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Registration Now Open for COSSA Colloquium on Social and Behavioral Science and Public Policy: November 4 and 5, 2013

The Consortium of Social Science Associations is proud to present its Annual Colloquium on Social and Behavioral Science and Public Policy, to take place on November 4 and 5, 2013.

The theme of the meeting is Societal, Technological, and Scientific Changes. It will feature presentations by the new director of the Census Bureau and leaders from the National Science

Foundation and National Institutes of Health. Other highlights will include panels on America's Political Institutions in Trouble, Social Science and the Press, and Changes Regarding Race in America. In addition, there will be sessions on Changes in Living Arrangements and the Impact of Technology on Social Change. Finally, COSSA's outgoing Executive Director will reflect on his thirty years of advocating for the social and behavioral sciences.

Register now to take advantage of our early registration offer. After October 25, registration fees will increase from \$100 to \$175.

Click [here](#) to register now!

Congress Returns: Debate over Syria Postpones FY 2014 Spending Decisions

The 113th Congress returned to Washington on September 9 with a lot of unfinished business on its plate. However, the debate over whether to bomb Syria and a continued stalemate over how to handle spending issues suggests that much of that business will get postponed.

It is now certain that Congress will enact a Continuing Resolution (CR), repeating a pattern of the legislature's inability to pass individual spending bills, to fund the government at the beginning of FY 2014, which begins on October 1, 2013.

Reports indicate the House will consider the CR the week of September 9 and that it would last for a few months. The CR would extend funding for programs at the FY 2013 level with the bottom line for discretionary spending set at \$988 million. During its earlier scrutiny of the FY 2014 budget proposals at the committee level for agencies and programs the House and Senate were operating with different total spending numbers-- the House at \$967 billion and the Senate at \$1.058 trillion.

The CR will be relatively clean with few policy riders. This means that the Coburn Amendment restricting the National Science Foundation's Political Science program will likely extend, at least into the early months of FY 2014. In addition, attempts to end sequestration will also get pushed into the future.

Also on the horizon is the need to increase the nation's debt ceiling sometime in mid-October. Although there has been a lot of rhetoric suggesting attempts at mischief during this debate, it now appears that, as it did earlier this year, Congress will punt the decision down the road a few months.

In all of these debates, some on the Republican side of the aisle will continue their assault on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

In the meantime, the scientific community's concern about the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee's attempts to fiddle with peer review at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the High Quality Research Act (see [Update, May 28, 2013](#)) and challenges to the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences directorate, could return. The Committee, led by Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), has been drafting a reauthorization bill for NSF that could surface this month. In addition, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, chaired by Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), has indicated interest in beginning the process of reauthorizing the America COMPETES Act, which includes NSF.

The President has nominated former Purdue University President France Cordova as the next director of NSF (see [Update, August 5, 2013](#)). It is unclear when her nomination hearing will take place and when the Senate will vote on her nomination. In the meantime, Cora Marrett remains Acting Director of the Foundation.

Other activities still awaiting action include resolution of the disagreements between the House and

Senate on the Farm Bill. The respective education committees may start hearings on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, especially after the President's focus on this arena during his August tour of the country. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act remains on the agenda without any great expectations that anything will actually happen.

It will be an interesting fall, and congressional staff members are not planning any early Christmas vacations.

Joanne Tornow Now Acting AD for SBE

With Myron Gutmann's departure from the National Science Foundation (NSF) on August 16, Joanne Tornow, who served as his deputy, has been named the Acting Assistant Director (AD) for the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate.

Tornow, who joined NSF in 1999 as a program director in the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences, has served in a number of capacities at the Foundation. She was the senior adviser for strategic planning, policy and analysis in office of the Assistant Director for the Biological Sciences, a Division Director of the Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Division, and the Executive Officer for the Biological Sciences Directorate, before coming to SBE.

She served on NSF's Merit Review Task Force, which the National Science Board convened to examine its policies regarding the criteria used to award its grants, especially the "Broader Impact" principle. The Task Force produced the 2012 report *Merit Review Criteria: Review and Revisions*. Despite significant criticism from the physical science community, the Report reasserted the importance of both the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact criteria.

Tornow received her B.A. in biology from Rutgers University and her Ph.D. in human genetics from Yale University. Her research training is in the area of molecular biology and genetics, focusing on the regulation of gene expression in eukaryotic systems. After completing postdoctoral training at the University of California, she served on the faculty at Portland State University and the University of Southern Mississippi.

In the meantime, the search for a new non-acting AD continues.

Richard Kronick, Political Scientist, Appointed New AHRQ Director

On August 19, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that Richard G. Kronick would become the next Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). He replaces Carolyn Clancy, who led the agency for 10 years.

Kronick came to HHS in 2010 as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), overseeing the Office of Health Policy. He is on leave from the University of California, San Diego, where he is a Professor of Family and Preventive Medicine and an Adjunct Professor of Political Science.



His research focuses on understanding the causes and consequences of lack of insurance, and on understanding whether and how markets can be made to work in health care, particularly for vulnerable populations. Kronick has held posts in the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare and Office of Health Policy and as a Senior Health Care Policy Advisor in the Clinton administration.

His articles have appeared in such journals as the American Journal of Political Science, The New England Journal of Medicine, and the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Kronick holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Rochester.

Meanwhile, Clancy will remain in Washington. She has been named the Assistant Deputy Undersecretary for Health, Quality, Safety and Value within the VA's Veterans Health Administration (VHA). She will help lead the VHA's efforts to improve the reliability, value and patient focus of health care across the VA system.

In 2012, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, proposed a FY 2013 spending bill that would have eliminated funding for AHRQ. The proposal did not make it into the final FY 2013 appropriations bill enacted in late March 2013.

COSSA Executive Director Receives APSA's Frank Goodnow Award

At the recent American Political Science Association's annual meeting in Chicago, COSSA Executive Director Howard J. Silver received the 2013 Frank Goodnow award.

The Frank Johnson Goodnow Award was created by the APSA Council in 1996 to honor lifetime service to the community of teachers, researchers, and public servants who work in the many fields of politics. Goodnow was the first president of the American Political Science Association, and a former president of Johns Hopkins University.



APSA President Jane Mansbridge of Harvard presents the Goodnow Award to Silver.

Photo courtesy of Moffa Photography.

The citation noted Silver's 30 years at COSSA, the last 25 as Executive Director, and his ability to forge alliances with many groups and organizations in the social and behavioral sciences and the federal government to promote and defend these sciences.

Silver has announced that he will leave COSSA at the end of 2013. A search is now underway for his successor.

Michael Brintnall, now APSA's former Executive Director (see following story), also received this year's Goodnow Award.

Steven Rathgeb Smith new APSA Executive Director

At the conclusion of the American Political Science Association's (APSA) annual meeting on September 1, the torch of the group's leadership passed from Michael Brintnall to Steven Rathgeb Smith.

APSA's new Executive Director comes to the organization from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, where he was Louis A. Bantle Chair in Business and Government and Professor of Public Affairs. Prior to his Maxwell appointment he served as the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Nancy Bell Evans Professor of Public Affairs at the University of Washington in Seattle. He returned there after a stint at Georgetown University, where Smith held the Waldemar A. Nielsen Chair in Philanthropy at its Public Policy Institute. He arrived at the University of Washington in 1996, where aside from serving as Professor of Public Affairs, Smith also directed the Nancy Bell Evans Center for Nonprofits & Philanthropy. Prior to his many years in Seattle, he taught at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University. He began his academic career at the Washington University at St. Louis' Brown School of Social Work.



Smith has received funding from the European Commission, the Aspen Institute, the Social Science Research Council, and the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research on foundations and other non-profit institutions and to fund students engaged in international study.

He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR). He has served as the President and received the lifetime achievement award of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA). He has also served on committees for the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), a COSSA member, and the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).

His books have included: *Nonprofits and Advocacy*; forthcoming, co-edited with Robert Pekkanen; *Faith and Lucre: How Religion and Public Funding Influence Social Welfare Services*; forthcoming, with John Bartkowski and Susan Grettenberger; *Governance and Regulation in the Third Sector: International Perspectives*, co-edited with Susan Phillips; and *Old Assumptions, New Realities: Economic Security for 21st Century Working Families*; edited with Marcia Meyers, Robert Plotnick, and Jennifer Romich.

Smith has been the Editor of *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* and served on the editorial board of numerous journals in policy studies and public administration.

Smith holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from MIT, and M.S.W. from Washington University in St. Louis, and a B.A. from Brown.

Proceedings of NAS Workshop on the National Children's Study Released

The National Academy of Sciences' (NAS) Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) released the summary of the January 2013 *Workshop on the Design of the National Children's Study* (NCS) on August 6, 2013. The study was requested by the National Institutes of Health in an effort to obtain additional scientific advice and guidance "upon which to base future plans for the study," according to the director of the NCS Steven Hirschfeld, *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). NICHD is the lead agency for the study.

The January 2013 workshop addressed three main topics: (1) the collection of environmental exposure measures, (2) the distribution of sample among cohorts, and (3) statistical issues associated with the sample design. To prepare for the workshop NCS provided a background paper ([Kwan et. al., 2013](#)) to the panel which explained the NCS and the status of the program and posed specific questions for consideration. The discussions were intended to inform the NCS Program Office on specific design questions to guide the NCS Main Study, including considerations related to prenatal exposures, alternative approaches for collecting information, costs of such collections, and their value to analysis. Additionally, the workshop was designed around sessions, each with a

specific set of questions to discuss. The overarching questions are covered in four chapters (Chapters 2 - 5) within the summary report.

Chapter 2: Given the challenge as stated in the Children's Health Act of 2000 to "perform complete assessments of environmental influences on children's well-being," does the proposed visit schedule and sample collection balance the complex requirements?

Chapter 3: What should be the criteria for the cohort allocation decision and what evidence is available to support the assessment of each criterion? What should be the allocation of sample cases among the various cohorts?

Chapter 4: Given the study design proposal described in Kwan et. al. (2013), and using the example cohort proportions proposed in the Chapter 3 questions, what enhancements can be made to address estimation and imputation challenges?

Chapter 5: From today's discussion, can you synthesize the trade-offs among factors, issues, and values that need to be balanced and considered by NCS leadership?

The complete workshop summary can be downloaded and/or viewed at:

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=18386.

Gallup, PDK Poll the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools

The results of the 45th annual Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools were released at an event on August 21, "Which Way Do We Go? Policy-Makers and the Public Differ on How to Achieve Educational Excellence." The full results of the 2013 poll are available [here](#).

Overview of the Findings

William J. Bushaw, PDK International, shared some highlights from the poll. He pointed out that the public has a high opinion of public school teachers; over 70 percent of respondents said that they trust and have confidence in public school teachers. However, opinion on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is much rockier. First of all, Bushaw pointed out, there is not a high level of public awareness of the standards; only 38 percent of those surveyed had even heard of the CCSS (45 percent of public school parents had heard of them). Of those who were familiar with the standards, only 41 percent felt they would make the U.S. more competitive globally. A majority said they would make the U.S. less competitive or have no effect. Few people (22 percent) believed that the increase in standardized testing over the past several years has helped improve schools. Thirty-six percent believed increased testing has hurt schools, an increase from 2007, when 28 percent felt it hurt.

Eighty-eight percent of parents said that they did not fear for their children's safety in school. The most significant safety concern of public school parents was other students (80 percent), not intruders in the school (14 percent). Fifty-nine percent believed improving mental health services would be the most effective way to make schools safer, as opposed to hiring more security guards (33 percent).

Sixty-eight percent of respondents favor public charter schools, while 70 percent oppose private school vouchers. A majority felt that schools should teach 21st-century skills (critical thinking, communication, setting meaningful goals, collaboration, creativity, well-being, and character). Critical thinking and communication received the most support from those polled.

Implications for Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Bushaw moderated a panel consisting of Sandra Boyd, Achieve; Maria Ferguson, George Washington

University Center on Education Policy; Mary Hawkins Jones, Westover Elementary School teacher and winner of the 2013 Most Hopeful Teacher of the Year Award; John Merrow, PBS NewsHour education correspondent; and James H. Shelton, III, Acting Deputy Secretary at the Department of Education.

In response to a question about whether the lack of awareness about the Common Core State Standards was a problem, Shelton argued that misinformation spread by both sides of the education reform debate has contributed to the public's poor understanding of the CCSS, and that this will pose a problem if it is not addressed. Boyd observed the CCSS is not "branded," and goes by different names in different states, which likely contributes to poor awareness. Furthermore, implementation of the standards is at different stages in different states so many parents have yet to see the standards impact their child's school. Jones, whose school is the process of implementing the CCSS, explained that the message schools need to send to parents is that expectations for students are changing. She recommended making implementation a conversation with students and parents. Merrow agreed that standards are currently too low, but suggested that the name "common core state standards" could pose a problem. He also pointed out that after No Child Left Behind, the standards are at risk of being seen as a "Washington" initiative (even though they are a state-led effort), so Education Secretary Arne Duncan can't use his office as a bully pulpit to promote the CCSS.

Ferguson pointed out that a majority of parents believe that charter schools offer a better quality of education than traditional public schools. Jones suggested that this perception is based in the fact that "parents want something different." They feel the expectations are higher at charter schools and want to receive information about their child's progress throughout the year, not just after year-end testing. Shelton observed the disconnect between low approval of the CCSS and the high opinion of the 21st-century skills, which the standards teach. He reaffirmed the need to close the information gap about the CCSS. Boyd discussed polls that indicate that although many people don't know what the Common Core State Standards are, after they are given a brief description, they tend to support them. Furthermore, teachers overwhelmingly support the standards.

In response to a question about promoting and supporting well-balanced education that includes science, the arts, physical education, etc., Merrow argued that we need to "measure what we value, not value what we measure." Instead of rating schools by test scores, we should look at how much time per week children spend in art, music, or gym, or what teacher turnover is like. Shelton noted that some schools operate on the flawed hypothesis that spending more time working on the subjects that are tested will lead to better performance. He observed that truly great schools are well-rounded and don't just focus on tested subjects. He also noted that co-curricular activities motivate students to come to school. Jones argued that these subjects can make the difference between students who are just busy and those who are engaged.

NCHS Roundup: Linked Mortality Files, Prescription Sleep Aids, Alcohol-Related Emergency Room Visits, Birth Data, and Family Planning

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) has released the Linked Mortality Files (LMF) for 2013, which connect several NCHS surveys with the National Death Index (NDI). The LMF provides the opportunity to conduct research designed to investigate the association of a wide variety of health factors with mortality. More information is available [here](#).

NCHS also released a data brief on [Prescription Sleep Aid Use among Adults: 2005-2010](#), taken from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). It finds that four percent of adults used prescription sleep aids in the past month. More women have used sleep aids than men, and non-Hispanic whites are nearly twice as likely to use prescription sleep aids as African Americans.

Data from the National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey published in the [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) shows that the rate of emergency department visits for alcohol-related diagnoses has increased by 38 percent for both men and women between 2001-02 and 2009-10.

The latest birth data in the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) have been compiled into a report, [Births: Preliminary Data for 2012](#). Key findings include:

- The birth rate essentially held steady from 2011 to 2012, after declining from 2007 to 2011.
- Between 2011 and 2012, the birth rate declined for women aged 15-29, but rose for women aged 30-44.
- The teen birth rate fell six percent from 2011, a historic low.
- The rate of non-marital births declined for the fourth consecutive year.
- The rates of preterm birth and low birth weight both declined from 2011.

A National Health Statistics Report presents data on [Use of Family Planning and Related Medical Services among Women Aged 15-44 in the United States: National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2010](#), taken from interviews conducted for the National Survey of Family Growth. It finds that 43 million women aged 15-44 received a family planning service in the year prior to the interview, with the most common services being Pap tests, pelvic exams, and contraception.

NSF and NOAA Provide Opportunity for Social and Behavioral Scientists

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate has issued a Dear Colleague letter alerting scientists in these disciplines to an opportunity "to broaden their core expertise through residence at a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) facility."

According to Acting Assistant Director for SBE, Joanne Tornow, "this Fellowship provides a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary research collaboration between SBE scientists and NOAA scientists and decision makers." It is part of NSF's Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability (SEES) activities that support interdisciplinary research and education that will help achieve a sustainable future" in the face of gradual and abrupt global change."

NOAA has indicated it would welcome SBE scientists to be based in any of their program offices, centers and laboratories through the NSF Program on Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability Fellows (SEES Fellows: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=504673).

Accordingly, NSF is soliciting proposals that require applicants to develop a plan for a research partnership. NSF and NOAA believe that NOAA program offices, centers, and laboratories, which are based throughout the country, provide an opportunity for such partnerships between SBE scientists and NOAA staff.

Although there is no set-aside, as proposals to reside at NOAA facilities must compete with all the other proposals, the willingness of NOAA administrators to work with SBE scientists should enable these scholars to develop strong proposals. This opportunity is open to early-career scholars. Awards provide salary support, research expenses and travel support for a maximum of 3 years. **Proposals are due November 21, 2013.**

Potentially interested applicants are urged to first review the NSF solicitation on Science, Engineering and Education for Sustainability Fellows (SEES Fellows: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=504673). For more information contact Leah Bunce Karrer, Deputy Chief Economist (leah.karrer@noaa.gov) at NOAA, in order to identify potential opportunities at NOAA.

Scholars should submit their proposals to the SEES Fellows competition at the NSF. Questions about this Dear Colleague Letter or other NSF-specific issues can be addressed to Dr. Robert O'Connor (roconnor@nsf.gov).

NSF Seeks Proposals for Innovation Corps Program

The National Science Foundation (NSF) seeks to develop and nurture a national innovation ecosystem that builds upon fundamental research to guide the output of scientific discoveries closer to the development of technologies, products and processes that benefit society.

In order to jumpstart a national innovation ecosystem, NSF has established the NSF Innovation Corps Teams Program (NSF I-Corps Teams). The NSF I-Corps Teams purpose is to identify NSF-funded researchers who will receive additional support-- in the form of mentoring and funding-- to accelerate innovation that can attract subsequent third-party funding.

According to NSF, the purpose of the NSF I-Corps Teams grant is to give the project team access to resources to help determine the readiness to transition technology developed by previously-funded or currently-funded NSF projects. The outcomes of I-Corps Teams projects will be threefold: 1) a clear go or no go decision regarding viability of products and services, 2) should the decision be to move the effort forward, a transition plan for those projects to move forward, and 3) a technology demonstration for potential partners.

WEBINAR: A webinar will be held on the first Tuesday of every month to answer questions about this program. Details will be posted on the I-Corps website as they become available. (See http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/program.jsp)

For further information contact: Rathdrinda DasGupta, rdasgupt@nsf.gov or 703/292-8353; or Anita LaSalle, alabelle@nsf.gov or 703-292-5006.

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