COSSA

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In This Issue

CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & NEWS

Analysis of the FY 2014 Omnibus & Implications for Social and Behavioral Science

On Friday, January 17, President Obama signed into law the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014*, thereby completing the fiscal year (FY) 2014 appropriations process more than three months into the fiscal year. The final omnibus legislation includes all twelve appropriations bills and totals $1.1 trillion.

As previously reported, House and Senate Appropriations Committee chairs, ranking members, and staff worked through the holidays to negotiate the final package based on the budget agreement reached in December that set an overall discretionary spending cap of $1.012 trillion, providing some additional funding flexibility for appropriators to complete their work (see the December 23, 2013 Update for more information).

The final agreement represents a significant win for the scientific community and especially the social and behavioral science community. Thanks to persistent efforts by the social science advocacy community and supporters on Capitol Hill, the omnibus is free of restrictive language that would limit social science at the National Science Foundation (NSF); in particular, language akin to the so-called "Coburn amendment," which significantly limited the NSF Political Science program in FY 2013 by requiring that all funded projects address U.S. economic or national security interests, does not appear in the bill, thereby lifting the restrictions that were placed on the program and researchers. In addition, proposed provisions that appeared in recent years prohibiting or otherwise limiting health economics research funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are not in the final agreement. The absence of these and other policy riders impacting social and behavioral science are a major victory for the community.

With respect to funding, the omnibus provides modest increases to several agencies important to the social and behavioral science community. For example, while the appropriation for NSF represents an overall decrease from the FY 2013 enacted level, when one accounts for last year's across-the-board cuts and sequestration, the FY 2014 appropriation for NSF actually represents an increase. Similarly, NIH receives a 3.5 percent increase in the omnibus after accounting for sequestration and transfers in FY 2013.

Click here for COSSA's analysis of the FY 2014 omnibus and its impacts on social and behavioral research across the federal government.

Consolidated Appropriations Act Mandates Open Access for HHS and Education Agencies

Congress mandates the agencies within the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education via the Consolidated Appropriations Act, or omnibus bill, to provide open access to publications that result from federally-supported research. Specifically, the provision requires those agencies with research budgets of $100 million or more to provide online access to publications that derive from federally-funded research within 12 months of publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The language reads as follows:

> "SEC. 527.Each Federal agency, or in the case of an agency with multiple bureaus, each bureau (or operating division) funded under this Act that has research and development expenditures in excess of $100,000,000 per year shall develop a Federal research public access policy that provides for- (1) the submission to the agency, agency bureau, or designated entity acting on behalf of the agency, a machine-readable version of the author's final peer-reviewed manuscripts that have been accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals describing research supported, in whole or in part, from funding by the Federal Government; (2) free online public access to such final peer reviewed manuscripts or published versions not later than 12 months after the official date of publication; and (3) compliance with all relevant copyright laws."

Until now, only the National Institutes of Health (NIH) was statutorily mandated to provide open access. On February 22, 2013, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) director John P. Holdren issued a memorandum designed to increase "access to the results of federal funded scientific research. The memorandum required all federal agencies to have a plan for both scientific publications and digital scientific data.

OSTP recognized that some Federal agencies already have policies that partially meet the requirements of this memorandum and directed those particular agencies to adapt their policies to meet the memorandum's requirements. Agencies were instructed to post the plan on each agency's "Open Government website." According to the memorandum, this requirement did not apply to manuscripts submitted for publication prior to the plan's effective date or to digital data generated prior to the plan's effective date.

Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act (FASTR)

On February 14, 2013, the bipartisan *Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act (FASTR)* was introduced in Congress. The legislation is co-sponsored in the Senate by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Ron Wyden (D-OR), and in the House of Representatives by Reps. Doyle (D-PA), Yoder (R-KS), and Lofgren (D-CA). FASTR goes much further than the provision included in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act* and would make articles reporting on publicly funded scientific research freely accessible online for anyone to read within six months after it has been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Agencies that would be affected by FASTR include the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the National Science Foundation. Agencies would have one year from enactment of the legislation to develop implementation policies.

While the bills have been introduced in the House and Senate, no hearings have taken place as of yet.

Homeland Security Committee Examines Conference and Travel Expenses

On January 14, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee convened a hearing, "Examining Conference and Travel Spending across the Federal Government," to look into "every nook and cranny of federal spending and seek ways to improve results and save money," explained Committee Chair Tom Carper (D-DE).

Opening the hearing, Carper specifically noted that the hearing was designed to discuss the progress that has been made by agencies in "cutting spending on conferences and travel." He highlighted the May 2012 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance that requires agencies to reduce federal spending on agency travel as well as to improve the accountability on conference spending. Since the guidance's issuance, FY 2013 conference and travel spending have decreased by more than $3 billion as compared to FY 2010, according to the Chairman. He underscored the importance of conferences and the "value derived from these types of meetings," but stressed that there "is no reasonable justification for the spending that took place at some government conferences over the past few years."

Carper also emphasized the need for "face to face meetings amongst agencies, and more importantly, with those who work outside the federal government. When properly planned and managed, conferences serve a legitimate and often times necessary purpose of fostering collaboration and partnerships between government employees, state regulators, academia and industry...We must be careful that we don't unduly restrict the ability of our agencies to interact with outside groups."

Ranking Member Tom Coburn (R-OK) described the reported waste identified in conferences held by the Department of Justice, Department of Treasury and the General Services Administrations. He noted, however, that there were "many more conferences that did not capture the attention" of the public. He lauded the work of the Inspectors General and acknowledged that the executive branch has taken some positive steps. He specifically noted the OMB's guidance as well as other efforts by the Administration. Coburn contended that these "embarrassing memories" will fade over time as new leadership and new federal employees enter the federal government. Consequently, he argued, eventually the government will slip back into old habits. His fear is that history will repeat itself, which is why he believes that it is important for Congress to take action to enact legislation that will permanently prevent excessive conference spending.

Coburn stressed that legislation, the *Conference Accountability Act* (S. 1347), which he introduced along with Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Jeffrey Chiesa (R-NJ), Mike Enzi (R-WY), and John McCain (R-AZ) in July 2013, would have prevented such abuse. The legislation would reduce travel expenses by scaling back overall spending on government-sponsored conferences, establishing attendance limitations, capping the amount that can be spent on a single conference at $500,000, and requiring all conference expenses to be published online.

The recently passed FY 2014 Consolidated Appropriations bill, however, continues the government-wide restrictions on travel and conference spending and requires agencies to adhere to the 2012 Office of Management and Budget memo that cut travel spending by 30 percent from 2010 spending levels. Inspectors General are ordered to audit conference gatherings in an effort to guard against "wasteful" conferences sponsored by federal agencies.

Beth F. Cobert,OMB, and Daniel M. Tangherlini, General Services Administration (GSA), testified on behalf of the Administration along with the inspectors general from the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, and GSA.

Echoing Carper, Cobert stressed that "conferences can and do produce important results," adding that "convening Federal employees and external stakeholders at a single location can be the most efficient and cost-effective means for carrying out Government-sponsored activities." For example, said Cobert, Federal science and engineering employees and program managers not only stay abreast of federal research and development investment portfolios, but "also see significant cost savings in lieu of performing multiple site visits to each research performer's laboratory."

She also pointed to the steps that the Administration has taken to ensure that it is managing spending in a responsible way. For example, said Cobert, in September 2011, OMB required all agencies to conduct a thorough review of conference-related activities and expenditures via OMB Memorandum 11-35, *Eliminating Excess Conference Spending and Promoting Efficiency in Government*. She also cited OMB's May 2013-issued Controller Alert, which clarified the importance of conferences and provided best practices in managing conference cost in an era of fiscal constraint.

Cobert stressed that the Administration's efforts are paying off and reiterated Carper's statement that in FY 2013, agencies reduced travel costs by $3 billion compared to FY 2010 levels. Agencies, she explained, will continue to hold travel spending to 30 percent below the FY 2010 levels, unless an agency can show that certain reductions will "undermine critical government functions such as national security, international diplomacy, health and safety, law enforcement, and site visits for oversight or investigatory purposes." Agencies, Cobert stated, are evaluating and rethinking how they conduct conferences that have resulted in innovative collaborations. She concluded her testimony by emphasizing how imperative it is that the federal government continue to improve how it conducts business and provide services to the American people while increasing public transparency.

According to GSA's Tangherlini, the GSA "has rigorous controls and oversight mechanisms to ensure that all proposed travel and conference expenses are cost effective, serve legitimate mission needs and have appropriate levels of review." The process for holding conferences, he explained, requires submission of a detailed justification, a proposed budget, and review and approval from multiple divisions. In line with Administration policies, he reported, when the proposed cost of a conference is more than $100,000, the Deputy Administrator must approve it. Conferences that cost more than $500,000 are prohibited unless Tangherlini approves them and documents the justification for why the conferences must be held. Even attendances at a conference require multiple layers of approval, he further testified. This includes submitting a justification for approval along with an estimate of expenses.

In line with the Administration's policies, Tangherlini said that the GSA posts all approved, agency-sponsored conferences with a cost that is more than $100,000 on a publicly available website. The GSA has also identified ways that it can assist agencies by providing tools to help them better manage travel and conference costs. The agency is utilizing the data to allow other federal agencies to make more informed decisions about where to host conferences determined necessary to an agency's mission. He informed the Committee that the GSA has eliminated what was known as the conference lodging allowance, which permitted travelers attending a conference to exceed the maximum lodging per diem rate by up to 25 percent if staying at the site of the conference. The GSA is interested in finding ways to further reduce the government's travel costs long-term, Tangherlini concluded.

Testifying on behalf of the Department of Justice, Horowitz explained that identifying waste and abuse in the Department is a crucial responsibility of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). He explained that since FY 2008, the appropriations law for DOJ has included a requirement that the Attorney General report to the OIG the cost of any conferences that exceeded a certain threshold. For FY 2008 through FY 2012, according to Horowitz, the threshold was $20,000; for FY 2013, the threshold was $100,000. He reported that since 2007, the OIG has conducted two audits of conference spending by the Department. Significant concerns regarding both conference expenditures and inadequate reporting of conference costs by DOJ components to Department leadership were identified by the OIG, which the Department took steps to address. Similarly, the Department has continued to address recommendations related to conferences and travel made by the OIG, Horowitz testified.

George provided testimony on conference spending by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), according to George, plays a critical role in ensuring that the 98,000 IRS employees collect tax revenue in an effective and efficient manner while minimizing the risks of waste, fraud and abuse.

Miller recounted a series of problems found by the OIG's review of GSA's conferences and noted that after its report on the Western Regions Conference, "Congressional oversight and transparency increased, which led to more accountability and internal controls," including the introduction of an online training session on conference attendance that is mandatory for every employee. He also described the various activities that have been implemented by the Administration, noting that "theoretically, these requirements should discourage further conference abuses." He concluded by pointing out that a "continued focus on transparency in conference spending will help ensure that internal controls and accountability remain."

Joint Economic Committee Holds Hearing on Income Inequality

On January 16, the Joint Economic Committee held a hearing on Income Inequality in the United States. Several scholars presented a variety of opinions on the state of income inequality, its impact on economic mobility, and what should be done to address the issue. The panelists were Robert Reich, University of California, Berkeley and former Secretary of Labor; Scott Winship, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research; Melissa Kearney, the Brookings Institution's Hamilton Project; and Aparna Mathur, American Enterprise Institute. The hearing was presided over by Vice Chair Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

Reich (testimony) asserted that income inequality is growing and is particularly pronounced between those at the very top of the income spectrum and everyone else. He suggested the high level of income polarization has three major negative impacts. First, it contributes to the slow economic recovery by limiting the disposable income and purchasing power (aggregate demand) of the poor and middle class, meaning that businesses cannot expand (i.e., hire) because they do not have the customer base to support new goods and services. Second, it limits upward mobility and equal opportunity. Even if one assumes that the rate of economic mobility has not changed (which Reich disputes), the fact that the distance between the top and bottom of the income spectrum has increased means that climbing the ladder at the same pace won't get you as far. The final impact is the concentration of the political power money can buy in the hands of the wealthy. Reich quoted Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who said, "We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can't have both." Reich recommended that Congress address inequality by raising the minimum wage, extending long-term unemployment benefits, investing in education and infrastructure, revitalizing unions, regulating Wall Street, and reforming the tax system.

Winship (testimony) disputed the claim that income inequality is growing rapidly, arguing that the standard of living for the poor and middle class has improved over the past decades. However, he suggested that more attention be paid to economic mobility. Although he did not concede that upward mobility is effected by income inequality or that it has declined, Winship argued that we should be doing more to stimulate economic mobility.

Kearney (testimony) made three major points about the state of income inequality. First, she attributed the rise in income inequality to structural changes in the labor market that favor highly skilled workers and observed that these pressures are unlikely to change. Second, income inequality fuels an educational achievement gap between the rich and poor, which is exacerbated by socioeconomic self-selection (people choosing to have children with those from a similar economic background). Lastly, Kearney testified that inequality perpetuates the disadvantages of poverty by making the next rung on the economic ladder seem so far away as to be unachievable.

Mathur (testimony) argued that the severity and rate of income inequality changes depending on how you measure it. She also suggested that consumption might be a better measure of well-being than income, observing that consumption inequality is much less severe than income inequality. Mathur argued that debates about income inequality are misguided, and the real problem is one of poverty, exacerbated by limited economic mobility. She recommended Congress improve access to high quality education, supplement unemployment benefits with skills training, and promote the earned income tax credit (EITC).

Senate HELP Committee Holds Hearing on TRIO and GEAR UP Programs

On January 16, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing titled "Strengthening Federal Access Programs to Meet 21st Century Needs: A Look at TRIO and GEAR UP." The witnesses included Maureen Hoyler, Council of Opportunity in Education; Scott Giles, Student Assistance Corporation; Cornelius Griggs, Walsh Group; Tallie Sertich, Climb Upward Bound; Weiya Liang, Director of GEAR UP, Washington; Douglas Harris, Professor, Tulane

University; and Ron Haskins, Brookings Institution.

To begin the hearing, HELP Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Ranking Member Lamar Alexander (R-TN) expressed the importance of these programs in helping millions of low-income Americans realize their dream of higher education. However, both Senators emphasized the necessity of ensuring that the grants are as effective as possible, with Alexander stating his enthusiasm for reauthorizing the *Higher Education Act* (HEA) this year.

The witnesses echoed the Harkin and Alexander statements, agreeing that the college access landscapes have changed and the TRIO and GEAR UP programs must shift to reflect those changes. According to Hoyler, these programs are notably successful in addressing the full cycle of a college student: access, retention, and completion. She said that the most difficult aspect of increasing graduation rates for low-income students is ensuring that they attend the right institutions with the programs that best fit their needs.

Harris agreed with this statement, stating that the earlier students are able to get information on their options for higher education the better. Alexander used this opportunity to echo a sentiment that he and other members of the HELP Committee have addressed at previous hearings: Pell Grant recipients should be notified at an earlier point in the process. He asked the witnesses if they thought simplifying the aid process and making it open earlier would save money while encouraging lower income students to attend college. The general consensus was yes, it would have a positive impact towards this goal.

Alexander's question kicked off a discussion among the witnesses: if this would have a positive effect, why hasn't it been done? Sertich said that the answer lies in the necessity of continued one-on-one support for many low-income students-something that TRIO and GEAR UP provide-and that earlier access to grants is not the sine qua non of encouraging low-income students to attend college. Griggs, a former beneficiary of the TRIO programs, agreed that much of his success came from the personal, one-on-one help he received.

Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT) asked what the witnesses would recommend TRIO and GEAR UP do better to identify what schools are best for their applicants, and what higher education in general can improve upon once they get in. Sertich said the quickest gains would occur if TRIO/GEAR UP checked if student support services existed at the institutions to which they send students. Harris agreed, but said that more active involvement in general would be the easiest first step. Universities often don't track students, he said, and those that are struggling and low-income students are often the ones that need the most support.

Finally, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) expressed her concern about the growing need in the economy for college-educated individuals and how these programs could be scalable to fit this need (she cited a study that suggests by 2020, 65 percent of jobs will require a post-secondary degree). Hoyler said that the main constraint will be at the institutional level; in other words, not enough room in the institutions themselves. At a programmatic level, Liang said that the limiting element will certainly be money, or lack thereof. Haskins said that while improvements can be made at the higher education level and by TRIO/GEAR UP, he thinks the primary limit on creating millions of new college graduates is the struggling K-12 level of education.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES & NEWS

NIH National Children's Study Issues Request for Information

The National Children's Study (NCS) has issued a request for information (RFI) on the proposed framework for developing study content and protocols for the NCS (See Update, September 9, 2013). The comment period will be open for 30 days, with comments **due by February 24, 2014**. Comments will be considered by the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHDC) and the NCS.

The NCS is a congressionally-mandated longitudinal birth cohort study intended to examine the effects of environmental exposures (including physical, chemical, biological, and psychosocial) on the growth,
development, and wellbeing of children. The Study will follow all enrolled children from birth until they reach age 21. The NCS was mandated by the *Children's Health Act of 2000* (PL. 106-310).

The NCS is proposing the use of a "framework of distal outcomes, health determinants, primary signs and symptoms, phenotypic and environmental descriptions, and capture of parameters associated with health disparities to guide the selection of the specific assessments along with their sequence and frequency."

According to the Federal Register notice:

> "To ensure the Study content framework is comprehensive, the NCS is working with subject matter experts to characterize health. As developmental trajectories are multi-dimensional, multi-directional, and multi-level, this effort not only helps characterize the distal end of the childhood developmental trajectory, but also identifies potential antecedent factors that could be measured earlier in life in assessing exposures that may contribute to later outcomes. For example, supportive family relationships during adolescence has been associated with positive outcomes ranging from reduced risk of poor mental health to higher levels of interpersonal and occupational functioning; these outcomes being independent of any effect of gender, socioeconomic status, or family disruption, for example death or divorce."

Additionally, the NCS will "measure health as well as the presence or absence of disease-related signs, symptoms, and limitations. This requires a data collection protocol that captures a full description of an individual-a health profile-rather than just known determinants of disease and subsequent outcomes."

Specific information requested by the RFI, include:

1. Comment on the validity and acceptability of using a composite outcome--the higher-level functions of a healthy 21-year-old person--as an operational construct to help frame data collection.
2. Are there additional outcomes or developmental endpoints that should be considered?
3. What factors should the NCS use to prioritize assessments? Some examples of factors to consider are:

    a) Potential public health impact.
    b) Technical feasibility, including timing of data collection with regard to potential developmental vulnerability.
    c) Scientific opportunity to address knowledge gaps and illuminate developmental pathways.

OSTP Seeks Input on "Pull Mechanisms" for Technologies that Improve Learning Outcomes

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) has released a notice of Request for Information (RFI), with a deadline of **March 7, 2014**, to individuals and organizations that have research related to "'pull mechanisms' for technologies that significantly improve a given learning outcome."

The RFI states that OSTP is interested in "identifying policies and serving as a catalyst for public-private partnerships" in order to address the "large gap between the relatively modest impact that technology has had on education, particularly in K-12, and the transformative impact that it has had in many aspects of our economic and social life." While there is a developed understanding of the role of "push" programs (grants, contracts to universities and companies, tax incentives, etc.) on accelerating the adoption, development and evaluation of high-impact learning technologies, "pull" mechanisms are much less understood, the RFI continues.

The advantages of pull mechanisms in OSTP's view are that "a funder can (a) pay only for success; (b) set a goal without having to choose in advance which team or approach is most likely to be successful; and (c) increase the number and intellectual diversity of the teams that are working to solve a particular problem."

For more information, including the questions on which OSTP seeks public comment, read the full RFI here.

New NCHS Reports on Asian Population Health and Use of Infertility Services

A new National Center for Health Statistics Data Brief, *Hypertension, Abnormal Cholesterol, and High Body Mass Index Among Non-Hispanic Asian Adults: United States, 2011-2012*, reports that about 40 percent of Non-Hispanic Asian adults are overweight or obese, a much lower rate than other racial and ethnic populations. The data brief uses data from the *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey* (NHANES).

A National Health Statistics Report, entitled *Infertility Service Use in the United States: Data From the National Survey of Family Growth, 1982-2010*, finds that women aged 25-44 who hadn't had a child and were experiencing infertility were much less likely to have used infertility services compared to 1982 (38 percent in 2006-2010 compared to 56 percent). The most commonly used medical services were getting medical advice, infertility testing, medical help to prevent miscarriage, and ovulation medication.

NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

Save the Date: CNSF Capitol Hill Exhibition & Reception is May 7

The 20th annual Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) Capitol Hill Exhibition & Reception has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 7, 2014 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm in the Rayburn House Office Building. COSSA encourages its members who are also CNSF members to participate in this annual event to showcase the value of NSF-funded social and behavioral science to Members of Congress, Congressional staff, federal agency officials, and others throughout the scientific community. Registration information is expected in the coming weeks. More on CNSF and the annual exhibition here.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NIH: Substance Use and Abuse, Risky Decision Making and HIV/AIDS

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), substance use, including injection and non-injection drug use or alcohol use, can affect attitudes, decision processes and motivational aspects of sexual behavior. It is noted that a significant proportion of substance abusers are HIV positive, "a fact that may reflect an underlying dysfunction in decision-making processes that is common to drug or alcohol use and the acquisition of HIV..." Further, "effects of substance use, such as intoxication with cocaine or alcohol, chronic abuse, and alcohol or drug withdrawal may alter perceptions, expectancies, planning ability, learning, flexibility, valuation of rewards and risks, impulse control and other behaviors." The Institutes also point out that brain dysregulations often associated with drug or alcohol use such as depression, anxiety, or confusion can increase drug or alcohol use and sexual risk-taking.

To investigate the decision-making process of these individuals, NIDA and NIAAA have issued a series of funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) (PA-14-061, investigator-initiated; PA-14-062, exploratory/developmental; and PA-14-063, small grant program) that are designed to stimulate model-driven research to understand the ways that people make decisions about engaging in behaviors that impact the risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV, or to adhere to treatments for HIV.

The announcements are seeking applications designed to study: (1) cognitive, motivational or emotional mechanisms, and/or (2) brain neuroendocrine and reinforcement systems that are related to HIV-risk behaviors or treatment noncompliance. The FOAs emphasize the desire for interdisciplinary studies that incorporate approaches from psychology, economics, anthropology, sociology, decision sciences, neuroscience and computational modeling.

More information is available here.

COSSA MEMBER ACTIVITIES

LSA Releases First *State of Linguistics in Higher Education* Report

The Linguistics Society of America (LSA), a COSSA member, has released its annual report for 2013, *The State of Linguistics in Higher Education*. The report is LSA's first annual compilation of information on higher education linguistics programs and uses data from LSA's Directory of Linguistics Programs and Departments, its member database, and survey information from the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education. It covers employment and job types, salaries, degree production, student enrollment and financial support, demographics (ethnicity, gender, and citizenship), and program specializations. Some of the "Overall Trends in Linguistics" identified by the report include the following:

- Most linguistics PhDs go into higher education, although a significant number pursue careers in government, industry, and K-12 education.
- Undergraduate education in linguistics is expanding, increasing by about 200 linguistics undergrad students.
- Most undergraduate degrees are awarded to women, and women comprise just under 60 percent of linguistics graduate students.
- The top three specializations for graduate students are syntax, applied linguistics, and phonology.

C-FARE Highlights the Importance of Fruit and Vegetable Market Data

The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Research Economics (C-FARE) held a webinar, co-sponsored by COSSA, to highlight the Value of Fruit and Vegetable Market Data. Other cosponsors included the American Statistical Association (a COSSA member), Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS), the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations (also a COSSA member), the Association of Public Data Users, and the National Association for Business Economics. Kitty Smith, COPAFS, moderated the webinar and introduced the presenters.

Gary Lucier, World Agricultural Economic and Environmental Services, explained that fruit and vegetable (specialty crop) market data is used by a wide variety of consumers: the food industry (growers, producers, shippers of produce), marketing, academia, government, the media, and others. Producers of specialty crop data within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) include the National Agriculture Statistical Service (NASS), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and Economic Research Service (ERS). Elsewhere in the federal government, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Census Bureau, and U.S. Customs and Border

Protection all supply relevant data. Lucier commented on how the harsh budget climate of the past few years has impacted agricultural data. Under sequestration, NASS was forced to suspend some of its activities. Although this has been remedied by the recent appropriations bill (see COSSA's analysis), Lucier noted that budget constraints make it difficult to keep up with changing crops markets.

Matthew Salois, Florida Department of Citrus, discussed how federal crop data assist the U.S.'s largest citrus producer. The Florida Department of Citrus produces monthly economic and market indicators, an annual citrus outlook report, and reports on citrus production trends and forecasts for use by the citrus industry at large and the Department's own marketing efforts. These products are informed by data from the ERS, FAS, NASS, the Census, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), BLS, and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). In light of new challenges posed by citrus greening, a bacterial disease wreaking havoc on the nation's citrus crop, Salois emphasized that "use of federal statistics is critical to the well-being and now survival of the citrus industry."

George Hoffman, Restaurant Services, Inc. (RSI), which manages the supply chain and purchasing for all Burger King restaurants, called his organization a "typical user of federal statistics" and explained the role they play in managing Burger King's supply chain. RSI's overall food and packaging scope totals $2.6 billion in products, which includes $110 million of fruit and vegetables that need to be available without fail regardless of market turbulence. NASS and AMS products are used to help determine both fixed and formula contract pricing. He explained that federal data products are so valuable to the industry because they are independent and unbiased, reliable and consistent, acceptable to both buyers and sellers, and have earned the confidence of all players in the market. Additionally, these products are indispensible if the market is disrupted (by hurricanes, freezes, drought, etc.) to assist with identifying alternate sources of supply and preventing price gouging and other unfair trading practices.

INSIDE COSSA

COSSA Joins COPAFS on Letter in Support of Business Data Compatibility

On January 16, COSSA joined the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS) and other sister organizations on a letter to the Senate Finance Committee commending them for including a provision in the chairman's tax reform discussion draft that would allow sharing of business data between the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), and the Bureau of Labor Statics (BLS).

According to the letter, "BEA uses data from both the Census Bureau and BLS to develop critical national and regional measures of economic progress (or regress). These measures, on which the Federal Reserve relies for its decision making, would be more accurate if it was possible for BEA to access a limited amount of tax information-derived Census data." In addition, impacts of such data sharing and consistency would include "an improved basis for the allocation of $400 billion dollars in federal funds (such as Medicaid) to States," as well as "better indicators of industry-specific growth rates; a more accurate consumer price index; and better and more useful trade statistics."

COSSA and ASPA Weigh in on Successful Efforts to Protect Political Science Funding

In a January 24 *Inside Higher Ed* article, COSSA and the American Political Science Association (ASPA), a COSSA member, discussed efforts taken over the last year by the social science advocacy community to reverse restrictions placed on political science funding at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in fiscal year (FY) 2013. The FY 2014 omnibus bill that was signed into law on January 17 effectively removes the so-called "Coburn amendment" that required all projects funded under the NSF program in FY 2013 to address only U.S. economic or national security interests. The article discusses the collective efforts of the broader scientific community to save political science research, but also notes that work is not done. ASPA Executive Director Steve Smith states, "The lessons that we've learned the past nine months, I think, is that we have to have a continued presence on Capitol Hill... It'll be an ongoing effort." COSSA Executive Director Wendy Naus added, "This is something that the community is going to stay vigilant on in 2014," not just defending political science, but all of the social and behavioral sciences.

Consortium of Social Science Associations

Members

Governing Members

American Anthropological Association
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 Evaluation Association
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

Colleges and Universities

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