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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE  NEW

Both the House and Senate are out of session for the spring recess. The Senate will return to session on Monday, April 8, and the House on Tuesday, April 9.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

PRESIDENT TO RELEASE FY14 BUDGET ON APRIL 10  NEW

President Obama will release details of his FY14 budget next Wednesday, April 10. Early news reports indicate that the package will include proposed cuts in Social Security and Medicare, as well as reductions in some tax benefits, but information about the Administration’s approach to research and higher education programs (other than the BRAIN initiative described below) is not yet available.

Following release of the budget next week, AAU will provide analysis and related information about the budgets for the specific agencies and programs that the association follows.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE EXTENDS DEADLINES FOR MEMBER FY14 REQUESTS  NEW

In light of the two-month delay in release of the Administration’s FY14 budget, the House Appropriations Committee has extended the deadlines for Members to submit their FY14
funding recommendations to the panel’s subcommittees. The subcommittee-specific deadlines are available here.

**PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR BRAIN RESEARCH INITIATIVE  UPDATED**

President Obama on April 2 unveiled his Administration’s “BRAIN” initiative, a broad-based effort designed to revolutionize understanding of the brain and, in the process, find new ways to treat, cure, and prevent brain disorders such as Alzheimer’s, autism, and epilepsy.

The Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) initiative will include about $100 million in funding from three federal agencies—the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)—as well as dedicated research investments by private foundations, research institutes, and companies.

In his remarks about this “next great American project,” President Obama discussed the importance of federally funded basic research to American innovation, saying, “…we don’t just attract the best scientists or the best entrepreneurs—we also continually invest in their success. We support labs and universities to help them learn and explore. And we fund grants to help them turn a dream into a reality. And we have a patent system to protect their inventions. And we offer loans to help them turn those inventions into successful businesses.”

After delineating some of the project’s potential benefits to health, jobs, and the economy, he added,

“That's the future we're imagining. That's what we're hoping for. That’s why the BRAIN Initiative is so absolutely important. And that’s why it’s so important that we think about basic research generally as a driver of growth and that we replace the across-the-board budget cuts that are threatening to set us back before we even get started. A few weeks ago, the directors of some of our national laboratories said that the sequester—these arbitrary, across-the-board cuts that have gone into place—are so severe, so poorly designed that they will hold back a generation of young scientists.

When our leading thinkers wonder if it still makes sense to encourage young people to get involved in science in the first place because they're not sure whether the research funding and the grants will be there to cultivate an entire new generation of scientists, that's something we should worry about. We can’t afford to miss these opportunities while the rest of the world races ahead. We have to seize them. I don’t want the next job-creating discoveries to happen in China or India or Germany. I want them to happen right here, in the United States of America.”

**EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**NSF REQUESTS CAMPUS IDEAS ON REDUCING INVESTIGATORS’ ADMINISTRATIVE WORKLOAD**
The National Science Foundation (NSF) has issued a request for information (RFI) on ways to reduce the administrative workload for principal investigators who receive federal research funding. The RFI asks campus research administrators and federally funded researchers to identify federal and university requirements that contribute most to their administrative workload and to offer recommendations for reducing that workload.

The RFI notes that the responses will provide vital information to the National Science Board’s Task Force on Administrative Burdens as it seeks to “implement agency-level changes and offer recommendations to reduce unnecessary and redundant administrative requirements.” Responses should be submitted by email by Friday, May 24, 2013.

**DHS ANNOUNCES CAMPUSES SELECTED FOR CAMPUS RESILIENCE PILOT PROGRAM**

Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano on April 2 announced the seven colleges and universities that have been competitively selected to participate in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Campus Resilience Pilot Program. Among the diverse group of campuses chosen to participate is AAU member Texas A&M University.

Secretary Napolitano said at the announcement, “Through their work with DHS, these colleges and universities will help us further develop best practices, resources and tools needed to assist campus communities nationwide in their efforts to reduce gun violence on campuses and bolster resilience and emergency planning processes for all types of hazards.”

The pilot program was created at the recommendation of the Secretary’s Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council (HSAAC), of which AAU President Hunter Rawlings is a member.

**OTHER**

**AAU UPDATES DATA ABOUT ITS MEMBERS**

AAU has updated its document that provides quick facts and figures about the association and its member universities. The two-page piece, called “AAU by the Numbers,” can be found [here](#).

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