focus on the larger behavioral treatment program. "Medications should be regarded as just a way of making [patients] amenable to other types of intervention," he said.

Schuster said NIDA is planning to develop a five-year plan for research on behavioral and psychotherapeutic treatment methods. Development of such a program could be greatly facilitated, he suggested, by a vocal congressional sponsor.

Turning to maternal drug abuse, Schuster noted a disturbing trend among states to legally characterize drug abuse during pregnancy as child abuse. From a public health point of view, he said, this policy decision is unwise, since it discourages women from seeking prenatal care or drug abuse treatment.

In addition, Schuster stressed the need for better data on the maternal drug abuse problem. Current estimates of the number of children born to drug abusing mothers range from 13,000 to 370,000. Clearly, he said, more accurate information is necessary.

Anderson on NSF Task Force

Earlier in the day, Steve Anderson of Johns Hopkins University offered an insider's view of the National Science Foundation (NSF) task force on "Looking to the 21st Century." Convened to study the future of NSF's Biological, Behavioral, and Social Sciences directorate (BBS), the panel recently announced its intention to recommend a separate NSF directorate for the social and behavioral sciences.

When BBS Director Mary Clutter proffered the invitation to join the task force, Anderson said, she suggested that the panel would discuss priorities and

research opportunities for the BBS directorate. Upon joining the task force, however, it became clear that the "underlying motivation" for convening the task force was consideration of a separate directorate, Anderson said.

Anderson maintained that he came to the separate directorate discussion without any preconceived ideas about the merit of a new administrative structure. But after considering the idea, it became clear that the issue was one of self-governance and equitable representation for the social and behavioral sciences, he said.

In recent years, 75-85 percent of BBS resources have gone to biology, and only 15-25 percent to the social and behavioral sciences, Anderson told the meeting attendees. While not attributing this discrepancy to any unfairness among BBS biologists, Anderson suggested that the directorate's structure encourages the bias toward biology.

Much of the problem stems from the fact that the assistant director for BBS has historically been a biologist. "Inevitably what is going to seem most exciting and worthy of support to a biologist is biology," Anderson said. It is unrealistic to expect anyone to adequately represent the wide range of disciplines that currently make up the BBS directorate.

Anderson also recounted how he became convinced of the importance of research initiatives. "The only way you ever get any more money than you have at present," he said, "is by bringing up a sparkling new research initiative." Advancing such an initiative requires the active support of the assistant director, and until the social and behavioral sciences have someone at that level, representation for these sciences will always be second-hand.

Anderson noted that the task force was not initially focussed on the separate directorate issue. The panel's biologists were concerned with a wide variety of issues, and the separate directorate question was generally considered "an annoying mosquito." Moreover, there was a widespread feeling that biology served to protect the social sciences from attacks by congressional and administration critics.

But following two days of convincing testimony, Anderson said, there was near unanimity about creating a new directorate. "We had basically agreed on a divorce and the issue now was the property settlement," he reported. At that point, discussion turned to those disciplines and specialties within the social and behavioral sciences that wish to remain part of the biology directorate.

Anderson then offered a wide-ranging discussion of the new directorate's possible structure, emphasizing that the task force has not yet come to any conclusions in this regard. Questions following Anderson's talk concentrated on the possible structure.

Miller on NSF Social Science

Speaking in the afternoon, Roberta Balstad Miller, director of NSF's Division of Social and Economic Science, offered her thoughts on the future of NSF social science research. In light of the task force recommendation for a separate directorate, she said, the social and behavioral science community must think through the implications of such a change.

"If the social science research community is to respond to the opportunities presented by a new directorate," she said, "it must concentrate much more on the long-term scientific and intellectual issues facing the social sciences." These issues include: (1) the need to reaffirm NSF's central role in basic social science research; (2) the need to develop priorities for research within a fixed budget; and (3) the need to plan for the next generation of social science, including people, equipment, and instrumentation.

"Now that the BBS task force is moving quickly toward a recommendation that there be a separate

CORRECTION

The "Sources of Research Support" column in the last issue of UPDATE included an editing error. In describing the National Science Foundation's Law and Social Science Program, all references to "sociological" research should actually be to "socio-legal" research.

Also, the October 5 issue of UPDATE included a "Sources" column on the Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA has changed the deadline for submissions to its socioeconomic program to a single date: March 22, 1991. The agency has also changed the deadline for its health program to a single date: August 16, 1991.

directorate for the social sciences at NSF," Miller said, "the social science research community must begin the very difficult task of thinking as social scientists – not as economists, or sociologists, or statisticians."

Congressional Panel

The annual meeting's final session featured a panel of congressional staffers, each of whom attempted to describe the prevailing Capitol Hill opinion of social science. The discussion began with a quick overview of the recent budget agreement between Congress and the administration. Mike Telson of the House Budget Committee outlined the nature of the compromise, focusing particularly on the agreement's various spending caps.

Telson's presentation was followed by a general discussion of social science and its perception on the Hill. Pat Windham of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee suggested that social science is no longer viewed as skeptically as it was during the early Reagan Administration. Neither, however, is it viewed as a particularly valuable resource. "Social scientists are seen as one group of experts to be judged like any other group of experts on their track record," he contended.

Amy Schultz of the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations Subcommittee suggested that members of Congress do not usually make fine distinctions between different types of scientists. Most members are probably unaware of social science as a separate category of science, she said.

Panel members agreed that members of Congress do not generally make the connection between policy-relevant research and the need to fund research through federal agencies. Schultz stressed the need for individual researchers and organizations such as COSSA to make that connection for them.

Patricia Ruggles of the Joint Economic Committee added that legislators want straight answers to social problems; they want to know "what works." Social science can provide some of these answers, she said, but lawmakers do not search explicitly for social scientists. The bias towards supporting natural and physical science solutions may exist because they appear to be more measurable than social and behavioral science solutions.

When asked about strategies for improving the image and funding of the social and behavioral

sciences, panel members had two suggestions: (1) COSSA should closely monitor social science budgets and alert the appropriate congressional staff where there are problems; and (2) COSSA should help staff identify the ways in which social and behavioral research can help individual members of Congress with issues of concern to their home district and their congressional committee assignments.

COSSA BOARD NAMES TWO NEW MEMBERS AND A PRESIDENT

The COSSA Board of Directors named two new members during its December 3 meeting. Charles L. Schultze, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, and William Julius Wilson, professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, were named to replace retiring board members. In addition, the board elected Joseph Grimes of Cornell University to be COSSA president for 1990-92.

Schultze, who was chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers from 1977-81, also served as director of the Bureau of the Budget from 1965-67. He was president of the American Economic Association in 1984 and is a sought-after witness on Capitol Hill.

Wilson, the Lucy Flower Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology and Public Policy at the University of Chicago, is well-known for his recent study of urban poverty, *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Wilson is a MacArthur Foundation Prize Fellow and the immediate past president of the American Sociological Association.

Wilson and Schultze replace Alfred E. Blumstein, dean of the School of Urban and Public Affairs at Carnegie-Mellon University, and Darlene Clark Hine, professor of history at Michigan State University, as at-large members of the Board.

Joseph E. Grimes, professor of modern languages and linguistics at Cornell, serves as the COSSA board representative from the Linguistic Society of America. He replaces as president Raymond E. Wolfinger, professor of political science at the University of California-Berkeley.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue is UPDATE's last for 1990. We will resume publication in early January.

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