

Minutes
ESCOP Social Sciences Subcommittee Meeting
February 21-22, 2012
Washington, DC

Location
APLU Building (Board Room)
1307 New York Avenue, NW
Phone: 202.478.6040 <http://www.aplu.org>

Members in Attendance:

Don Albrecht, WRDC, Utah State, Rural Sociology
Ntam Baharanyi, Tuskegee University, Ag Economics (ARD Representative)
Bo Beaulieu, SRDC, Mississippi State University, Rural Sociology
Dwayne Cartmell, Oklahoma State University, Ag Communications
David Doerfert, Texas Tech University, Ag Communications
Robin Douthitt (via Skype), University of Wisconsin, Madison, Human Sciences
Jack Elliot, Texas A&M University, Ag Communications (Chair, ESCOP-SSSC)
Matt Fannin Louisiana State University, Ag Economics
Joan Fulton (Beth Forbes alternate), Purdue University, Ag Economics
Chuck Moss, University of Florida, Ag Economics
June Henton, Auburn University, Human Sciences (Liaison to the BoHS)
Travis Park, Cornell University, Ag Education (Liaison to the ESCOP Science and Technology)
Mike Retallick, Iowa State University, Ag Education
John Ricketts, Tennessee State University, Ag Education
Soyeon Shim, University of Arizona, Human Sciences (Liaison to the BoHS)
Bobby Torres, University of Arizona, Ag Education
Bruce Weber, Oregon State University, Ag Economics
Dreamal Worthen, Florida A&M, Rural Sociology

Liaison/Ad Hoc/Ex-Officio Members

Scott Loveridge, Regional Rural Centers
Dan Rossi, Rutgers University, NE Regional Assoc of AES Directors ESCOP S&T Chair
Howard Silver, Executive Director, Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)
Gina Drioane, Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)
Tamara Wagester, Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE)
Chuck Fluharty, Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI)
Pat Hipple, National Program Leader, Division of Family and Consumer Sciences, NIFA, USDA

Guests (Non-speaking)

Aida Balsano, NIFA NPL

Bonita Williams, NIFA NPL

February 21, 2012

**8:00 AM Introductions, Review of Agenda, Committee Focus
Subcommittee Membership Update, Jack Elliot, *Chair, SSSC***

Jack Elliot, SSSC Chair, presided over the meeting that began at 8:00 a.m. with introductions and the following agenda:

8:15 AM SSSC Overview: Dr. Pat Hipple, *National Program Leader, Division of Family and Consumer Sciences*

- Pat Hipple provided an overview and the goal of the SSSC—to recommend specific actions to help the Land-Grant system address high priority research and education issues leading to outcomes that deal with social issues in a significant, measurable way and that will generate sustained financial support.
- Provided the reporting hierarchy of the SSSC: SSSC-> Science and Technology Committee->ESCOP->CFERR->A.P.L.U.
- Emphasized the need of “amplified voice” of SSSC to integrate social science perspectives through the hierarchical channel.

8:30 AM NIFA Overview: Dr. Pat Hipple, *National Program Leader, Division of Family and Consumer Sciences*

- See attached fact sheet and accompanying power point presentation (Pat Hipple Feb 21) and NIFA Organizational Chart and NIFA Fact Sheet.
- Pat Hipple presented the overview of the NIFA, the reorganization background (Danforth Study, CREATE 21, REE reorganization plan), the Farm Bill, and five Grand Challenges
 - Climate change
 - Bioenergy
 - Food safety
 - Nutrition and childhood obesity
 - Global food security
- Reported that leadership positions (NIFA Director and four assistant director positions) have been filled or pending final approval before public announcement; Principal scientist positions will not be filled due to the budget and transition of NIFA leadership.

8:40 AM Board on Human Sciences - promote the impact of the human dimension for NIFA/AFRI; and the University of Arizona (Norton School) building capacity to integrate the consumers, families, and environment initiatives to environmental sciences and engineering: Soyeon Shim, *Liaison form the Board on Human Sciences and Director Norton School, University of Arizona*

- Soyeon Shim shared the activities of the Board on Human Sciences (BoHS) to promote the impact of human dimensions for NIFA/AFRI.

- Presented the University of Arizona's initiative, entitled CESI (Consumers, Environment, and Sustainability) to engage both biological and social scientists to have a creative dialogue in search of integrative and interdisciplinary solutions to solving the critical issues facing the nation for sustainability.
- Presented the CESI in introducing human, behavioral and social science based solutions to and collaborating with environmental scientists on campus.
- Discussed new opportunities as well as challenges/barriers for integrating human dimension to biological solutions to food security, food safety, climate, environment, energy, and obesity.

**9:15 AM Dr. Howard Silver, *Executive Director*
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)**

- Howard Silver discussed the current state of affairs on the hill, particularly regarding the budgetary concerns and political issues.
- Reviewed the budget situations and priorities at NIH and NSF. Top priorities are on translational research – turning basic research into products and interdisciplinary research.
- Shared two other significant developments:
 - Higher education (e.g., STEM, number of college graduates, cost control, return on investment on basic research or applied research, matrix and measurement for Congress); and
 - Political situations (an election year, a lot of activities trying to figure out increase/continuation of programs in solving the deficit). Farm bill process is underway.

**10:00 AM Dr. Meryl Broussard, *Deputy Director*
National Institute of Food and Agriculture**

- Meryl Broussard provided an update on NIFA's affairs and including NIFA's budget proposal (see NIFA FY2013 President's Budget Proposal).
- Discussed the importance of developing balanced portfolio for sciences. Challenges are how to accomplish efficiencies while protecting legacy programs and looking for consolidation for some programs.
- Discussed the update on NIFA re-organization and new administration Dr. Woteki brought stability to the agency. Getting new leadership in place (assistant director positions & the NIFA director position—waiting for approval); ; it takes time and must endure growing pains.
- Discussed focus (five priorities) and scale (large enough to make significant impact, i.e., big capital grants)
- Understand concerns regarding human/social sciences in solving five challenge areas; Look forward to the outcomes from the Gap Analysis -- what are we missing? What's the impact? Not just the role of social sciences. But more specifically, what are we missing in AFRI and other programs?

- Stated that NIFA needs social scientists to serve on review panel – we hear the complaints but we need solutions; we need to continue dialogue and identify opportunities to move forward.

11:00 AM NIFA Panel (Science Advisory Council) – Challenge to SSSC

Dr. Robert Holland, *Assistant Director, Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition*

- Robert Holland discussed some of the areas that may be emphasized under the IFSN. For instance, ethnic and cultural factors that influence nutrition and obesity among African American families. How to factor in “love effects (i.e., salt, sugar fat with love) in preparing food for families and friends.
- Discussed that we need to do a better job of communicating food safety issues from a systemic standpoint (e.g. i.e., lack studies on chronic/long-term effects of campylobacter infection on people and poor communication to consumers)

Dr. Debby Sheely, *Assistant Director, Institute of Food Production and Sustainability*

- Debby Sheely presented the IFPS organizational chart and IFPS programs and initiatives focusing on:
 - Producing Food for a Hungry World
 - Protecting our Food and Environments from Pests and Disease
 - Improving Biosecurity and Emergency Preparedness
 - Contributing to Economic and Social Well Being
- Encouraged more social scientists to sign up to be on the review panel (contact program leaders). Robin Douthitt asked about the proportion of the social scientists on the panel; Debby said they keep all panel information in the file but it is generally confidential. For any specific information, she needs to check.
- Discussed the efforts that have been made to integrate social and human dimensions into the RFAs; Soyeon made comments that she has observed progress among NIFA NPLs in their efforts.
- Plan to stick to the five Grand Challenges but remain flexible for input from the stakeholders for the content of the programs.
- See ppt slides for more information.

Dr. Frank Boteler, *Assistant Director, Institute of Bioenergy, Climate, and Environment*

- Frank Boteler presented the NIFA organizational chart and the overview and the roles of the IBCE in the NIFA

- Discussed the goals of each of the three divisions (Bioenergy, Climate, and the Environmental System) and Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program.
- Discussed specific grant programs, # of awards (made or to be made) for each grant program, particularly focusing on programs that are relevant to social and human sciences.
- Stated that the grant program, “Socioeconomic impacts of biofuels production on rural communities” didn’t draw a large number of submissions (e.g., 36 letters of interests were submitted; about half were invited for submission, and only about half of those invited submitted full proposal).
- See ppt slides for more information.

Dr. Cynthia Reeves , Senior Research Leads (*filling in for Dr. Crocoll*) Institute of Youth, Family and Community

- Cynthia Reeves provided an overview of the IFYC’s three divisions, the Division of Youth and 4-H, the Division of Community and Education, and the Division of Family and Consumer Sciences, promote the human dimensions of NIFA’s food and agricultural sciences through research, education, and extension programs.
- The IFYC’s portfolio also includes long-standing and emerging partnerships with the Department of Defense and Military Service Components to support military children, youth, and family on military installations around the world, as well as the families of National Guard, Reserves, and Veterans living in communities far removed from military installations.
- RFAs with a human dimension:
 - Rural Health & Safety Education (approx \$1.4 million in 2012; not in budget for 2013); CYFAR (2012 competition complete)
 - Childhood Obesity Prevention - AFRI
 - Integrated Food Safety Initiative – AFRI
 - National Integrated Water Quality Program (NIWQP)
- Challenges to the SSSC
 - Facilitate understanding of the various science cultures within NIFA and how to interact with each other in a strategic and effective way.
 - Speak in terms of Human Sciences-not just “social” sciences which has an unintended effect of marginalizing us.
 - Help the Human Sciences articulate their role in NIFA priority areas.
- See ppt slides for more information

12:30 PM Working Lunch

**1:15 PM ESCOP Science & Technology Committee Interface with SSSC
Dr. Dan Rossi, *Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, Rutgers***

- Dan Rossi provided an overview and update on ESCOP's three major committees (based on major functions of AES):
 - NIFA project related Committees (e.g., budget, program priorities program side – science roadmap providing guidance. Funding mechanism – base fund most important; Farm Bill language. Tweaking this year. Legislation – usually
 - Communication and Marketing Committee– major initiative on marketing; hired a firm, targeted marketing (branding), specific issues targeting decision-makers. Editorials. Newsletter to congressional legislators. New social media (a lot of staffers). New firm – very extensive network/very good at social media. Now looking at identifying key issues to help educate decision makers on priorities.
 - Science and Technology Committee – charged to anticipate opportunities and various policies relevant to science; response to the proposed changes; next 5-10 years, where do we need to focus and enhance the focus in the land-grant system; science roadmap, facilitate multistate programs at the national level as a model for collaboration; USDA/NIFA are proposing changes to science policies and looking for inputs in terms of priorities – this committee responds on behalf of the system.
 - 4th area – national research support project (money is taken off at the top to support research); this committee reviews and make a recommendation.
- Discussed how the SSSC can work more closely with the ST Committee. Dan appreciated the support and involvement of the SSSC for assisting with the process and writing of the Science Roadmap. It was a good model. The Science Roadmap is a good document, involving good science, but not useful for people outside the academe; the ST is now in the process of creating a new one, focusing on cross cutting issues that are readable for non-science communities. SSSC has a representation (i.e., Travis Park) for the ST committee, so be sure to respond to the request for input
- Dan Rossi made two personal (not ST's) suggestions:
 - Seek input from the ST Committee regarding the Gap Analysis outcome (ST's meeting coming up this spring; Remind Travis Park to seek input from the ST Committee).
 - 150th celebration (Morrill Act) – do we need a new model? Are we satisfied? What kinds of decisions are we making to make changes? Is that the best model? At least we should ask the question: Is the model that we use working?

**1:15 PM RFA priorities: Dr. Pat Hipple, *National Program Leader*
*Division of Family and Consumer Sciences***

Pat Hipple provided critical background prior to the Gap Analysis as follows:

- Limited Capacity at NIFA
- Loss of 20 staff on Dec 31, 2011 representing @ 7%
- Loss of several social scientists yet to be replaced (may not be replaced)
 - Janie Hipp, Jane Schuchardt, JH Bahn, Sally Maggard
- Currently: Ag Econ (3): Fen Hunt, Robbin Shoemaker, Siva Sureshwaran (AFRI Assigned); Rural Sociology (1): Pat Hipple; Human Sciences/FCS (7+): Maurice Dorsey, Caroline

Crocoll,, Brent Elrod, Aida Balsano, Susan Shockey, Beverly Samuel, Cindy Reeves, (FCS); 4H and DOCES

- Significant: AFRI funding distributed across 3 of 4 Institutes. IYFC manages no AFRI funding, but has the majority of the social scientists. Why? (Leadership transition due to the leave of absence of the assistant director and a series of acting directors means no consistent voice at the table)
- IYFC now serving on AFRI planning committees
- IYFC co-chair of committee to advise (Suzanne LeMenestral)
- But significant other funding under management by IYFC makes IYFA the largest financial portfolio of the 4 Institutes.
- Significant prolonged attempt to diffuse social science perspectives, approaches, and inquiry throughout the NIFA portfolio. Legacy of “Silo” programs
- Things are getting much better, though AFRI program leaders and NIFA leadership recognize there is more that can be done and they are eager for ideas, suggestions, and feedback.
- Some NPLs feel stymied that their solicitations have not been successful at attracting robust contributions by social scientists.
- Some feel frustrated that their requests to social science professionals for improvement of solicitations have gone unanswered. This has created a credibility gap.
- There are disciplinary language and culture barriers that are difficult to communicate. Not unlike NIFA, there is a growing capacity concern in the social sciences. But also, AFRI has been a moving target and increasingly complicated, so hard to get our arms around to provide succinct guidance or critique.
- Pat passed around – Resources that inform a science agenda for the human and social dimensions of food and agriculture ([An electronic link](#) is available and provided to SSSc members as a “living” document).

Pat provided plan for today as follows:

- GAP analysis – where are the holes/opportunities? To have robust participation of social science in AFRI grants
- Five multidisciplinary working groups—each group one part of 30 page document
- Five sections:
 - Food safety—North Central group
 - Climate -- South
 - Food security -- West
 - Bioenergy -- 1890
 - Foundation – At Large

4:45 PM Officer Elections Reflection/Implications/Next Steps

- Soyeon Shim, Secretary/Chair-Elect, resigned from the position due to her increased administrative load at the University of Arizona. A nomination for her replacement for her

position (1 year Secretary/Chair-Elect and 2 year Chair commitment) will be accepted for election on the following day.

- Gap Homework -- Each working group is to formulate one page summary of the gap analysis and to be prepared for discussion on the following day.

5:00 PM Adjourned

Wednesday, February 22

7:30 AM Breakfast: Breakfast Sandwiches

8:00 AM GAP Analysis of the AFRI RFA priorities: Dr. David Doerfert, *Professor Texas Tech University*

For detailed information about the Gap Analysis outcomes: [see XXX](#)

Cross Cutting Areas from Five Working Group Reports -- Where do the human dimensions come from in the ____ project?

- Outcomes might be a process and/or a product
- Need social sciences involved in framing problem – not after thought (not buzz words)
- Behavioral change end goal? (adoption/diffusion process) – who/what behavior should change? Choices, decision-making, the role of culture
- Communities: place vs people prosperity
- Systems development – sustainability in terms of adoption measures
- Sustainability – Three-legged stool: social, economics, & environment
- Scholarship is expected – as well as process & product (education/extension)
- Limited resource audiences/stakeholders
- Human behavior and preferences/human brain mapping/motivational research (cognitive, intelligence)
- Interactions among social system factors and external influences need to be examined.
- Feedback loop research and resulting adjustments

Foundational (Bobby Torres on behalf of at-Large Members)

- Plant Health/Products -- Adoption/diffusion component – barriers and enhancers
- Animal Health/Products -- Influence of consumer preferences and expectations
- Food Safety/Nutrition/Health -- Add cultural factors that influence consumer choices and decision-making
- Renewable Energy -- Impact on communities, production operation
- Agricultural economics -- Is this a “catch” bucket? --A bucket for everything else/too broad/too big of issues

Bio Energy (John Ricketts on behalf of 1890 members)

- Stronger, direct language (ex. We will network with the University research, extension, education; instead of “network” – collaborate?)

Food Safety (Joan Fulton on behalf of North Central members)

- Needs to have research on what drives consumers’ preferences and behaviors
- Market/social/organizational structures/how they interact each other
- Value chain and critical control points and related costs and benefits

Climate (Chuck Moss on behalf of South members)

- Everything is dynamic (social, econ, environment)
- Where is the market?

Food Security (Bruce Weber on behalf of West members)

- Production increase should not be sole focus
- Creating a new category (by shifting #7) - Improving the food systems by understanding human behaviors and social/economic systems.
- #7 program feels like a “catch bucket” making it unworkable – create a new category.

10:30 AM Tamara Wagester, *Executive Director (C-FARE)* *The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics*

- Non-profit organization that represent Ag Econ professions; based in the DC area
- Three areas of focus – a nexus of new ideas, resources for its members, and a source of economic interpretation and information
- Dealing with various issues such as energy, natural resources/environmental issues, climate, food safety, international development, etc issues
- Facilitate a luncheon seminar for congressional staffers regarding how research funds are used and values that social science research brings to the table
- Conducted Webinar activities – 5 webinars (researchers, multidisciplinary point of view) , ...
- Bringing in research communities together in a unified voice
- The only social science coalition- great value

10:50 AM Tom Van Arsdall, *Executive Director (National C-FAR)* *National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research*

Goals:

- Brings together stakeholders in the research, extension and education community and entities representing research customers.
- Complement the efforts of allied groups, such as APLUS, CAST and AFRI Coalition
- Keep member organizations aware of new developments and opportunities to take action.

Action programs:

- Hill Research Seminar Series (i.e., 63 seminars in the past 6+ years, reaching over 3,700 attendees)

- support for increased funding (submits comments to the Administration and congressional appropriations and budget committees in support of maintaining and enhancing public investment in food and ag research, extension, and education)
- Collaboration with APLU-BAA – help leading “customers’ voice their views to the public about the value of federal investments in food and ag research.
- Participation in implementation of Farm Bill & Reauthorization – reaching out to key policy makers and stakeholders to evaluate how best to protect existing funding and increase future funding in the next Administration and Congress.

**11:10 AM *Chuck Fluharty, Vice President for Policy Programs
Rural Policy Research Institute***

- Discussed goals of the Institute briefly focusing on rural issues (Counsel and decision support; Information and analysis; Collaborative engagement; Support for collaborative briefings; Public speaking engagements)
- Would like to have stronger presence of the ESCOP-SSSc in the Institute
- The role of the ESCOP-SSSc is going to be never greater than now because of what’s coming ahead of us once election is over (e.g., tax changes, budget cuts, etc) – what does that mean for programs that matter to rural people?
- We will need to find a new way of doing business. Ag communities are consolidating massively.
- We will have to think much more strongly about ways to align the funding sources with program. Where is the vehicle? Some issues that we are thinking about what you are doing. Appreciate the work you do. We are trying to strengthen it.

David Doerfert provided a brief summary of the Gap analysis to the panel members:

- What’s missing; what’s not right; what can be clarified. The idea is that behavioral changes are not homogenous; very dynamic, feedback loop, shouldn’t be an after thoughts; not another products/widgets, integrate social and human factors in framing the issues; issues are complex.
- Chuck asked Pat to chat with him about the GAP analysis outcomes for the next step.

11:30 AM *Summary Discussion/Implications/Next Steps/SSSC business*

Action Items

- 1) Jack would like to engage the SSSC members throughout the year (e.g., Quarterly call for action items and responses) in addition to the annual meeting in February.
- 2) Pat Hipple suggested that the SSSC showcases the good work going on for social science integration for NIFA NPLs (what’s working or not working); Soyeon suggested a webinar for scientists across the nation.
- 3) Next Step for Gap Analysis:
 - a. All five working groups will submit a one-page report and/or electronic documents with track changes to Pat.

- b. Pat, Jack and Soyeon will review the notes and work on the draft documents and disseminate to the SSSc members for feedback.
 - c. Pat will submit it to NIFA.
- 4) White Paper (Scott Loverridge) working on draft re: Hispanic Serving Institutions.

Jack Elliot's Reflections

- "Thank-you's"
 - Please send a thank-you email to Jack's assistant , Elke Aguilar for her meeting arrangement: elke-r-aguilar@tamu.edu
 - Thanks to NIFA Liaisons, Pat Hipple and Siva Sureshwaran, for helping with the program (Note: Siva is on a travel status and couldn't attend the meeting).
- 2013 SSSC meeting
 - Hold Feb 19-20 (Tue & Wed)/2013 tentatively
 - Will try to align with the Ag Outlook Forum
 - May move up or down a week
- Election for Secretary/Chair-Elect (1 year Chair-Elect; 2-year Chair for a 3 year commitment)
 - Travis Park nominated Bobby Torres
 - Bobby was unanimously voted for the position.

Pat Hipple wrapped up the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.