



COSSA

Washington UPDATE



March 25, 2013 Volume 32, Issue 6



In This Issue

[Coburn Amendment Restricts NSF Political Science Funding](#)

[Congress Completes FY 2013 Appropriations Process](#)

[NSF Director's Farewell Appearance with Congress](#)

[Causes and Correlates of Youth Violence Discussed at CJS Hearing](#)

[COSSA Testifies to House CJS Appropriations Panel](#)

[COSSA-Led Collaborative Releases Enhancing Diversity Report](#)

[Changes to the Common Rule: The Implications for the Social and Behavioral Sciences](#)

[NSF Seeks Proposals on Use and Functioning of the Civil Justice System](#)

[COSSA Joins More Than 150 Organizations to "Rally for Medical Research" on April 8th in Washington](#)

[NIH Office of Disease Prevention Seeks Input on Strategic Plan](#)

[OppNet Seeks Revision Applications for Basic Social and Behavioral Research on Social, Cultural, Biological, and Psychological Mechanisms of Stigma](#)

[Home and Family Based Approaches for the Prevention and Management of Overweight or Obesity in Early Childhood](#)

Coburn Amendment Restricts NSF Political Science Funding

Four years after he attempted to eliminate funding for the National Science Foundation's political science program (see Update, [October 12, 26](#), and [November 9, 2009](#)), Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) tried again with an amendment to H.R. 933, which funded the government for the rest of FY 2013

[\(see following story\)](#)).

Although his original intention to abolish NSF's \$10 million political science funding and redistribute \$7 million of it to the National Cancer Institute did not succeed, Coburn managed to have the Democratic leadership accept a "modified" version of the amendment that restricts the projects the political science program can fund.

The new version allows NSF funding for political science projects only if the Foundation's Director certifies in writing that the project is "promoting national security or the economic interests of the United States." Any unobligated funds from the political science program may be provided for other scientific research and studies that do not duplicate those being funded by other Federal agencies. This appeared to satisfy the Senator from Oklahoma who has criticized studies of Congress and voting behavior for years.

What Happened

Four years ago, Coburn's amendment lost on by a vote of 62-36. With significant advocacy by COSSA, the American Political Science Association, the Midwest Political Science Association, the Association of American Universities, the American Public and Land-grant Colleges and Universities, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and many individual university government relations representatives, the thinking was that Coburn could be beaten again.

That was not how Senate Appropriations Chair Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) saw it. Mikulski was shepherding the spending bill and was concerned about trying to get it through the Senate and back to the House before Congress left for its Easter/Passover two-week break on March 22 and before the Continuing Resolution expired on March 27, which would create a government shutdown.

Senators had introduced over 110 amendments to the bill. By March 14, the Senate had voted on only a handful. Expressing his disappointment that the Senate was moving slowly, Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV) asked staff to work to reduce the amendment load on the weekend of March 16-17. Mikulski and Coburn appeared to have reached some agreement on the "modified" amendment.

On Tuesday, March 19, Reid, fed up with continuing delays, invoked cloture on the bill and got enough Republican votes to meet the 60 vote threshold and bring regular debate to a close. That still left 30 hours on the clock for post-cloture maneuvering, including the consideration of some amendments. After initially announcing that only three amendments would be voted on at 11:15 a.m. on Wednesday, March 20, none of them from Coburn, suddenly there was another delay. Reid then announced that at 2 p.m. that day there would be votes on amendments, including four from Coburn, one of which was the NSF political science provision. Coburn would need 60 votes to succeed.

The first two of Coburn's amendments went down to defeat on roll call votes. When the NSF amendment came up Mikulski announced that she had agreed to accept the amendment and called for a voice vote. The amendment passed. Not one Senator spoke against it or defended political science or NSF's merit review process for selecting grants. Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) issued a statement deploring Coburn's amendment the day after.

Why Did It Happen?

Coburn succeeded in 2013 where he failed in 2009 because he was able to take advantage of a need to speedily pass legislation. Reid and Mikulski were concerned that he could have held up the bill for another 30 hours. Senators were told that the provision was a "do nothing" amendment that would not harm NSF and therefore there was no need to vote against it or even have a vote.

Perhaps, Coburn threatened to go back to his original amendment and force Democrats to vote against cancer research. Of course, when earlier in the week Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) proposed an

amendment to increase NIH's budget by \$211 million rather than a paltry \$7 million, Coburn voted against it. When he had the chance in the final vote to pass the bill to fund NIH at over \$31 billion, he voted against that too. Yet the Senator from Oklahoma gets away with these votes and perceives of himself as a great friend of NIH. However, if Democrats voted against cancer research to continue funding NSF's political science program, that would have created an opening for 30-second ads in their next campaign on how they voted against a cure for cancer.

What Happens Now?

So far reactions to Coburn's amendment have come from a strong statement issued by APSA, calling it "a devastating blow to the integrity of the scientific process at the National Science Foundation" and declaring that it "makes all scientific research vulnerable to the whims of political pressure." *New York Times* columnist David Brooks called the Coburn amendment "weird" on the March 22 PBS Newshour, and the blogosphere has been full of commentary. No statements have been issued from the august National Science Board, the prestigious National Academy of Sciences, or any other scientific association deploring Coburn and the Senate for accepting the amendment.

Reports are beginning to surface that NSF is informing grantees that their funding has been held up because of the subject matter of their projects. How NSF interprets the amendment is paramount. With an Acting Director and within a few months a new permanent director, NSF's incentive to risk offending Coburn by a broad interpretation of the restrictive language is not high.

Does this mean the American National Election Study, a special Coburn target for many years, is now endangered? Political scientists and their friends will have to figure out a way to frame the study within the new rules.

We now move onto FY 2014 where the dangers to not only political science, but to all NSF support for the social, behavioral and economic sciences is in the sights of House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) (see [Update, February 11, 2013](#)) and the House Science Committee Chairman Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX). The vehicle may be the reauthorization of the America COMPETES bill, which includes NSF. It may also take the form of an amendment to the FY 2014 appropriations bill in the House and a return engagement from Coburn in the Senate.

In 1983, Congress eliminated NSF's Science Education programs only to restore them a year later, and now science education is a major focus of attention and federal funding. Perhaps, this is the precedent political science should look forward to emulating as we contemplate the future ahead.

Congress Completes FY 2013 Appropriations Process

With passage by the House on March 21 of the Department of Defense, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (H.R. 933), following Senate approval on March 20, the 113th Congress completed the FY 2013 spending bills initiated in the 112th Congress. The measure now goes to the President for his signature.

The bill, which included the restrictions on political science funding in Sen. Tom Coburn's (R-OK) amendment ([see previous story](#)), keeps government programs and agencies operating beyond the March 27 expiration of the Continuing Resolution enacted last September before the Congress left town for the 2012 elections. H.R. 933 provides funding for the rest of FY 2013, which ends on September 30, 2013.

President Obama is now expected to release his FY 2014 budget on April 9. Both the House and Senate enacted versions of a budget resolution for FY 2014 before they left town for the Easter/Passover recess on March 22. The budget resolutions are so different in their details that no reconciliation is expected. The resolutions set the parameters for overall spending for the appropriations committees.

So the process will begin again. Whether regular order, the enactment of the 12 individual appropriations bills, will get restored as the appropriations chairs Rep. Hal Rogers (R-KY) and Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) assert will happen this year, remains uncertain.

The FY 2013 bill maintains the across-the-board (ATB) cuts of the sequester, costing most domestic agencies five percent of their funding, and reduces the overall cap for discretionary spending to \$984 billion, significantly below \$1.047 trillion, where the cap was when the FY 2013 appropriations process began. However, the bill provides some flexibility for some Departments and agencies on how to apply the reductions among their programs. The House had allowed this for the Defense Department. The Senate version of H.R. 933, which the House simply adopted without a conference committee, selectively provided maneuvering room for agencies within certain spending bills. The Commerce, Justice, Science agencies, and the Departments of Agriculture, Homeland Security, and Veterans' Affairs, were added to the Defense Department. In addition, some programs within the other Departments got special treatment.

With all the reductions, including an ATB cut of 0.1877 percent before applying the sequester, the National Science Foundation (NSF) ended with a FY 2013 budget of \$6.884 billion. This is \$149 million below the FY 2012 appropriation. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) received a \$71 million increase over FY 2012.

In an anomaly, the National Agricultural Statistics Service wound up with \$168.7 million, with \$62.5 million designated to complete the Census of Agriculture. The Bureau of Economic Analysis ended up with \$93.4 million. The Census Bureau received \$844.7 million in direct appropriations as well as additional \$18 million from the Census Working Capital Fund. The Senate report includes language strongly supporting the Economic Census, including \$138.3 million for its activities. The Senate report also noted that it was rejecting the action of the House last May to eliminate the American Community Survey, but the Census Bureau "is directed to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations no later than 120 days after enactment of this Act on the steps being taken to ensure that the ACS is conducted as efficiently and unobtrusively as possible. In addition, the Department of Commerce is directed to acquire an independent analysis of the costs and benefits of making compliance with the ACS voluntary."

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) wound up with \$40.1 million for FY 2013 with a little less than \$5 million transferred to the National Institute on Standards and Technology for DNA research. NIJ will continue to receive funds, around \$3.5 million for research on violence against women and \$4 million for research domestic radicalization violence. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) would receive \$44.8 million. Of that, close to \$36 million would go to continue the revitalization of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), leaving very little funding for other BJS activities. Congress continued the two percent set-aside of now reduced Office of Justice Programs funding for research and statistics.

Department of Education and Housing and Urban Development research offices would get their FY 2012 funding minus the five percent sequester reduction.

As we move into the FY 2014 process, the President still seeks some grand bargain that would eliminate the sequester for that fiscal year and beyond. At this point, not many people expect that to happen.

NSF Director's Farewell Appearance with Congress

The House Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), held a hearing with a dual purpose on March 19, 2013. First, it said goodbye to National Science Foundation (NSF) Director Subra Suresh and then heard from Ohio State Communications and Psychology Professor Brad Bushman, who co-led a committee of social and behavioral scientists in preparing a report on Youth Violence for the Chairman ([see following story](#)).

Suresh, whose last day at NSF was March 22, will assume the presidency of Carnegie Mellon University on July 1. He will be replaced for the time being by his Deputy Cora Marrett, a sociologist by training, who became Acting Director. Chairman Wolf and Ranking Member Rep. Chaka Fattah (R-PA) warmly praised Suresh for his service to the nation amidst much discussion of Pennsylvania sports teams. Suresh announced he was learning a lot about the Pittsburgh Steelers for his new city.

In his testimony, Suresh reiterated what he viewed as his accomplishments at the NSF. These included the "One NSF" philosophy that helped promote cross-disciplinary interactions and organizational efficiency, NSF's leadership role in the Global Merit Review Summit and the and the creation of international opportunities for American graduate students through the Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide program (GROW). He also mentioned the partnerships fostered with other federal agencies, private foundations and businesses (for more see [Update, February 11, 2013](#)).

Wolf began his questioning of Suresh by asking about accusations that NSF supports "frivolous grants." These allegations, Wolf continued, "are then used to make the argument that we could reduce NSF's budget without negatively impacting any important work."

Suresh responded by defending NSF's merit review process that conducts more than 240,000 evaluations of the tens of thousands of proposals submitted to the Foundation. He also noted how this "gold standard" approach is widely copied internationally. Finally, the departing director admonished NSF's detractors "that sometimes when we look at the titles of these projects and just look at the titles, we may end up with misleading conclusions if we don't go through the outcome of the project." He cited a NSF-funded project called Game Theory that led to mathematical and economic analyses, which in turn led to spectrum auctions which provided \$60 billion to the U.S. Treasury. Suresh concluded that "science funding over some period of time leads to unexpected outcomes."

Citing Senator Tom Coburn's (R-OK) reports criticizing NSF spending, Wolf also wanted to know "how NSF and its grantees can do a better job of explaining the purpose and the value of its grants to the public." Suresh indicated that NSF uses all kinds of media to get the message out and that he has also met individually with members of Congress during his tenure. Yet referring to the criticisms, Suresh asserted that "when we try to articulate the impact of it in layman's terms, that has the potential to be misinterpreted, because if somebody just looks at the title that is articulated for the layperson, it doesn't fully convey the full impact of the scientific work."

Small Budgets for the SBE Directorate Make it a Lower Priority

Referring specifically to the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate, Wolf asked Suresh to explain why its small budget "seems to confirm that you also consider social sciences to be a lower priority." He defended SBE's small budgets by suggesting that social science doesn't have major infrastructure needs like the physical and natural sciences, while at the same time admitting that "there are increasing needs for data management, data collection and longitudinal studies, which can become expensive." He also argued that the social sciences benefit from collaboration with other areas at NSF on issues such as big data and education and human resources.

Concluding his response, Suresh asserted: "I think some of the grand challenges that we face, both nationally and globally, will inevitably require integration of perspectives from social and behavioral sciences and economic sciences, with natural sciences and engineering. And ultimately we want to understand human condition, we want to understand human beings, and we want to understand institutions. And social, behavioral, and economic sciences provide a unique platform to do that."

Ranking Member Fattah highlighted the neuroscience initiative that he and the Chairman put into the appropriations committee report in 2011. He thanked Suresh for NSF's leadership on the issue

took note of the Dear Colleague letter that recently went out (see [Update, March 11, 2013](#)). Fattah also indicated that he looked forward to the report from the interagency working group led by the White House Office of Science and Technology that will be issued in June 2013.

Suresh responded that reverse engineering of the human brain has been identified by the National Academy of Engineering as one of the grand challenges of the 21st Century. To do this requires, he said, "bringing the biology of the neurons in the human brain and connecting that to the psychology of the human mind." "This is one of the frontiers of exploration and discovery where the tools that we have will position us to make some phenomenal new discoveries in the future," he added.

Other topics raised by members of the Subcommittee included: NSF sponsoring university-science and technology high school cooperation (Rep. John Culberson (R-TX)); earthquake research (Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA)); increasing H1-B visas for highly educated immigrant scientists (Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD)); NSF's role in supporting U.S. advanced manufacturing (Fattah and Wolf); international scientific cooperation vs. U.S world leadership (Wolf, Fattah, and Harris); and NSF management of large infrastructure projects (Rep. Tom Rooney (R-FL)).

Causes and Correlates of Youth Violence Discussed at CJS Hearing

The second part of the hearing on March 19 was a discussion of the report, *Youth Violence: What We Need to Know*, prepared by a Subcommittee on Youth Violence of NSF's SBE Advisory Committee. Brad Bushman, Professor of Communication and Psychology at the Ohio State University, and Katherine Newman, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Johns Hopkins University, led the team that produced the report. Others who served on the Subcommittee included Ann Masten, Professor of Child Development at the University of Minnesota and a COSSA Board member. For a summary of the report see [Update, February 25, 2013](#).

Bushman appeared before the CJS Subcommittee to report on the study and answer questions. Chairman Wolf has long had an interest in the topic, but the shootings in Newtown, CT last December precipitated the request for this report.

Bushman began by asserting: "We know a lot about youth violence. For decades, social scientists have been studying youth violence, and much of this research has been funded by federal agencies. There's also numerous and well-validated theories to explain youth violence." He noted that following mass rampage shooting, "legislators and mass media have focused on three possible causes: guns, mental health, and violence in the media." He suggested that there are many more causes besides these three.

Focusing on the media violence question, he told the Subcommittee, "We haven't proven that violent video games directly cause violence, because it can't be proven. There's no way to ethically run experiments to see if playing a violent game like Call of Duty pushes somebody to violence. You can't give people guns and knives in our laboratory experiments." However, he explained that, despite the lack of causal evidence, there are correlations between video game watching and violent behavior.

He went on to indicate that another significant finding of the research is that peer rejection and social hierarchies play an important role in rampage shootings. Bushman also reported that research shows that school climates and cultures and social trust can act as protective factors to mitigate social rejection and protect against youth violence.

Finally, he mentioned guns. "All shooting rampages and more than 80 percent of homicides involving youth are committed with guns. It's critical to reduce access to guns in youth, especially youth that have a history of delinquency, crime involvement and certain mental illnesses," Bushman concluded.

Chairman Wolf focused his attention on violent media suggesting that many of the rampage shooters

played many of these games. He again called attention to the findings in the report that showed a definite link between violent video games and aggressive thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Acknowledging First Amendment problems, Wolf asked Bushman if anything can be done with regard to these games. Bushman, called for a uniform ratings system such as the one used in the Netherlands, rather than the very confusing situation we have in the U.S. where movie, TV and video game ratings use different terminology.

Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA) disputed the report's findings on the impact of video games and cited research in Sweden and Australia suggesting very little linkage to violence. Bushman responded that these studies were included in a meta-analysis of 381 effects from studies of 130,000 participants that came to the conclusion that the correlation between violent video games and violent behavior could not be characterized as "trivial," as the research Schiff cited did. Bushman argued that the correlation level of 0.2 was as significant as the one between wearing a condom and contracting HIV, 0.18, between second-hand smoke and lung cancer, less than 0.2, between exposure to lead and brain functioning, less than 0.2, or between exposure to asbestos and cancer, less than 0.2. Yet, we have regulatory policies in each of these other situations, he argued.

Other members of the Subcommittee, such as Rep. John Culberson (R-TX), pointed out that the report neglected other protective factors such as family values and religious activity, which Bushman recognized as important. Rep. Sam Graves (R-GA) reiterated the importance of family values and indicated that they can overcome the non-protective factor of having guns in your house. Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD) asked why suicide and its factors were not included in the report. Bushman told the congressman that although suicide among teens is a problem, this was not part of his committee's charge.

Finally, Rep. Jose Serrano (D-NY) asked about the connection between violent video games and guns. Bushman indicated that there has been an increase in the appearance of guns in these games, but like a lot of questions related to this and the other issues raised in the hearing, more research is necessary.

COSSA Testifies to House CJS Appropriations Panel

On March 21, COSSA Executive Director Howard J. Silver appeared before the House Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations (CJS) Subcommittee to testify during its public witness hearing.

With panel chairman Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) and Ranking Member Rep. Chaka Fattah (D-PA) in attendance, he discussed the importance of NSF's support for the social, behavioral and economic sciences. Silver noted that NSF provides 62 percent of federal funding for basic research in these sciences at U.S. colleges and universities, while in some disciplines, such as political science, it is close to 95 percent.

He also pointed out the discouraging budget situation, indicating that the administration had proposed a FY 2012 NSF budget of \$7.8 billion, and barring unforeseen developments, the FY 2013 budget will be around \$6.9 billion ([see other story](#)). He asked that in considering the upcoming FY 2014 budget, "the Subcommittee lead the Congress in restoring the lost funds for NSF, which is still the world's premier basic science agency supporting ALL the sciences."

With regard to NSF's political science program, he expressed his disappointment with the House's vote last year voting to eliminate the program (see [Update, May 14, 2012](#)). His testimony informed the Subcommittee that "the Political Science Program supports scientific research that creates knowledge critical for making our own democracy stronger, for understanding the actions of nations around the world, and for achieving efficiencies and fairness in our public policies. Like all scientific endeavors, its researchers follow the scientific method of developing hypotheses, testing them through data collection and analysis, and producing publishable results while archiving the data for replication. Political science does not take sides or make decisions about values. It provides data for understanding political processes and identifies generalizable relationships. This

research is used, mostly without acknowledgement, by decision makers in this legislative branch, the executive branch, and in capitals around the world. The research saves lives, analyzes political upheaval, increases competitiveness, and explains democratic governance."

He also stressed the importance of the SBE sciences to cybersecurity, referencing the recent hearings (see [Update, March 11, 2013](#)), and to disaster research particularly with respect to risk communications and resilience. He cited the transformative research by Nobel Prize winners Elinor Ostrom and Daniel Kahneman on collective and individual decision making, and the role of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) on state and local governments, businesses, and police departments. He also noted the hearing the Subcommittee held two days earlier on youth violence ([see other story](#)) featuring a report prepared by SBE scholars. As he has done in all of his testimony on NSF over the years, Silver strongly supported the continuation of the three Gold Standard surveys supported by SBE-- the American National Election Survey, the Panel Study on Income Dynamics, and the General Social Survey.

He cited NSF's role in the Interagency Neuroscience Initiative, championed by Fattah, and the SBE's Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences divisions' role in that initiative, including a recent solicitation (see [Update, March 11, 2013](#)). Finally, he indicated support for NSF's efforts to broaden participation of underrepresented groups in science, referring to the COSSA-led Collaborative for Enhancing Diversity in the Sciences and the workshop it held in May 2012 ([see other story](#)).

NIJ and BJS

Silver then turned his attention to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), telling the Subcommittee of James Q. Wilson's admonition that the federal government can be and should be the research and development arm of the criminal justice system supporting research and data collection, analysis, and dissemination. He thanked the Subcommittee for its support of a set-aside of Office of Justice Programs appropriations for research and statistics, but argued that more funding is necessary for these agencies to carry out their important functions.

With regard to NIJ he noted that the agency has played a key role in "designing and testing crime prevention and control strategies by focusing on three major areas-- the nature of crime, the causes of crime and the response to crime. It has funded studies and evaluations that are rigorous, scientifically sound, and valuable to criminal justice practitioners-- police, prosecutors, judges, correctional officials and policymakers."

He indicated NIJ has recently emphasized the notion of "Translational Criminology," the translation of scientific discoveries into policy and practice to help prevent, manage and control crime. It includes: "addressing the gaps between scientific discovery and program delivery, finding evidence that something works and figuring out how to implement the evidence in real world practice settings, and knowing what conditions facilitate or inhibit field use of research evidence."

Silver told the Subcommittee how NIJ has further strengthened its standing as a science agency by using standing peer review panels, supporting randomized control trials, and using crimesolutions.gov as a way of disseminating the results of the research it supports.

For BJS, he thanked the Subcommittee for supporting the revitalization of the National Crime Victimization study, which has allowed reinstatement of the sample size and interviewer training and the development of sub-national estimates. It will also allow BJS to fulfill the goal of finding better ways for measuring rape and sexual assault in this self-report survey.

He also mentioned BJS's NCS-X: The National Crime Statistics Exchange, which would facilitate the development of a nationally representative sample of U.S. law enforcement agencies that provide detailed information on crime incidents in their communities. In addition, to help support recidivism studies, BJS has also designed and implemented a software system that taps rap sheets housed in state repositories across the nation and yields a searchable database that summarizes the recorded criminal histories of tens of thousands of individuals.

Finally, he reminded the panel of the importance of BJS support for its State Justice Statistics program, whose Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) conduct research on issues that are essential to both state and federal agencies, such as assessing prescription drug use, human trafficking, and the effects of sex offender policy reform.

Silver's full testimony is available [here](#).

COSSA-Led Collaborative Releases Enhancing Diversity Report

Studies of the United States scientific workforce repeatedly and consistently show that ethnic and racial minorities are underrepresented across all science disciplines. Collaboration on a common set of high-priority measures has the potential to inform, target, and strengthen efforts to increase diversity in the science. Participants of the May 24, 2012 workshop, *Enhancing Diversity in Science: Working Together to Develop Common Data, Measures, and Standards*, recognized that the "process of working toward common measurement itself also provides an opportunity for mutual updates on data tracking efforts and initiatives that government agencies sponsor, and in which colleges, universities, foundations, and nonprofits participate." The Collaborative on Enhancing Diversity in the Sciences, led by COSSA Deputy Director Angela Sharpe, has now released the report of the workshop.

The full report is available at:

http://www.cossa.org/diversity/reports/Enhancing_Diversity_in_Science_Common_Data_Measures_and_Standards.pdf

The Executive Summary is available at:

<http://www.cossa.org/diversity/reports/Common-Data-Measures-and-Standards-Executive-Summary.pdf>

Workshop participants examined diversity issues in detail in small breakout groups addressing five overarching questions (1) What to Measure: Surveys and Indicators, (2) What to Measure: Programs and Interventions to Promote Diversity in the Scientific Workforce, (3) Whom to Measure, (4) How to Measure, and (5) Processes for Sharing Best Practices/Research.

Overarching Workshop Recommendations

This meeting strongly confirmed that steps are needed to increase the comparability of both administrative and survey data collected on diversity in the scientific workforce. Achieving agreement on what data elements are high priority to collect and on specific measures to use will make it possible to aggregate findings across studies and to coordinate efforts to increase diversity across agencies, universities, and organizations. At present, unfortunately, there is little consistency in what data are collected and how they are collected.

Just as important, there is widespread acknowledgement of the crucial need to understand the effectiveness of approaches, such as fellowships and mentoring, to strengthening diversity in the workforce though it is generally agreed that there is a need for an integrated summary of the research in this area that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. Similarly, there is agreement that in addition to studying effects on individual targets of intervention efforts, research is needed that considers the social context, environment, and culture of the institutions, programs, and/or departments in which these students and professionals participate, allowing for a nuanced understanding of perceptions and experiences with programs to enhance diversity. The inclusion of data collected from program providers as well as program participants is important for both bringing programs to scale and to sustaining them.

Finally, methodological consideration across the range of different data collection methods is also imperative. Efforts are required to minimize respondent burden, include the highest data priority

elements, and provide data formats that allow the basis for summary variables that inform the efforts to diversify and encourage enrollment and retention of students and professionals.

Overarching Recommendation No. 1:

Establish a federal interagency working group of federal science agencies and the Department of Education to examine and define common data elements that all federally supported programs and individuals would be required to collect for tracking and evaluation purposes. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) should take the lead and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), the primary supporters of federal research and training, should serve as co-chairs of this interagency working group, similar to their collaboration on the STARMetrics program.

The first task of the federal interagency working group should be to jointly sponsor a National Academy of Sciences' (NAS) study with two goals: (1) to summarize existing evaluation studies of programs, approaches, and interventions to support diversity; and (2) to review current data collection efforts by agencies, colleges and universities, and other organizations in order to make recommendations on common data elements.

Overarching Recommendation No. 2:

Develop a permanent central web-based repository for data on diverse populations in the science pipeline, as well as publications focusing on this issue.

Overarching Recommendation No. 3:

Launch a new set of fellowships focused on increasing diversity in the scientific workforce using a public/private partnership and taking into account recent research and practice on the structuring of fellowships and training experiences.

The workshop was sponsored by the: ***Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)** in collaboration with the **National Institutes of Health (NIH)** [Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institute Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)], the **National Science Foundation (NSF)** [Directorate for Education & Human Resources (EHR) -- Historically Black Colleges and Universities Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP), and Research on Gender in Science and Engineering (GSE); Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) -- Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (BCS) (Social Psychology) and the Division of Social and Economic Sciences (SES) - Economics Program, Science of Organizations Program, and the Sociology Program], the **Alfred P. Sloan Foundation (Sloan)**, **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)**, and the **William T. Grant Foundation (W.T. Grant)**.

Changes to the Common Rule: The Implications for the Social and Behavioral Sciences

On March 21 and 22, the National Academies' Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences (BBCSS) held a workshop on the "Proposed Revisions to the Common Rule in Relation to the Behavioral and Social Sciences." In 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services proposed changes to the Common Rule, the regulations governing the protection of human subjects in research, in an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM). (For more information, see [Update, January 28, 2013](#) and click [here](#) for a response to the ANPRM from the social and behavioral science community.) Several COSSA member organizations helped sponsor the workshop. More information about the workshop, including presenters' slides and an archived webcast, is available [here](#). BBCSS will publish a summary report of the workshop. According to Robert Hauser, Executive Director of the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (DBASSE), the Academies expect to convene a panel a panel that will produce a consensus report with conclusions and recommendations.

The workshop's opening session reviewed existing knowledge and evidence about the functioning of the Common Rule and Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). Connie Citro, Director of the Committee on National Statistics at the National Academies, gave an overview of the many National Academies' reports on human subjects protection published since 1979 and summarized the lessons learned. She pointed to four major takeaways from the existing literature. First, one-size-fits-all approaches often have unanticipated negative consequences. Second, there is no need to reinvent the wheel regarding human subjects' protection. Third, a balance needs to be struck between leaving subjects vulnerable and handicapping researchers. Finally, the social and behavioral sciences (SBS) are often not given the same consideration as the biomedical sciences in writing regulations and thus need to be constantly vigilant to make sure that new rules are appropriate for a SBS context.

Noting that there is a relatively small evidence base on the efficacy of the Common Rule and IRBs, Jeffrey Rodamar, Department of Education, reviewed some of the existing data. He found that despite popular perception, IRBs function pretty well. They are generally no more of an administrative burden than other grant-related activities; on average, review takes less than three percent of a study's time; a majority of studies are approved; expedited review takes less than a month on average and full review takes less than two months; and extreme delays are statistically uncommon. Rodamar described data showing that both SBS and biomedical researchers generally approve of the IRB system. He conceded that there are some problems with the Common Rule regulations and IRBs, but, paraphrasing Winston Churchill, suggested that perhaps "IRBs are worst form of governing research except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

The "Minimal Risk" Standard

The second session, moderated by Celia Fischer, Fordham University, focused on the types of "risks and harms" encountered in SBS research. Richard T. Campbell delved into the concept of "minimal risk," an important area for researchers dealing with human subjects. The determination of whether participation in a study represents a "minimal risk" dictates the level of IRB review that takes place. Under the Common Rule, a study represents minimal risk if "the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests." Noting that it is a "cognitively complex" concept, Campbell suggested that risk can be thought of as the relationship between the probability of harm occurring and the severity of potential harm. Thus, the Common Rule provides some flexibility in that it does not dictate that both probability severity must be "minimal," just that, as probability increases, the severity of possible harm must decrease (and vice versa). Given that other parts of the definition are also thorny (such as what is meant by "daily life"), Campbell suggested that the Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP) could provide guidance to facilitate more consistent application of the minimal risk benchmark.

Brian Mustanski, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, spoke about his research on risky and sensitive behavior (such as drug use, sexual behavior, and HIV) in youth, which are topics that often make IRBs skittish. He conducted a study that was reviewed by two IRBs. One board approved it immediately, while the other delayed the study for six months because it was felt to be a "slight increase" over minimal risk. However, when Mustanski surveyed his subjects, a large majority felt that their participation was less uncomfortable than a routine medical exam (the minimal risk standard). Mustanski argued that such institutional reluctance to approve research into controversial or sensitive subjects as minimal risk can have a chilling effect, leading to a poor evidence base for interventions with already underserved populations, which is indeed the case regarding HIV prevention in LGBT youth.

Steve Breckler, American Psychological Association and COSSA Board Member, discussed the concept of risk in the SBS context. He reminded the audience that the broad goal of assessing risk is to calibrate the level of review to the level of risk a study poses to participants, in other words, to

protect subjects and reduce unnecessary regulatory burden. He argued that the social science community should put greater focus on producing evidence to determine how well regulations are working and that having better guidance and tools for assessing risk would facilitate the work of IRBs.

Charles Plott, California Institute of Technology and a former COSSA Board member, posed the question of whether the entirety of the research endeavors for some fields, like economics, political science, game theory and decision science, could be said to be wholly without risk. In a survey of economics, political science, and judgment and decision making associations, Plott found very low numbers of adverse incidents and reports of harm, all of which were low-magnitude events (such as feelings of stress or frustration). He argued that some research topics-- markets, committees and voting, games, processes, and decisions-- and some research methods-- questionnaires, computer games, etc.-- can be said to pose no potential harm to subjects and should thus be exempted from consideration under the Common Rule.

Informed Consent and Special Populations

A session on the consent process and special populations was moderated by Margaret Foster Riley, University of Virginia. Sally Powers, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, discussed how consent operates in her research on depression, which collects "rich" behavioral and biospecimen data (which can be recoded and analyzed as part of future analysis). The proposed changes to the Common Rule would require that prior consent is obtained for re-analysis of biospecimens, but that consent should be given for open-ended use of specimens. However, the changes do not address rich behavioral data; Powers argued that the same standards should be applied.

Roxane Cohen Silver explained how she conducts research on victims of disasters and traumatic experiences (like natural disasters, infant death, and mass shootings) shortly after such events occur. Silver argued that such research can be conducted ethically and sensitively, if participants are given multiple opportunities to opt out, are allowed to refuse to answer questions and researchers and staff are well-trained. Noting that this type of research is most valuable if it is commenced immediately after a traumatic event, Silver described her arrangement with her IRB, which pre-approved a generic post-disaster proposal. In the aftermath of a traumatic event, Silver provides the IRB with specific information and can get full approval within 48 hours.

Celia Fischer, Fordham University, spoke about some of the issues involving obtaining informed consent from children. She argued that simplifying consent forms, as proposed by the ANPRM, would be useful. However, relying on standardized forms can be problematic for certain types of research and subjects of different ages, language skills, and educational backgrounds. Fischer observed that verbal consent can be a better form in certain contexts. She also noted that emancipated minors are often not treated as full adults by IRBs, despite being adults under the law. Fischer pointed out the issue of re-obtaining consent from adults, for whom parental consent had been granted when they were minors.

Data Security and Sharing

David Weir, University of Michigan Survey Research Center, moderated a panel on "Data Use and Sharing and Technological Advancement." The proposals in the ANPRM would mandate that all studies that collect identifiable or potentially identifiable data to have data security plans. George Alter, University of Michigan Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), which archives and protects social science data, spoke about some of the ways data can be kept secure. Informational risk can be reduced by improving study design (implementing certain sampling procedures, using multiple sites), having protection plans in place, using data repositories and archives, and training. ICPSR restricts data based on the degree of risk of disclosure and severity of harm from that disclosure, from publically releasing data online to requiring researchers work with data in physical data enclaves.

Taylor Martin, University of Utah, spoke about the data security implications of her research into

math learning, which collects rich data from children playing online educational games. This type of research shows promise in terms of providing new information about how different kinds of children learn and how we can teach them better. However, concerns about data security can have a chilling effect on data sharing and reuse among researchers. Martin observed that for-profit companies are collecting data and doing the same kind of research without having to go through the same hurdles as researchers.

Susan Bouregy, Yale University Human Research Protection Program, raised concerns about the ANPRM's proposal to apply HIPAA standards for deidentification of data (requiring removal of 18 specific identifiers). Bouregy noted such standards may make some data sets unusable while ignoring other ways individuals could be identified. She also argued that some of the mandated HIPAA security elements are not appropriate for certain types of social science research. Furthermore, it ignored that not all identified data is risky. Finally, Bouregy suggested that the ANPRM's requirement that all suspected data breaches be reported should be made more flexible and allow IRBs to tailor reporting to the context of each situation.

Multi-Disciplinary and Multi-Site Studies

Robert Levine, Yale University, moderated a session focused on multi-disciplinary and multi-site studies. Pearl O'Rourke, Partners Health Care System, discussed the requirement that multi-site studies use a single IRB of record. She noted that having a central IRB does not absolve the individual institutions of fulfilling a number of responsibilities in overseeing and approving research. O'Rourke was concerned that mandating a central IRB would not address the complexity of each situation. Furthermore, the requirement underestimates the costs and time involved in running a central IRB.

Laura Stark, Vanderbilt University Center for Medicine Health and Society, gave an ethnographic perspective on IRB decision-making. As an explanation for why IRBs reach different conclusions regarding the risk level of similar research, Stark suggested the concept of "local precedents," or allowing past decisions to govern the evaluation of subsequent research. Such precedents may lead to faster decisions and internal consistency, but they can be problematic for researchers working with multiple IRBs. Stark offered three strategies to work around local precedents: 1) study networks (having a central IRB for multiple sites), 2) collegial review (allowing departmental experts to review research), and 3) decision repositories (online archives of approved protocols from many IRBs).

Thomas Coates, University of California, Los Angeles Program in Global Health, shared his experience with multinational studies (which are not addressed by the ANPRM). Some concerns he encountered included whether requiring other countries to adhere to U.S. requirements could be considered paternalistic, how to evaluate minimum risk in different cultural and economic contexts, and how to harmonize U.S., international, and local regulations. Coates also stressed the importance of receiving approval from local bodies in addition to U.S.-based IRBs.

The Scope of Institutional Review Boards

A final session, moderated by Yonette Thomas, Howard University and a COSSA board member, focused on the "Purview and Roles of IRBs." Lois Brako, University of Michigan, discussed the ANPRM's proposed changes from the perspective of an IRB that has made strides to become more innovative and flexible. Brako praised the ANPRM's proposals to reduce the oversight burden for minimal risk studies, eliminate annual review, and harmonize federal regulations (so long as the harmonization does not take the form of a unilateral one-size-fits-all approach). However, she argued that some of the proposals are unnecessarily burdensome, including requiring all institutions that receive Common Rule funding to be subject to federal oversight, some of the information security provisions, requiring reports of all adverse events to be submitted and stored in a central database, and expanding "human subjects" to include deidentified biospecimens. Brako also suggested that in some cases, clearer guidance from OHRP would be more helpful than changed regulations.

Rena Lederman, Princeton University, observed that the Common Rule regulations were written from a biomedical perspective and are particularly unsuited for certain types of SBS research, such as anthropological fieldwork. Anthropologists establish thick relationships with their subjects, immerse themselves in other cultures, and do not test hypotheses or run controlled experiments. The ANPRM's requirements for informational security could cripple anthropological research (anthropologists' detailed field notes would be treated as data with informational risks under the new rules, raising the question of how such notes could be deidentified). Rather than trying to adapt the Common Rule to fit SBS research, Lederman proposed that it be only applied to biomedical research. She proposed the creation of a National Commission to develop an alternative guidance and framework to address SBS research risks.

Cheryl Crawford Watson, National Institute of Justice (NIJ), discussed the Department of Justice's (DOJ) approach to confidentiality and how it differs from other regulations regarding human subjects protection. Researchers funded by DOJ must submit a Privacy Certificate, which protects researchers and data from subpoena. It also prevents the researcher from violating subjects' privacy for any reason other than future criminal conduct. The DOJ privacy certificate differs from the certificate of confidentiality mandated by other agencies (like Health and Human Services) in that it prohibits researchers from reporting child abuse, reportable communicable diseases, and threatened harm to self or others. In order to be allowed to report such abuse, researchers must get the subjects to sign a separate consent-to-report form. The certificate is so strict due to concerns that few of the subjects under DOJ's purview would consent to participate in research otherwise.

NSF Seeks Proposals on Use and Functioning of the Civil Justice System

For over thirty years the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Law and Social Science (LSS) program has supported research related to the how people use the legal system and how the legal system has responded to that use. It has also supported the development of databases related to the legal system.

NSF's Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate has issued a Dear Colleague letter seeking proposals for the LSS program to fund research concerning the use and functioning of the civil justice system. This is not a special competition or a new program. NSF will evaluate the proposals through its standard merit review process. Scholars should submit their proposals through the regular LSS program:

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=504727&ods_key=nsf12507.

The letter suggests that LSS scholars have developed useful knowledge concerning how people understand the law, what they do about their legal concerns, and how organizations define, mediate and answer legal concerns. In turn, courts and other legal institutions shape and impact people's family lives, their housing choices, and their business and employment options. These impacts are central both to theory-building concerning legal mobilization and decision making by institutions and to understanding where and how law structures people's lives.

The program invites proposals concerning civil justice that consider problems involving and not limited to the following:

- Individual decisions to engage legal institutions and assistance, and the institutional, cultural, social and economic factors that shape those decisions;
- Mediating institutions that define, mobilize or manage legal claims, and the differences they make in process and outcomes; and
- The process and outcomes of decision-making in courts, both trial and appellate.

Scholars can use all appropriate methods used within the social and behavioral sciences, including and not limited to collecting and analyzing documents, conducting lab and field experiments, conducting surveys and interviews, and engaging in ethnographic research. In addition, NSF

welcomes comparative approaches in which scholars analyze change over time or compare across jurisdictions.

For more information contact: Susan Sterett, ssterett@nsf.gov or (703) 292-7267.

COSSA Joins More Than 150 Organizations to "Rally for Medical Research" on April 8th in Washington



On Monday, April 8, 2013, COSSA and more than 150 organizations will come together to raise awareness about the critical need for a sustained investment in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies that improve health, spur more progress, inspire more hope and save more lives.

The current budget situation constrains federal funding for medical research, threatening the future health of Americans. A unified call to action to raise awareness, the Rally for Medical Research is designed to unite thousands of Americans across the country to call on our nation's policymakers to make life-saving medical research funding a national priority.

The Rally will be held on Monday, April 8 at 11:00 a.m. in Washington, DC, on the steps of the Carnegie Library. For those unable to attend the Rally in Washington, it will be broadcast via YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y23FFtBWzdY>.

For more information on the Rally and how to become involved in the Rally, see: <http://rallyformedicalresearch.org/Pages/default.aspx>.

To become a partnering organizations, see: <http://rallyformedicalresearch.org/pages/getinvolved.aspx>.

NIH Office of Disease Prevention Seeks Input on Strategic Plan

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Disease Prevention (ODP) is seeking broad public input on its Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-2018 Strategic Plan. ODP's mission is to improve public health by increasing the scope, quality, dissemination, and impact of prevention research supported by the NIH. The Office fulfills its mission by providing leadership for the development and coordination, and implementation of prevention research in collaboration with NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) and other partners. ODP advises the NIH director on prevention research issues, actions, and activities and provides overall guidance to the ICs on programs that seek to improve the Nation's health through research, training, knowledge translation, and public education as it relates to health promotion and disease prevention.

Established in 1986 in response to a directive in the Health Research Extension Act of 1985, ODP has never had a formal strategic plan. The Office has begun an extensive planning process to develop a plan. In its vision statement, ODP notes that by "2018, the ODP will be a valuable resource to the NIH and the broader prevention research community, providing guidance in prevention research methodology, identifying gaps in existing evidence and facilitating the coordination of new activities to address those gaps, promoting quality improvements in the review and administration of prevention research, and increasing the impact and visibility of prevention research."

The purpose of the RFI is to gather public input on specific objectives for each strategic priority as

well as ideas about measures and timelines appropriate to those objectives. Respondents are also encouraged to comment on what the ODP could do to improve processes the NIH uses to solicit, review, and administer research grants and cooperative agreements.

Six Strategic Priorities

The ODP Strategic Plan has six strategic priorities and welcomes submissions of changes, additions, or deletions to these priorities. It also welcomes recommendations of measurable objectives associated with an individual priority, as well as recommendations of appropriate benchmarks for gauging progress toward each recommended objective.

ODP notes that the "characterization of the NIH prevention research portfolio is based on a broad definition of prevention and limited to an analysis of the title and abstract of each application." This approach does not provide either enough sensitivity or specificity or enough detail on other important features (e.g., content area, methods, target population) to adequately characterize patterns or trends or to identify areas that would benefit from targeted efforts by the NIH Institutes and Centers. The Office emphasizes that it has "an opportunity to play an important role in the development and validation of new methods for characterizing the NIH prevention research portfolio."

Strategic Priority #1: Systematically monitor NIH investments in prevention research and the progress and results of that research. The NIH ICs periodically ask ODP for advice on areas and topics for new or expanded prevention research. More effective characterization of the prevention research portfolio would allow identification of areas with limited investment or inadequate coordination. The reports from other federal agencies can also be used for this purpose. Regular interactions with professional societies and the extramural community can also be helpful. ODP has an opportunity to facilitate the allocation of resources to areas in need of additional attention.

Strategic Priority #2: Identify and promote prevention research areas that deserve expanded effort and investment by the NIH. It is important that the best available methods in prevention research be utilized to move the science forward. Increased awareness of and training in the use of newer and more efficient approaches for measurement, intervention, design, and analysis are needed to improve both the quality and success of prevention research applications submitted to the NIH. Opportunities exist for ODP to support the development of these methods and to encourage training in their use for a variety of audiences, including NIH program and review staff, intramural investigators, and the extramural community.

Strategic Priority #3: Promote the use of the best available methods in prevention research and support the development of new and innovative approaches. All of the ICs support prevention research in their own areas. This approach has helped to create a robust and diverse research portfolio that addresses a range of important scientific questions. Even so, enhanced collaboration and coordination among NIH ICs could result in better outcomes and more efficient use of resources. Opportunities exist for ODP to encourage coordination of prevention research across Institutes and Centers.

Strategic Priority #4: Encourage development of collaborative prevention research projects and facilitate coordination of such projects across the NIH and with other public and private entities. Part of the mission of the ODP is to disseminate the results of high quality evidence-based disease prevention research. Opportunities exist for ODP to facilitate the identification and promotion of effective evidence-based interventions.

Strategic Priority #5: Identify and promote the use of effective evidence-based interventions. Many NIH ICs have well-organized communication and outreach programs that promote the findings of their research. Opportunities exist for ODP to play a central role in highlighting the scientific and public health impact of the NIH prevention research portfolio.

Strategic Priority #6: Increase the visibility of prevention research at the NIH and across the

country.

In addition to the strategic priorities, the ODP welcomes suggestions on how to enhance the prevention research portfolio at the NIH, including suggested changes to the approach used by the NIH to:

- Develop funding opportunity announcements that could improve the quality of prevention research supported by the NIH;
- Review applications that could improve the quality of prevention research supported by the agency; and
- Manage funded projects that could improve the quality of prevention research supported by the NIH.

ODP is accepting responses to the request for information until April 14, 2013. Comments should be submitted electronically using the web-based form available at http://prevention.nih.gov/aboutus/strategic_plan/rfi.aspx. For more information, see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-13-051.html>. Information about ODP is available on [its website](#).

OppNet Seeks Revision Applications for Basic Social and Behavioral Research on Social, Cultural, Biological, and Psychological Mechanisms of Stigma

Stigma remains a significant public health problem in the United States and globally, particularly in low and middle income countries. It has been shown to interfere with seeking and receiving appropriate health care, limit social and occupational opportunities, contribute to depression and other psychiatric disorders, and lower the quality of life of individuals with stigmatized statuses. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) reports that there is a large body of research on stigma, including a number of studies funded by the NIH. However, much of the existing stigma research, whether exploratory, descriptive or intervention-based, has focused on manifestations of stigma related to specific diseases, conditions, or populations. The agency is concerned that this focus may prevent an understanding of the underlying psychological and physiological mechanisms driving the development of stigmatizing attitudes and the experience of stigma and obscure important commonalities or differences across stigmatized health conditions and other stigmatized statuses, such as those associated with race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation.

This gap in research poses a number of challenges for understanding stigma and developing effective interventions to prevent or reduce the experience of stigma or buffer against its effects. Without knowledge of shared underlying features of the development of stigmatizing attitudes or the experiencing of a stigmatized identity, researchers may adopt intervention models or strategies developed in the context of specific health conditions that do not fully address the complex psychological and physiological underpinnings of stigma. For example, little is known about the commonalities among stigma, social isolation, and stress, or about the potential for positive affect or social support to attenuate the experience of stigma. Additionally, disease-focused stigma research may lead to duplicated efforts, in that research aiming to understand and address stigma may not leverage relevant existing work done with other health conditions or stigmatized statuses.

Accordingly, the NIH is seeking research applications that elucidate mechanisms underlying stigma that are relevant across health conditions or stigmatized statuses. It is also seeking to encourage applied stigma researchers to incorporate mechanistic components into their research and for basic behavioral and social science research investigators to incorporate stigma into studies of related phenomena.

Specific areas of research interest include but are not limited to:

- Social, cultural, biological, and psychological mechanisms that contribute to the experience of felt and enacted stigma or that underlie the development of stigmatizing attitudes.
- Mechanisms through which external or societal stigma develops into internalized stigma.
- Neurological, physiological, genetic/epigenetic, and psychological mechanisms through which felt or enacted health-related stigma affects health or the impact of health interventions.
- Neurological, physiological, and psychological processes involved in the development or expression of stigmatizing attitudes or behaviors.
- Neurological, physiological, and psychological processes that underlie changes in felt stigma experiences or stigmatizing attitudes in response to stigma interventions.
- Social, cultural, biological, or psychological phenomena that may attenuate the experience of stigma in response to perceived discrimination.
- The association between the experience of stigma and other psychological phenomena, such as stress or other affective states, resilience, self and group identity formation, and social isolation.
- Developmental course or changes in the experience of stigma and underlying neurological and physiological mechanisms.
- The nature of experiencing multiple stigmatized identities, including conditions under which this psychological experience is interactive or compounded.

Letters of Intent due July 2, 2013. Applications are due on August 3, 2013. Applicants, however, are encouraged to apply early to allow adequate time to make any corrections to errors found in the application during the submission process by the due date. For more information and/or to apply, see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-MD-13-005.html>.

Home and Family Based Approaches for the Prevention and Management of Overweight or Obesity in Early Childhood

The most recent national representative survey data for the years 2003-2006 estimate that 12.4 percent of all children ages two through five years residing in the United States are overweight, meaning a BMI (body mass indicator) greater than or equal to 95th percentile of the 2000 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) BMI growth charts. An additional 16 percent are at risk of becoming overweight (BMI 85th to less than the 95th percentile). Consequently, approximately one-fourth of all toddler and pre-school children in the United States are estimated to be overweight or at risk of overweight.

Racial/ethnic disparities have been reported from a nationally representative sample of U.S. children four years of age with the highest prevalence among American Indian/Native Alaskan pre-school children for whom obesity is twice as common as in non-Hispanic white or Asian children with an intermediate prevalence among Hispanic and non-Hispanic black children. Research has also revealed a low awareness among parents of overweight status of their pre-school children. This is concerning because parents of overweight children who do not recognize their child's weight status may be unlikely to engage in obesity prevention efforts. Approximately one-third of children ages 6-11 years (33.3 percent) and adolescents ages 12-19 years (34.1 percent) are either at risk of overweight or are overweight. It has been known for some time that weight status tends to track across childhood. By the age of eight years, most children are in the BMI percentile channel that they will follow until the end of growth in late adolescence.

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), data from the Feeding Infants and Toddlers Study (FITS) indicate that parents may be responsible for feeding patterns and eating habits introduced very early in life that may last a lifetime. Patterns of physical activity and physical inactivity may begin at early ages in the home environment. When combined with a diet of highly energy dense foods, this pattern of inactivity may help explain the increasing prevalence of overweight among young children. In addition to diet and activity, other factors that may also

influence the development of overweight in preschool children need further investigation. For example, it is reported that daily sleep duration of less than 12 hours during infancy appears to be a risk factor for overweight and adiposity in preschool-aged children. Parental social stress, time limitations, work responsibilities, and absence, or other factors that may strain parent/child interactions may also be of interest. An evidence/technology assessment report) that examined weight management interventions in clinical and non-clinical community settings found that available research studies primarily enrolled children and adolescents ages five to 18 years and no studies targeted those less than five years of age suggesting a significant research gap for this age range.

Accordingly, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) are seeking applications from institutions/organizations that propose randomized clinical trials testing novel home- or family-based interventions for the prevention or management of overweight in infancy and early childhood. Tested interventions can use behavioral (including dietary and physical activity), environmental, or other relevant approaches.

The initiative is predicated on the belief that within the home environment, parents of infants and young children can be taught to recognize children's weight status and can serve as highly influential role models for dietary and physical activity behaviors, as gatekeepers for foods and beverages that are brought into the home environment, and as regulators of portion size, of foods eaten away from home, and of screen time (e.g., television viewing, computer use, video games, etc.), free play time, and other sedentary and physical activity behaviors. Parents have the ability to influence the development of fundamental eating, physical activity, and other influential behaviors at an early age for their children and they have the ability to provide or withhold reinforcement for these behaviors. Additionally it is likely important that the rest of the family follows the principles of a healthy lifestyle so they can serve as capable teachers, facilitators, and role models. This [funding opportunity announcement](#) (FOA) is designed to encourage creative ways to explore the potential of parents and other caregivers including in-home day-care providers and older siblings in the home, as conduits to reach children with appropriate energy balance messages and behaviors, modify the physical environment of the home to make it more conducive to energy balance, or otherwise have a positive impact on appropriate weight gain of young children through various mediating behavioral factors.

The FOA is seeking experimental research approaches that utilize randomized clinical trial study designs. Behavioral interventions (e.g., self-monitoring, reinforcement strategies, motivational interviewing, and skills training) may be included in combination with approaches to change the home environment. Interventions based on well-established theory or existing data are encouraged; however, due to the need to explore innovative approaches, novel approaches that are based on clinical experience and are well justified will be considered. Novel or innovative approaches that are accompanied by a convincing rationale for their use are encouraged. Applications targeting groups or populations at high risk for the development of obesity are also encouraged. Observational or descriptive studies designed to examine the correlates of overweight in the absence of an intervention will not be considered appropriate for this FOA.

Projects that include a multi-disciplinary team of investigators with knowledge and experience in working with infants and young children, parents, child care providers and other primary caregivers, as well as experts on overweight and randomized clinical trials are encouraged. Relevant disciplines would include early childhood development and education, in addition to other behavioral and social scientists as appropriate, depending on the nature of the interventions proposed. Research topics include:

- Behavioral interventions emphasizing the role of home, parents, family, household microenvironment.
- Operational parental support, reward, involvement, commitment, rules, restrictions, and engagement to achieve healthy weight and minimize weight related risk factors in young

children.

- Structural home changes including: food and beverage pantry content, exposure, and availability of high fat snack foods and sugar-sweetened beverages and confections such as candy or pastry.
- Multi-component interventions that incorporate family-based behavioral/lifestyle counseling, physical activity and dietary counseling, and parent modeling and reinforcement.
- Interventions in infants beginning in the post-weaning period that focus on regulating the quantity, quality, and timing of complementary foods introduced into the diet.
- Multi-site, trans-site interventions bridging the gap in continuity between the home, neighborhood/community, day-care, pre-school and other sites in which young children spend most of their time, encouraging greater linkage of externally-based approaches with the internal home environment (i.e., reciprocal reinforcement with increased parental involvement).
- Interventions that influence: intra-family dynamics (including siblings), family relationships (including extended families); joint parent/child goal setting and family rituals to optimize balance of energy intake and expenditure (including family play, recreational sports, and fitness activities); family meals and eating occasions.
- Studies attentive to cultural and ethnic influences that impact competing individual/family choices for energy intake and expenditure.
- Interventions designed to reduce or manage environmental/situational social stressors to increase parental time (including work schedules, work-family balance), involvement, and attention to factors associated with energy balance in early childhood.
- Interventions that enhance parental skills, parental modeling of anti-obesogenic behaviors, and parental awareness or monitoring of the eating behavior and physical activity of children (including both maternal and paternal involvement in planning children's meals, and involvement in physical activity).
- Interventions that address family coping with adverse external influences on diet, physical activity, and sedentary behaviors, including media, peer, neighbor, and neighborhood influences.
- Interventions that address parenting styles (e.g., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, indulgent) as they relate to parent feeding styles (e.g., pressure to eat, monitoring, restriction) and energy density of the child's diet.
- Interventions focusing on novel aspects of behavior that directly or indirectly influence diet and physical activity, e.g., food as an instrument of reward or punishment, perceptions of physical safety outdoors, sleep/bedtime rules, and other less documented considerations.
- Interventions that integrate home and neighborhood resources or utilize human capital resources from the community such as trained Agricultural Extension Service aids, registered dietitians, or fitness trainers to provide guidance to parents and children on practices consistent with energy balance; interventions that include home visits by relevant community service providers; interventions that include anticipatory guidance recommendations provided by health care providers, applied in conjunction with the other aspects of the home/family environment.
- Interventions that promote family social support for the adoption and maintenance of dietary and physical activity practices consistent with achieving and maintaining energy balance in early childhood.
- Interventions that utilize non-parent child care providers external to the nuclear home/family as behavioral role models, facilitators, or change agents; including enhancing parental monitoring and regulation of activity, screen time, and foods that their young children consume in the setting of non-parent child care providers.
- Interventions that establish television and other screen time guidelines for the home/family shared environment, offset with increased free play time as an example of one component for regulating sedentary behaviors beginning at pre-toddler ages.
- Interventions that involve re-engineering the physical home environment (stimulus control-removing cues for unhealthy habits; add prompts for healthier alternatives), substitution (counter conditioning-learning healthier behaviors that substitute for problem behaviors), or rewards (reinforcement management-reward or punishment for taking steps in a particular direction) to achieve behavior modification related to diet or physical activity.

For more information and/or to apply, see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-13-153.html>.

Consortium of Social Science Associations

Members

Governing Members

American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Economic Association
American Educational Research Association
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Criminology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Law Schools
Law and Society Association
Linguistic Society of America
Midwest Political Science Association
National Communication Association
Population Association of America
Society for Research in Child Development

Membership Organizations

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
American Finance Association
American Psychosomatic Society
Association for Asian Studies
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
Association of Research Libraries
Council on Social Work Education
Economic History Association
History of Science Society
Justice Research and Statistics Association
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
North American Regional Science Council
North Central Sociological Association
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for Anthropological Sciences
Society for Behavioral Medicine
Society for Empirical Legal Studies
Society for Research on Adolescence
Society for Social Work and Research
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Southern Political Science Association
Southern Sociological Society
Southwestern Social Science Association

Centers and Institutes

American Academy of Political and Social Sciences
American Council of Learned Societies
American Institutes for Research
Brookings Institution
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences

Colleges and Universities

Arizona State University
Boston University
Brown University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara
Carnegie-Mellon University
University of Chicago
Clark University
University of Colorado
Columbia University
University of Connecticut
Cornell University
University of Delaware
Duke University
Georgetown University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Harvard University
Howard University
University of Idaho
University of Illinois
Indiana University
University of Iowa
Johns Hopkins University
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
University of Maryland
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse
University of Michigan
Michigan State University
University of Missouri, St. Louis
University of Minnesota
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
New York University
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
North Dakota State University
Northwestern University
Ohio State University
University of Oklahoma
University of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
University of South Carolina
Stanford University
State University of New York, Stony Brook
University of Texas, Austin
University of Texas, San Antonio
Texas A & M University
Vanderbilt University
University of Virginia
University of Washington

Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
Institute for Women's Policy Research
National Opinion Research Center
Population Reference Bureau
RTI International
RWJF Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico
Social Science Research Council
Vera Institute of Justice

Washington University in St. Louis
University of Wisconsin, Madison
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
Yale University

COSSA

Executive Director: Howard J. Silver

Deputy Director: Angela L. Sharpe

Assistant Director for Government Relations: LaTosha C. Plavnik

Assistant Director for Public Affairs: Julia Milton

President: James S. Jackson

Address all inquiries to COSSA at newsletters@cossa.org Telephone: (202) 842-3525

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is an advocacy organization promoting attention to and federal support for the social and behavioral sciences.

UPDATE is published 22 times per year. ISSN 0749-4394.

