

Committee on Socioeconomic Status (CSES) 2007 Annual Report

Mission Statement

As approved by APA's Council of Representatives in August 2006:

The mission of the Committee on Socioeconomic Status (SES) shall be to further the major purpose of the APA –“to advance psychology as a science and a profession and as a means of promoting health, education and human welfare”—by ensuring that issues of SES receive the full attention of the Association. The Committee will identify and act as a catalyst in the Association's efforts to address issues of SES, and promote appropriate attention to SES in psychological research and practice. In this regard, the Committee shall: (a) collect information and documentation concerning SES; (b) promote scientific understanding of the roles of poverty and SES in health, education, and human welfare; (c) develop approaches to the application of psychology that take into account the effects of SES on psychological development and well being; and (d) advocate for social policy that will alleviate or reduce the disparities between SES groups.

Membership

The inaugural members of CSES for 2007 were: Heather Bullock, PhD (Chair); Sandra Graham, PhD (Vice Chair); Rand Conger, PhD; Mary Jansen, PhD; Alice McIntyre, PhD; and Vonnie McLoyd, PhD.

Members Rand Conger, PhD; Alice McIntyre, PhD; and Vonnie McLoyd, PhD resigned from the committee prior to completing their terms of service due to being over-committed. BAPPI appointed the following alternate nominees to complete the unexpired terms: Suniya Luthar, PhD; and Bernice Lott, PhD.

Meetings

CSES met in Washington, DC on March 23-25, 2007 and September 28-30, 2007 for the spring and fall 2007 consolidated meetings. Strategic planning and future directions discussed at the meetings included the development of short, long, and intermediate goals for disseminating information about psychology and SES in a compelling manner, identifying issues related to the stigma associated with poverty, and emphasizing the importance of measuring and reporting poverty and other socioeconomic indicators in psychological research. Additional activities initiated during the meeting included: 1) the development of CSES Operating Policies and Procedures; 2) the development of an SES network, listserv, and newsletter; 3) planning of Committee activities for APA's 2007 and 2008 Conventions; 4) assigning monitors to other boards and committees; and 5) meeting with the Government Relations Office to discuss and generate legislative priorities and advocacy related to SES inequities. Furthermore, CSES reviewed, discussed, and prepared responses to all Cross Cutting Agenda items. Committee members agreed that as the newest APA committee, it was important to establish a presence and voice with other committee, boards, and members.

CSES Activities

CSES Communications (Network, Listserv, Webpage, Newsletter)

The newly formed CSES initiated several activities to inform the discipline and increase attention and participation among psychologists to social class and SES related issues. The SES Network was initiated in August 2007 to work in partnership with CSES to accomplish the goals of the Committee. The SES Network provides a platform to share information and ideas, raise questions, and identify critical problems and issues related to socioeconomic status. The inaugural meeting of the SES Network took place in August 2007 during APA's Convention in San Francisco, CA. Current membership of the SES Network includes 108 representatives of various divisions, state associations, committee members, APA staff, and other groups.

CSES is committed to keeping the network informed of the work of the Office and Committee, responding to initiatives raised by network members, soliciting input on issues that come before the committee, and providing information and opportunities for network members to become more active in APA governance. Therefore, a SES listserv, webpage, and newsletter have been developed to provide a forum for exchange among members of the network, CSES, APA staff, and the public. The SES Network and related informational resources are supported by OSES.

Capitol Hill Advocacy on World Poverty Day

In observance of World Poverty Day, October 17, 2007, PI's OSES, GRO and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) coordinated several congressional visits to discuss psychological research on poverty and related legislation. Heather Bullock, PhD, current chair of CSES and Marybeth Shinn, Ph.D., SPSSI member, participated in these visits. The visits included meetings with key congressional offices that have strong track records in poverty-related legislation. In addition to raising awareness of the work that APA and SPSSI are doing on the topic of poverty, the visits laid the groundwork for the infusion of psychological science in poverty-related legislation.

CSES Leadership Awards

The APA Committee on Socioeconomic Status (CSES) established CSES Leadership Awards. The CSES Leadership Awards recognize the outstanding achievements of psychologists and friends of psychology who have made significant contributions to the understanding of socioeconomic status and the lives and wellbeing of the poor by: 1) promoting scientific understanding of the roles of poverty and SES in health, education, and human welfare; 2) developing approaches to the application of psychology that take into account the effects of SES on psychological development and well being; and/or 3) Advocating for social policy that will alleviate or reduce the disparities between SES groups.

There are two categories of the CSES Leadership Award: "emerging" leaders and "distinguished" leaders. Emerging leaders are psychologists who have 15 or fewer years of post-doctoral achievements, have made a substantial contribution to SES in psychology, and demonstrate promising professional achievement. Distinguished leaders are psychologists who have more than 15 years of post-doctoral achievements, a longstanding influence on SES-related issues, and are recognized leaders in their area of expertise.

Task Force on Resources for Inclusion of Social Class in Psychology Curriculum

As an effort to increase training and education in psychology related to socioeconomic status and social class, OSES will publicize and disseminate a new report, titled: *Using curriculum materials on social class to enhance and enrich teaching in psychology*, through its webpage and networks. The report is scheduled for release Spring 2008. It was prepared by the Task Force on Resources for Inclusion of Social Class in Psychology Curricula, jointly sponsored by Divisions 9 and 35 of the American Psychological Association. Co-chairs of the report are Bernice Lott, PhD, University of Rhode Island and Heather E. Bullock, PhD, current chair of CSES. The report includes the following sections: classroom exercises, course syllabi, fiction, legislation on SES related social policy, popular media (film, TV, music, etc.) scholarly books and articles, and websites.

2008 APA Convention Program Proposals

CSES submitted proposals requesting 2008 convention hours for two 2-hour symposia. Both proposals were granted the requested hours.

Title: *Partnering with Community Groups in Advocating for Low-Income Communities*

Co-sponsors: BAPPI, Division 27, CSES, CWP

Participants: Sari H. Dworkin, PhD (chair); Karen Fraser Wyche, PhD; Lydia P. Buki, PhD; Melissa M. Pearrow, PhD; Nancy Guerra, PhD; Heather E Bullock, PhD (discussant)

Title: *Enriching Psychology's Contributions to Public Health by Incorporating Issues of Socioeconomic Status into Research, Practice, and Policy*

Co-sponsors: BAPPI, Division 9, CSES

Participants: Mary A Jansen (chair) , PhD; Laura D Kubzansky, PhD; Deborah Belle, EdD; Laura Smith, PhD; Brian D Smedley, PhD; Bernice Lott, PhD (discussant)

Consultation to Office on SES (OSES)

CSES provides on-gong consultation and feedback to several OSES generated activities such as the development of SES intersecting fact sheets; an SES resource database, and an OSES hosted Interdisciplinary Discussion and Strategy Session on Socioeconomic Status.

Acknowledgements

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Respectfully Submitted
Heather Bullock, PhD
2007 Chair, CSES