

Behavioral and Social Sciences Research in the FY 2001 Budget

*Patricia Kobor, APA; Sandi Wurtz, AERA;
and David Johnson, FBPCS*

INTRODUCTION

Most support for behavioral and social sciences research comes from the federal government. Among federal agencies, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Defense (DOD), and the Department of Education (ED) are the primary funders. But additional support is provided by a host of agencies including the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Here are highlights of the FY 2001 budget year:

- In NSF, a new Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE), a new Deputy Assistant Director, and a new Director for Behavioral and Cognitive Science (BCS) mean change as SBE plans a research initiative for FY 2003.
- The Army, Navy, and Air Force continue their long, downhill slide in support of research generally, and behavioral and social sciences research is no exception to the trend.
- Interagency cooperative initiatives account for the largest portion of requested funding increases at the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) in ED.
- The National Cancer Institute is forging ahead in the building of a strong behavioral and social sciences research program with many new hires proposed.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH)

Behavioral and social sciences research is prospering at NIH, fueled by NIH's record growth, and increasing acceptance of these sciences as tools to address NIH's public health mission. The supportive infrastructure for behavioral and social science research funding at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) is a case in point. Since 1997, Director Richard Klausner, M.D., has approved nearly 50 coveted Full-Time Equivalency slots (FTEs) for the Behavioral Research Program in the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences which funds the lion's share of behavioral and social research at NCI. That program contains fast-growing behavioral research branches focused on health communications research, basic biobehavioral research, and applied sociocultural research among others. NCI now funds the third highest amount of behavioral and social science research at NIH in dollar value.

Research in the behavioral and social sciences has increased at a slower rate than overall NIH funding. For example, while NCI received an overall increase of 13.3 percent in FY 2000, its behavioral and social sciences research increases by an estimated 9.7 percent. Overall, NIH received increases of nearly 15 percent in FYs 1999 and 2000, but the percentage of behavioral and social sciences research (as reported to the Financial Management Office by the institutes and centers (ICs)) remained steady at approximately 10 percent. The reason appears to be that growth in behavioral and social sciences research funding is highly variable across the ICs. The fast-growing National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) has only a small portfolio of behavioral and social sciences research, its ELSI program (ethical, legal and social issues). One institute, the National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), reports no expenditures for behavioral and social sciences research in the three years noted in Table 1, below.

The Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) in the Office of the NIH Director received a healthy budget increase in the FY 2000 budget, and is now funded at \$18.6 million (up from \$12.8 million in FY 1999). The increase was not earmarked and will be used in part to seed research on adherence to medication regimens and socioeconomic status and health. NIH does not request an increase for FY 2001. The budget of OBSSR includes \$10 million to fund five centers that support

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research on mind-body interactions and health. The centers focus on research that seeks to understand how beliefs, attitudes, values, and stress affect physical and mental health, and how they are developed, maintained, and changed.

Table 1. Behavioral and Social Sciences Research Funding Among NIH Institutes and Centers (Dollars in millions)

Participating ICs	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Estimate	FY 2001 Estimate
Highest funders in dollar terms			
NCI	\$172.7	\$191.3	\$202.8
NHLBI	130.3	145.3	153.2
NIMH	286.0	326.4	345.4
NIDA	259.8	292.0	308.0
Lowest funders in dollar terms (excluding FIC and NLM)			
NHGRI	5.5	4.4	5.0
NIAID	11.5	12.9	13.7
NIEHS	8.3	9.0	9.5
NIGMS	0	0	0
NIH Total	1,569.0	1,776.7	1,866.9

Source: Program Budget Branch, NIH Financial Management Office

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

Major personnel changes in the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) began to unfold as the NSF budget for FY 2001 went to Capitol Hill. Bennett Bertenthal completed his term as Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences. Hilleary Everist, Director of the Behavioral and Cognitive Science Division, went on an extended leave of absence. A successor had not been named at press time. And Jeff Fenstermacher, SBE's first and only Deputy Assistant Director, retired and was succeeded by Wanda Ward, a social psychologist and NSF veteran who comes to the Directorate from the NSF Director's office. Replacing Bertenthal as AD is Norman Bradburn. Bertenthal's interest in child development led to creation of the Program in Child Learning and Development. Bradburn is known for his

leadership in development of the major social science databases and the National Opinion Research Council (NORC), responsible for many of the landmark social surveys of recent years. This difference in the backgrounds of the former and the incoming AD will have a yet-to-be-determined influence on SBE's direction over the next several years.

Change in SBE's top leadership comes at a critical time. For years, most new funds have come to NSF through initiatives rather than through the core disciplinary programs. SBE has never been chosen to design and lead such an initiative. That is expected to change, however, because the Directorate has been informed that it should prepare a major initiative for FY 2003. It is likely that if the unprecedented requested increase for NSF in the President's FY 2001 budget is approved, some of the money would go to explore several initiative alternatives.

In addition to the unprecedented increase, the FY 2001 request is also unusual in that it is the first in more than a decade that places emphasis on increased funding for the core programs. Of the \$675 million increase, nearly half would support core programs. SBE plans to use some of this increase to increase grant size and duration. SBE would grow by 19.8 percent from \$146 million to \$175 million in FY 2001 (see Table II-7). Of that amount, the Social and Economic Sciences Division would receive \$72 million (up 18 percent), while Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences would receive \$59 million (up 30.7 percent).

When the Biology and SBE Directorates were created by dividing the old Biological, Behavioral and Social Sciences Directorate in two, neuroscience remained with biology. Cognition went with SBE. In FY 2001, \$10 million of the \$13.9 million increase for behavioral and cognitive science would fund cognitive neuroscience, reuniting the brain and the mind. Moreover, NSF is receiving more applications involving brain imaging, with some requests routed to Biology and some to SBE. As cognitive neuroscience develops, there may be discussions of how the BIO and SBE might share in building up non-health research in this field.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED)

Federal educational research was initiated in 1867 with the creation of the United States Office of Education (USOE). For 90 years, USOE

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primarily collected routine data and disseminated statistics, but beginning in 1954 it began funding research in field-initiated studies. Growth in the federal educational research program has continued, filling a void the private research sector has not addressed.

Today, with increased interest in the federal role in education and growing awareness of education as the foundation of economic growth, educational research is broadly recognized as a necessary function of the federal government. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) in ED serves as the major federal educational research agency, providing research and data collection.

To support core educational research programs within OERI, a total increase of \$30.0 million or 18 percent has been requested by the Administration. \$10 million would be targeted for continuation of each of two current interagency activities. One of the collaborative efforts, between NSF, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and OERI, is the Interagency Education Research Initiative (IERI) to develop educational interventions through basic research on learning and teaching, a critical area of basic research which has needed additional attention.

Improving Learning for Language-Minority Students, a joint project with NICHD, is identifying crucial influences on development of English-language literacy among children whose first language is Spanish. With a growing immigrant school population, educators have become increasingly interested in increasing the knowledge base for addressing the needs of English as a Second Language students. The remaining \$10.0 million would be apportioned through several programs.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) would receive an increase of 24 percent from \$68 million to \$84 million. Among other things, it would fund the Birth Cohort of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, a sample of children born in 2000 who would be followed to age six. Information from this study would be used to inform the development of child-care and early learning practices and policies, an area of increasing interest to policy makers, educators, and parents.

Funds would also target the implementation of requirements of the reauthorized Higher Education Act which mandates states to gather and publish data on teacher training graduates' pass rates on state credentialing tests. Congress has become increasingly focused on teacher quality and program accountability, which this legislation reflects. In addition, funding would be increased for the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 which would provide information on the cognitive growth, high school completion, and postsecondary education experience of high school students from 2000 to 2010.

Funding for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) would rise \$2.5 million to cover the costs of NAEP 2000, which would provide decennial benchmarks in mathematics and science for states and the nation as a whole. Additional funds would also be provided to states to enhance the ability to analyze and use NAEP data for improving instructional programs, benchmarking NAEP with state assessments, and developing new products and services for schools using NAEP findings, thus making test results more meaningful and useful to participants.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)

Research support in DOD has dwindled since the end of the Cold War. This year's budget request continues that decline. In constant dollars, buying power has shrunk by nearly 27 percent over the past decade.

The social and behavioral sciences budgets have suffered loss of buying power from both inflation and actual cuts. In 1989, for example, Army funding for basic behavioral and social sciences research stood at \$4.3 million. The FY 2001 request is \$2.8 million, an amount that represents approximately a 50 percent decline in buying power compared to 1989.

In behavioral and social sciences, there are overall cuts for each service. The Army requests \$22 million, down from \$23 million in FY 2000. The Navy requests \$39 million, down from \$40 million in FY 2000. The largest decrease is in the Air Force whose request of \$92 million is down \$23 million from the FY 2000 level. This 20 percent cut is of particular significance because the Air Force was conceived as the military branch whose success would be based on scientific and technological development.