



# COSSA

*Washington Update*

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## **In This Issue**

### **FEATURED NEWS**

[SAVE-THE-DATE: COSSA Annual Meeting & Advocacy Day](#)

### **COSSA IN ACTION**

[Scientific Community Expresses Support for NIH and Its Peer Review Process](#)

[COSSA and Partners Urge Support for International and Foreign Language Education for FY 2015](#)

### **CONGRESSIONAL NEWS**

[FY 2015 Funding Bills Approaching December 11 Deadline](#)

### **FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS**

[Deadline Extended for Applications to SBE Leadership Posts](#)

[NIH to Use Single IRB to Speed the Initiation of Clinical Research, Seeks Comments](#)

[NIH Seeks Comments on Draft NIH Policy on Dissemination of NIH-Funded Clinical Trial Information](#)

[OMB Finalizes New Statistical Policy Directive](#)

[Reminder: Comments on Proposed Elimination of ACS Questions Due December 30](#)

[Census Releases New ACS Data, Special Feature on Young Adults](#)

### **PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS**

[Leiden Statement: "Social Sciences and Humanities Indispensable to Understanding and Addressing Global Challenges"](#)

[ERS Reports on Fast Food Purchasing Behavior](#)

[AHRQ Data Shows 50,000 Lives, \\$12 Billion Saved](#)

[NCHS Releases Report on Drug Overdose Deaths](#)

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

[NIH: Systems Science and Health in Behavioral and Social Sciences](#)

[NIH: Family and Interpersonal Relationships in an Aging Context](#)

[NIJ: Bridging Research and Practice Program](#)

## **COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

[Steven Breckler, COSSA Chair, to Leave APA](#)

## **EVENTS CALENDAR**

**[NEXT COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE--DECEMBER 19](#)**

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## **FEATURED ARTICLE**

### **SAVE-THE-DATE: COSSA Annual Meeting & Advocacy Day**

The COSSA Annual Meeting and inaugural Social and Behavioral Science Advocacy Day will be held in Washington, DC on **March 9-10, 2015**. The meeting will feature presentations from federal agency leaders and other officials and will provide an excellent opportunity to network with others from throughout the social and behavioral science research community. New in 2015 will be the first-ever Social and Behavioral Science Advocacy Day in which COSSA members will have an opportunity to educate their elected officials about the value of social and behavioral science research and the importance of federal funding. Additional details, including registration information, will be available in early 2015.

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## **COSSA IN ACTION**

### **Scientific Community Expresses Support for NIH and Its Peer Review Process**

On December 2, the Coalition to Promote Research (CPR) sent [letters](#) to Congress expressing its "continued and strong support for the competitive peer review process used by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)." The letter, signed by 128 diverse organizations, noted that the scientific community is "extremely concerned about the recent criticism of the NIH's funding decisions and the accompanying mischaracterization of NIH-supported research in the media and by some in Congress. The ongoing targeting of specific grants produces a chilling effect across the entire scientific community. These attacks inhibit the very scientific progress the critics claim to support. Our organizations strongly oppose these mischaracterizations and the associated undue criticism of the NIH peer review process."

The signatories of the letter "agree Congress has an oversight role in ensuring that the funding provided to federal agencies is used in accordance with an agency's mission. This oversight is essential. It is also essential that the scientific process determine project selection. [They] encourage[d] Congress to resist efforts to undermine the NIH and its peer review process. It is not in the best interest of the American public."

CPR is led by COSSA's deputy director, Angela Sharpe, and Patricia Kobor, senior science policy analyst for the American Psychological Association. To complement this effort, Sharpe and Kobor also published a commentary in *Roll Call*, "[Memo to Congress: Stop Fighting Scientific Research](#)."

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## **COSSA and Partners Urge Support for International and Foreign Language Education for FY 2015**

On November 19, COSSA joined a Coalition for International Education [letter to House and Senate appropriators](#) in support of strong funding levels for the Department of Education's international and foreign language education programs (Title VI and Fulbright-Hays) as Congress attempts to wrap up funding for fiscal year (FY) 2015. As the letter notes, "Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are the nation's longest-serving, most comprehensive programs that develop and maintain a strong, world-class foundation for international education and foreign language studies."

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## **CONGRESSIONAL NEWS**

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### **FY 2015 Funding Bills Approaching December 11 Deadline Headline**

As previously [reported](#), the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress still has more work to do to complete the fiscal year (FY) 2015 appropriations process before adjourning at the end of the month. At the time of this writing, negotiations between House and Senate appropriators and leadership continue, all working toward some form of final agreement to fund the federal government before the current temporary spending measure expires on December 11. Latest reports suggest that an omnibus appropriations bill that consolidates most of the 12 appropriations bills is still the preferred option, but a hybrid approach that includes an omnibus for some bills and a continuing resolution (CR) for others may be needed in order to get to the finish line. Details of the omnibus bill currently being developed could be released publicly as early as Monday, December 8. Either way, Congress must act in some manner by December 11 in order to avoid a government shutdown.

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## **FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS**

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### **Deadline Extended for Applications to SBE Leadership Posts**

As previously [reported](#), the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) is seeking to fill a number of leadership positions. Deadlines for applications have been extended through December 31. The open positions include:

- [Deputy Assistant Director](#)
- [Division Director, Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences](#) (BCS)
- [Division Director, Social and Economic Sciences](#) (SES)

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## **NIH to Use Single IRB to Speed the Initiation of Clinical Research, Seeks Comments**

On December 3, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued a [draft policy](#) to promote the use of single institutional review boards (IRB) in multi-site clinical research studies. The draft policy proposes that all NIH-funded multi-site studies carried out in the U.S. utilize a single IRB regardless of the funding mechanism. Hence, the agency is seeking public comments on the draft policy through a 60 day comment period closing January 29, 2015.

According to the release announcing the draft policy, exceptions would be allowed if local IRB review is necessary to meet the needs of special populations or where it is required by federal, state, or tribal laws and regulations. Wider use of single IRB review in multi-site studies is expected to help achieve greater efficiencies in the initiation of studies across NIH's entire clinical research portfolio.

Several NIH institutes and centers, including the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke have been supporting the use of a single IRB in multi-site studies. NIH director Francis Collins noted that the use of single IRBs in multi-site studies will "reduce duplication of effort, speed the initiation of important research, and save time and taxpayer funds."

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## **NIH Seeks Comments on Draft NIH Policy on Dissemination of NIH-Funded Clinical Trial Information**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is seeking comments on its draft policy "to promote broad and responsible dissemination of information on clinical trials funded by the NIH" through registration and submission of summary results information to ClinicalTrials.gov.

NIH has a number of policies designed to promote the distribution of research results and guide funding recipients in disseminating their results, including the NIH Data Sharing Policy, the NIH Public Access Policy, the NIH Research Tools Policy, and the NIH Genomic Data Sharing Policy. According to the NIH, a recent study found that the results of less than half of NIH-funded clinical trials had been published in a peer-reviewed biomedical journal within 30 months of trial completion. "Selective publication of the results of some trials and not others - or publication of incomplete or partial findings from a particular trial - can lead to inappropriate conclusions about the usefulness of particular therapies."

Compliance with the new policy will be a term and condition in the Notice of Grant Award and a contract requirement in the Contract Award. When the final policy is issued, NIH will provide more specific procedural guidance.

Comments are due on the draft policy by February 19, 2015. For more information see the [notice](#).

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## **OMB Finalizes New Statistical Policy Directive**

On December 2, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Statistical Policy Directive No. 1, "[Fundamental Responsibilities of Federal Statistical Agencies and Recognized Statistical Units](#)." The Directive provides "a unified articulation of Federal statistical agency responsibilities."

In order to implement the Directive, federal statistical agencies will report to OMB on their progress toward fulfilling four key responsibilities: (1) Produce and disseminate relevant and timely information, (2) Conduct credible and accurate statistical activities, (3) Conduct objective statistical activities, and (4) Protect the trust of information providers by ensuring the confidentiality and exclusive statistical use of their responses. A draft version of the Directive was released for public comment in May (more information [here](#)).

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## **Reminder: Comments on Proposed Elimination of ACS Questions Due December 30**

On October 31, the U.S. Census Bureau within the Department of Commerce issued a request for public comment related to the 2014 Content Review of the American Community Survey (ACS). According to the [Federal Register Notice](#), the 2014 review "is the most comprehensive effort ever undertaken by the Census Bureau to review content on the survey, seeking to understand which federal programs use the information collected by each question, the justification for each question, and assess how the Census Bureau might reduce respondent burden." The review looked at the ACS's 72 questions and proposed removal of seven from the annual questionnaire. Among the seven questions slated for elimination is the question on "Undergraduate Field of Degree." This potential move raises concerns for many in the social and behavioral sciences community, as well as the National Science Foundation's National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, which uses the data collected via the "field of degree" question in its efforts to measure and track the U.S. science and engineering workforce. The Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS) has already submitted a [letter](#) outlining its concerns with the proposed changes.

More information can be found in the [Federal Register Notice](#). **Comments are due December 30, 2014.**

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## **Census Releases New ACS Data, Special Feature on Young Adults**

On November 4, the Census Bureau released 2009-2013 [five-year estimates](#) from the [American Community Survey](#) (ACS). The release includes new tables on field of bachelor's degree, health insurance status, poverty status, and year of naturalization. In addition, a new Census Explorer feature, [Young Adults: Then and Now](#), allows users to compare young adults (18-34) across the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses and the 2009-2013 ACS five-year estimates and track changes in demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics.

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## **PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS**

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### **Leiden Statement: "Social Sciences and Humanities Indispensable to Understanding and Addressing Global Challenges"**

"The social sciences and humanities are indispensable to understanding and addressing contemporary global challenges, and to grasping emerging opportunities. Every challenge the world faces has a human dimension, and no solution can be achieved without enlisting the support and efforts of individuals, communities and societies," according to the *Leiden Statement: The Role of the Social Sciences and Humanities in the Global Research Landscape*, released in November. The Statement's signatories are the League of European Research Universities (LERU), the Association

of American Universities (AAU), the China 9 grouping of leading Chinese universities (C9), the Australian Group of Eight research-intensive universities (Go8), the Association of East Asia Research Universities (AEARU), the Russell Group in the UK, RU 11 Japan, and the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities. The Statement's purpose is to "restate and champion the fundamental role that the social sciences and humanities play in the new global community." Accordingly, the Leiden Statement calls for "an expanded role" for the social sciences and humanities in confronting problems via interdisciplinary research.

[Read on](#) for more details.

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## **ERS Reports on Fast Food Purchasing Behavior**

The Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (ERS) has released a report, "[The Role of Time in Fast-Food Purchasing Behavior in the United States](#)," which examines the factors impacting how Americans consume fast food. The study, conducted using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' American Time Use Survey, assessed the impact of time-use behaviors, prices, sociodemographic characteristics, and labor-force participation on fast food purchases. It finds that those who purchase fast food on a given day spend less time engaged in "primary" eating (eating while not doing something else), sleeping, doing housework, and watching television than the population average. And while the amount of time Americans spent eating out declined during the Great Recession, the percentage of people who had purchased fast food on a given day remained stable.

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## **AHRQ Data Shows 50,000 Lives, \$12 Billion Saved**

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) released a report, "[Interim Update on 2013 Annual Hospital-Acquired Condition Rate and Estimates of Cost Savings and Deaths Averted From 2010 to 2013](#)" which provides preliminary 2013 estimates for hospital-acquired conditions (HACs), which include adverse events like falls, pressure ulcers, infections, and adverse drug events acquired during a patient's hospital stay. The report finds a 17 percent decline in HACs from 2010 to 2013, equaling 1.3 million fewer patient harms over the three years. The decline also resulted in 50,000 fewer patients dying in a hospital as a result of a HAC, and a savings of \$12 billion in health care costs. The data is part of a national measurement strategy on patient safety, coordinated in part by AHRQ, which produces the "AHRQ National Scorecard" on the HAC rate.

The report notes, "Although the precise causes of the decline in patient harm are not fully understood, the increase in safety has occurred during a period of concerted attention by hospitals throughout the country to reduce adverse events." In a [blog post](#), AHRQ director Richard Kronick called the results "unprecedented," and observed, "More remains to be done, but we should mark the progress we've seen to date because it shows that we are finally on the right track."

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## **NCHS Releases Report on Drug Overdose Deaths**

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) released a report on "[Trends in Drug-poisoning Deaths Involving Opioid Analgesics and Heroin: United States, 1999-2012](#)," based on data from the National Vital Statistics System's multiple-causes-of-death mortality files. The report shows that between 1999 and 2012, the drug overdose (or drug poisoning) death rate more than doubled. The rate of death in evolving heroin nearly tripled. And while the drug poisoning rate involving opioid analgesics more than tripled over this period, it did decrease by five percent between 2011 and

2012-the first decrease in more than a decade. The states with the highest drug overdose rate over this period were West Virginia, Kentucky, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada.

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## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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### **NIH: Systems Science and Health in Behavioral and Social Sciences**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has issued a funding opportunity announcement (FOA), *Systems Science and Health in the Behavioral and Social Sciences* ([PAR-15-047](#)), seeking applications that apply system science approaches such as system dynamic modeling, agent-based modeling, social network analysis, discrete event analysis, and Markov modeling to better understand complex and dynamic behavioral and social sciences processes and problems relevant to health.

The purpose of the FOA is to increase the breadth and scope of the topics that can be addressed with systems science methodologies. Accordingly, it calls for research projects that are applied and/or basic in nature, have a human behavioral and/or social science focus, and employ methodologies suited to addressing the complexity inherent in behavioral and social phenomena, referred to as system science methodologies. The funders also seeks to promote interdisciplinary collaboration among health researchers and experts in computational approaches to further the development of modeling- and simulation-based systems science methodologies and their application to important public health challenges.

Participating institutes, centers and offices include: the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences (OBSSR), Cancer, Aging, Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, Child Health and Human Development, Dental and Craniofacial, Environmental Health Sciences, Mental Health, Nursing, and the Office of Disease Prevention.

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### **NIH: Family and Interpersonal Relationships in an Aging Context**

The National Institute of Aging (NIA) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is seeking applications designed to expand understanding of the role and impact of families and interpersonal relations on health and well-being in midlife and older age.

The funding opportunity announcement (FOA), *Family and Interpersonal Relationships in an Aging Context* ([PAR-15-042](#)), notes that it is widely recognized that families and relationships with intimate partners and close friends represent some of the most significant social forces in a person's life. In addition, there is a growing body of evidence that "suggests that the family environment, including both family of origin and family networks forged in adulthood, can profoundly influence and shape lifespan trajectories of health and the experience of aging. The Institute explains that while well-replicated associations between various family and interpersonal relationship variables and health outcomes have been documented in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, in both humans and well-characterized social animal models, the mechanisms through which these relationships might mediate and moderate well-being and health outcomes are not well understood.

NIA is seeking studies that examine interrelations between multiple domains. Relevant research topics include: life course studies, the family as a context for genetic and epigenetic expression,

family structure and family dynamics, allocation of resources, the family as a context for decision making and behavior change, relationship status and quality, and interpersonal affiliational relationships and social support.

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## **NIJ: Bridging Research and Practice Program**

The National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) [Bridging Research and Practice Program](#) (BRP) provides funding to former NIJ grantees to disseminate and share their findings with practitioner audiences. The goal of the program is to ensure that the research reaches as broad an audience as possible.

The program supports such activities as presenting at professional practitioner-focused conferences or webinars; publishing in trade journals or other practitioner publications, including blogs; recording videos or podcasts for practitioner audiences; and engaging in other reasonable means designed to reach these audiences. The amount of funding provided will vary depending on the activity proposed. The funds can also be used to cover registration fees, lodging, travel, per diem, consultant pay, and other transportation costs.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. Additional information on how to apply is available [here](#).

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## **COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

### **Steven Breckler, COSSA Chair, to Leave APA**

Steven Breckler, Executive Director for Science at the American Psychological Association (APA), will leave APA at the end of the year after 10 years in the position. APA is a COSSA Governing Member and Breckler currently serves as chair of the COSSA Executive Committee. He is praised for his service to APA in the [announcement](#) of his departure released last month. Breckler's service to COSSA as well cannot be overstated; he is a longtime member of the COSSA Board of Directors, served as chair of the Executive Committee for the last two years, and chaired the 2013 search committee for the new COSSA Executive Director, among other contributions. COSSA thanks him for his service - his leadership will be deeply missed.

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## **EVENTS CALENDAR**

[Webinar: Producing Government Data with Statistical Confidentiality Controls](#), American Statistical Association Privacy and Confidentiality Committee, December 17, 2014

[COSSA Annual Meeting & Advocacy Day](#), Washington, DC, March 9-10, 2015

A list of COSSA members' annual meetings and other events can be found on the COSSA [web page](#).

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## **NEXT COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE**

The next COSSA Washington Update will be published on Friday, December 19.



# 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 Empirical Legal Studies  
Society for Research on Adolescence  
Society for Social Work and Research  
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues  
Society of Behavioral Medicine  
Southern Political Science Association  
Southern Sociological Society  
Southwestern Social Science Association

## Centers and Institutes

American Academy of Arts and Sciences  
American Academy of Political and Social Sciences  
American Council of Learned Societies  
American Institutes for Research  
The Brookings Institution  
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences  
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research  
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

## Colleges and Universities

Arizona State University  
Boston University  
Brown University  
Carnegie-Mellon University  
Clark University  
Columbia University  
Cornell University  
Duke University  
George Mason University  
Georgetown University  
Harvard University  
Howard University  
Indiana University  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY  
Johns Hopkins University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Michigan State University  
New York University  
North Dakota State University  
Northwestern University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Princeton University  
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey  
Stanford University  
State University of New York, Stony Brook  
Texas A & M University  
The George Washington University  
The Ohio State University  
University of California, Berkeley  
University of California, Irvine  
University of California, Los Angeles  
University of California, San Diego  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of Chicago  
University of Connecticut  
University of Delaware  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign  
University of Iowa  
University of Maryland  
University of Michigan  
University of Minnesota  
University of Missouri, St. Louis  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
University of Oklahoma  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of South Carolina  
University of Texas, Austin  
University of Texas, San Antonio  
University of Virginia  
University of Washington  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee  
Washington University in St. Louis  
West Virginia University  
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Institute for Social Science Research, University of Massachusetts  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
NORC at the University of Chicago  
Owens Institute for Behavioral Research, University of Georgia  
Population Reference Bureau  
RTI International  
Social Science Research Council  
Vera Institute of Justice

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

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