



Social and Behavioral Science Task Force

THE NEXT **150**

Brent W. Roberts

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Membership

Brent Roberts, Psychology, SBSRI *Chair*

Kristen Bub, Educational Psychology

Craig Gundersen, Agriculture and Consumer Economics

Hillary Klonoff-Cohen, Kinesiology and Community Health

Christopher Larrison, Social Work

Jeffrey Mondak, Political Science

Silvina Montrul, Spanish & Portuguese

Andrew Orta, Anthropology

Eva Pomerantz, Psychology

Brian Quick, Communications

Patrick Vargas, Advertising

Areas where Illinois has the greatest opportunity to positively impact state, national and global social science through research, education and engagement

Using Social Science to Improve Health

- Research on the social science of cancer
- Improving health education, literacy, and behavior change
- Improving health and health behavior assessment (Illinois Neuro/behavioral Assessment Lab)

Social Science, Big Data, and Technology

- Big data & social behavior (Part of the Data Science initiative)
- Human computer interaction
- Sensors and social interaction
- Social influences on STEM

Understanding Culture, Language & Diversity

- Diversity Science Center (proposed by Wendy Heller, Psychology)
- Communication, conflict, and diversity
- Multilingualism and linguistic diversity
- Democracy in a global context
- Cross-cultural understandings of social interactions and health
- Inequality and insecurity in a global context

Areas where Illinois has the greatest opportunity to positively impact state, national and global social science through research, education and engagement

Solving Poverty

- Food insecurity
- Health inequality in our community--Carle Healthy Beginnings project
- Financial distress
- Stratification and well-being
- Stratification and reducing educational disparities

The Challenges of an Aging Population

- Social, cognitive and behavioral contributors to cognitive decline & Alzheimer's
- Improving quality of life in old age
- Cognition, Lifespan, Engagement, Aging, and Resilience (CLEAR)

Increasing links between basic social scientists and researchers in the professional schools

- Intervention research in medicine, business, social work, & education
- Patient-based research (Alzheimer's, etc.)

Opportunities and challenges in social science-related research and education over the next five to ten years

- The persistent challenges of diversity, discrimination, and poverty
- The increasing stratification of the US population
- An aging population that needs better health care
- A society confronting the challenges of new technology and the information overload that comes with it
- Changing nature of globalization and the placement of the U.S. in the world
- The need to create nimble interdisciplinary working groups to confront these issues
- Meeting the challenges of tight federal funding
- Aligning traditional majors and units with these interdisciplinary challenges

Specific actions would be most effective in realizing our potential in social science education, research and engagement

Short term:

- Fund the Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Initiative at a level that can support its goal to facilitate interdisciplinary research.
- Targeted seed funding for areas of opportunity
 - Social and behavioral science grants targeted at the National Cancer Institute
 - Social science, big data, and technology
- Creation of the Social Science Translational Research Network to strengthen links between basic social science and professional schools

Specific actions would be most effective in realizing our potential in social science education, research and engagement

Medium term:

- Fund research “cores” that could be used to bolster social science research, such as
 - The Illinois Neuro/Behavioral Assessment Lab
 - A Social Science Methods Center that provides training opportunities for all social scientists.
- A hiring initiatives for the social sciences focused on grand challenges
 - Using Social Science to Improve Health
 - Social Science, Big Data, and Technology
 - Understanding Culture, Language & Diversity
 - Solving Poverty
 - The Challenges of an Aging Population

Specific actions would be most effective in realizing our potential in social science education, research and engagement

Long term:

- Out of the work conducted by the SBSRI create a social science institute that can rival the work being conducted in the institutes that already exist on campus

Ways we better leverage our research strengths to enhance the university's educational mission in social science-related fields

- Service learning courses where students get to work on issues like poverty, health care, and technology, in the field
- Specific curricula reflected in areas of concentration or expertise in the social sciences (certificates, minors, etc.)
 - Measurement and assessment across units (e.g., forensics)
 - Cultural expertise
 - Social science and health
 - Community enhancement
- Faster and better integration of discoveries into professional school curricula: medicine, law, veterinary medicine, public health, social work, education

Ways to best engage our local community through social science?

- Through social science open houses
- Through our efforts to advise and support the Carle Healthy Beginnings project
- Through social-science based field work, including partnerships with community programs and organizations
- Through more effective communication of the strengths in the social sciences that already exist on our campus