

Working with Policymakers

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SCIENCE & POLICY: TWO CULTURES

There is a culture clash between science & policy



Science

Systematic

Specialists/In Depth Data

Patience

Consensus-based

Policy

AdHoc/Reactionary

Generalists/Broad Range Issues

Decisiveness

Adversarial (compromise)

There is a culture clash between science & policy



Issues: Agriculture and Food, Armed Forces and National Security, Civil Rights and Liberties, Minority Issues, Emergency Management, Government Operations and Politics, Immigration, International Affairs, Labor and Employment, Public Lands and Natural Resources, Transportation and Public Works, Veterans Affairs

Policy

AdHoc/Reactionary

Generalists/Broad Range Issues

Decisiveness

Adversarial (compromise)

Congress is (dis)organized



Senate

Health, Education,
Labor & Pensions

Budget
Committee

Appropriations
Committee

+ Many other committees

House of Representatives

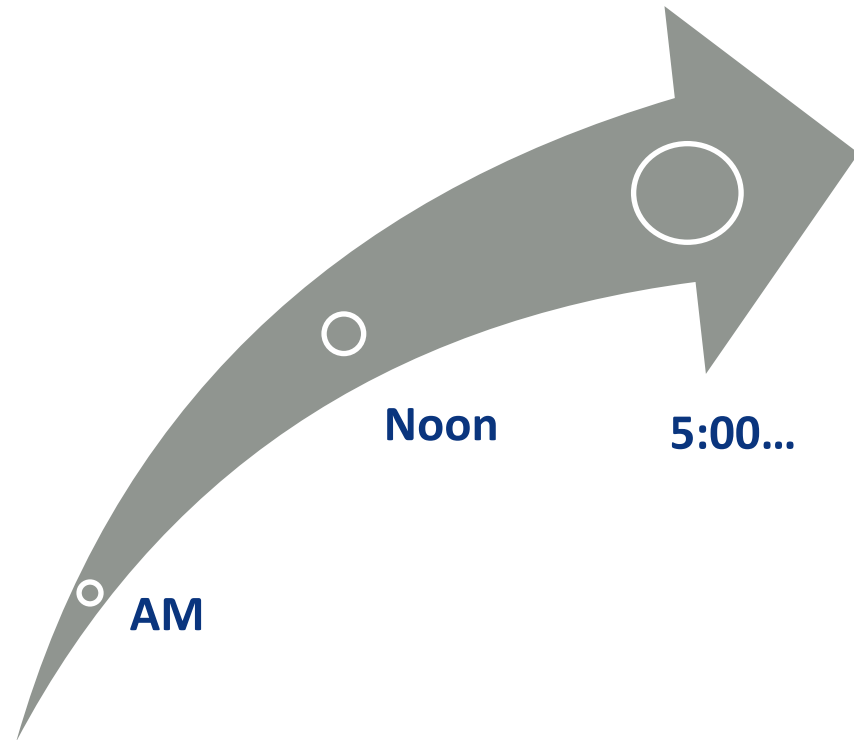
Energy &
Commerce

Budget
Committee

Appropriations
Committee

+ Many other committees

Congressional staffers are drinking from a fire hose



- 200 inbound e-mails from advocacy groups, constituents, and colleagues
- 25 e-mail alerts
- 5 news websites
- 150 headlines
- 15 Internet searches
- 5 Washington-focused publications
- 4 newspapers
- 3 news magazines
- 8 hours of (background) cable news
- 3 hours of radio news
- 5 online newsletters
- 5 Congressional Research Service reports
- 2 hours of committee hearings
- 300 pages of documents from Leadership's Office
- 75-page report from Congressional Budget Office
- 25 faxes from interest groups
- 20 publications, position papers, received by mail
- 30 phone calls
- 4 lobbyist meetings

Source: National Journal



*“We do not suffer from a lack of information here on Capitol Hill, but from a **lack** of ability to glean the knowledge and to **gauge the validity, the credibility, and the usefulness** of the large amounts of information and advice that we receive.”*

Rep. Rush Holt, June 2006



Science policy can mean different things

Which science policy do you want to talk about?



Policy for Science

Impact the conduct and practice of research.

Science for Policy

Informs and enhances the development and implementation of policies.



Policy for Science

THE BUDGET!!!!



“By God, gentlemen, I believe we’ve found it—the Fountain of Funding!”



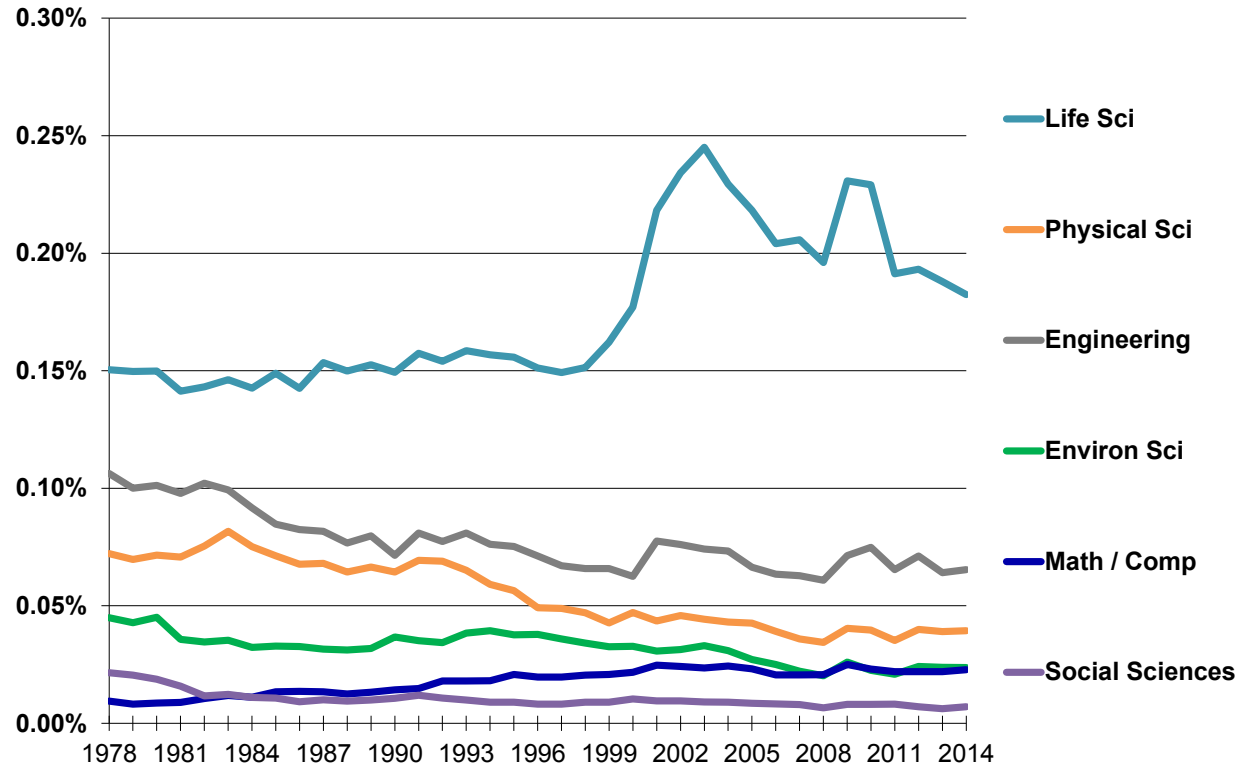
*“Advanced Federal Budget Process”
2-day course in Washington, DC*

THURSDAY 25

Scientists are looking for long-term funding...

The NIH doubling is behind us

Federal Research Funding by Discipline as a Share of GDP, 1978-2014



Source: National Science Foundation, *Federal Funds for Research and Development* series. FY 2013 and 2014 are preliminary. GDP figures are from OMB. © 2015 AAAS



- Science for Policy

THE ENVIRONMENT

Science is JUST ONE factor in policymaking



- District/state/region priorities
- Jobs/Economy
- Risks may outweigh benefits
- What's in the news
- Impact on ELECTION!



“[It] is important to remember that not all people will reach the same policy conclusion based on the same scientific information—even if they understand and accept that information.”

— Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY, retired)



Communication Strategies

Communicate in different ways



Scientists

Policymakers

Background

Supporting
Details

Results
Conclusions

Bottom Line

So What?

Supporting
Details

Source: Susan Joy Hassol, *Physics Today*

Goal: Change the **nature** of communication



Communicating



to Policymakers



Communicating



with Policymakers

Be a good resource
Build a lasting relationship

Your message in a minute

- Miniature
- Meaningful
- Memorable



Miniature



- Get to the point
- NO jargon
- Rule of three
 - Example: results, importance, potential applications



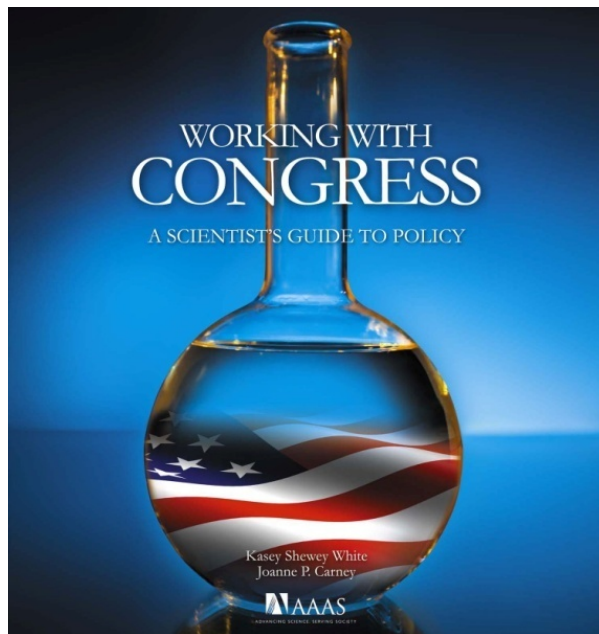
Federally funded biomedical research has had a profound effect on the health and well-being of Americans. We are living longer and experiencing a better quality of life. U.S. death rates from heart disease and stroke has dropped more than 60 percent. But serious disease challenges remain. The NIH budget is currently under \$31 billion, and this year alone Alzheimer's and other dementias will cost the U.S. economy over \$180 billion. The Senate would raise this level to over \$32 billion, even above the House proposal. Please support the Senate's proposed budget for NIH.

Source: The Science Coalition



The 6th W: Who Cares?

Meaningful: Communicating checklist



- Who is your **audience**?
- Know your timing
- Who are **you**?
- What is your message?
- Prepare to listen!

Meaningful: Know your audience



- Interest or connection to your message
 - Committees?
 - University or lab in district
- Understanding of the issue
- Position on the issue
- Context matters

Meaningful: Know yourself

- Discipline
- Research project
- Technical expertise
- Policy options?...





Memorable: TELL *YOUR* STORY

Memorable

- Talk about your **personal experience**
- **Connect science to jobs, the economy, high skilled workforce**
- Be willing to say **'I don't know'**



Memorable

- Use **analogies or metaphors** to illustrate your point
- Use **visual aids** to reinforce the message



AUTOMOTIVE APPLICATIONS OF BASIC RESEARCH

Federally funded research laid the foundation for many technological advances contained in the modern car

- LCD Monitors
- Speech Recognition Technology
- Lithium-Ion Batteries
- Catalytic Converters
- Synthetic Polymers
- Shatterproof Windshields
- Power Windows
- Center Brake Light
- Semiconductors
- Airbag Deployment Sensors
- Remote Car Locks
- CD Players
- Extended Tire Life
- GPS
- Car Bumpers

Produced by the Association of American Universities, www.aau.edu, Sept. 2010

Memorable *don'ts*

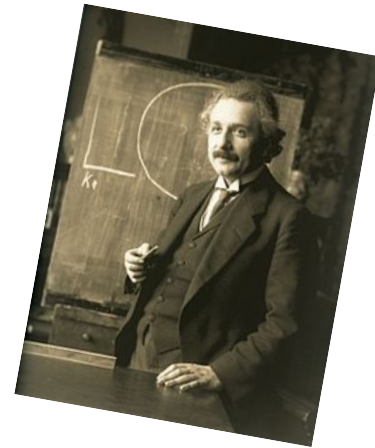


- Use jargon
- Feel the need to answer every question
- Cast federal funding as an entitlement
- Throw another discipline or program under the bus
- Go crazy with the visual aids



“You do not really understand something until you can explain it to your grandmother.”

-- *Albert Einstein*





OTHER WAYS TO ENGAGE IN POLICY

Advisory committees play an important role



**SPACE STUDIES
BOARD**

THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES
Advisers to the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine.

**BOARD ON
PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY**

THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES
Advisers to the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine.

The screenshot shows the NSF Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS) website. At the top left is the NSF logo. The main heading is "National Science Foundation Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences (MPS)". To the right is a "QUICK LINKS" dropdown menu and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation menu with items: "MPS HOME", "MPS FUNDING", "MPS AWARDS", "MPS DISCOVERIES", "MPS NEWS", and "ABOUT MPS". On the left side, there is a section for "Astronomy (AST)" with a sub-image of a satellite and a list of links: "AST Home", "About AST", and "Funding Opportunities". The main content area features the heading "Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC)" and a brief description: "The Astronomy and Astrophysics Science Foundation (NSF), the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Education have jointly funded the AAAC to advise on astronomy and astrophysics research and education." Below this is a link for "AAAC Principles of Access".

The screenshot shows the NASA Science website. At the top is a navigation menu with items: "Home", "Big Questions", "Earth", "Heliophysics", "Planets", "Astrophysics", "Missions", "Technology", and "Science News". Below the menu is a large banner with the text "NASA SCIENCE" and an image of a satellite. Underneath the banner is a secondary navigation menu with items: "NAC Science Committee", "NASA Science for ..." (with a dropdown arrow), "NASA Celebrates ..." (with a dropdown arrow), and "About Us". Below this is a breadcrumb trail: "Home > NAC Science Committee". At the bottom, there is a button labeled "NAC Science Committee" and the text "NAC SCIENCE COMMITTEE".

Write an op-ed



The New York Times

The Opinion Pages

WORLD U.S. N.Y. / REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH SPORTS **OPINION**

OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR


Not Ready for a ‘Solar Sandy’


By YOUSAF BUTT

Published: November 2, 2012

HORRENDOUS and damaging as it was, Hurricane Sandy would be considered only an opening act compared with a powerful “once-in-a-century” solar storm.

 FACEBOOK

 TWITTER

 GOOGLE+

Think local!



- State/local politics
 - Education boards
 - Neighborhood advisory commissions
 - Local science advisory boards
 - E.g., air quality boards in CA
 - Science advisors to governors

Build bridges between science & society



Prepared by:
American Association for the Advancement of Science
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Competing Responsibilities?: Addressing The Security Risks of Biological Research In Academia

January 21-22, 2010

ASSOCIATION OF
PUBLIC AND
LAND-GRANT
UNIVERSITIES

AAAS
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

Bridging Science and Security for Biological Research

Personnel Security Programs
Meeting Report • 21 - 22 August 2013

Prepared by the American Association for the Advancement of Science in conjunction with the Association of American Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

AAAS
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

Human Inheritable Genetic Modifications

*Assessing Scientific, Ethical, Religious,
and Policy Issues*

Mark S. Frankel & Audrey R. Chapman

AAAS



THE GOLDEN GOOSE AWARD



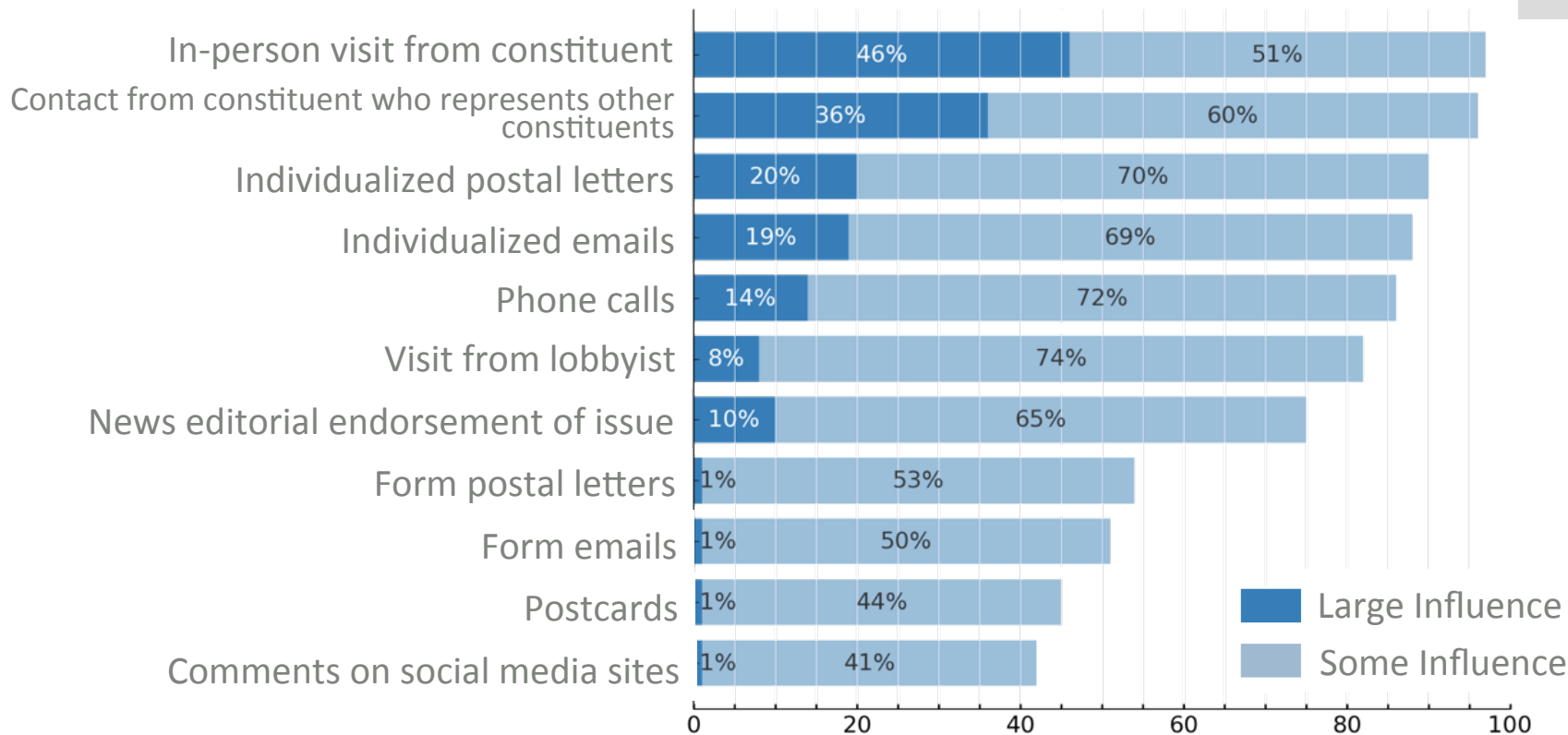
Congressional visits



Bring scientists & science to policy



How much influence do different strategies have on undecided Members of Congress?



Practice!



You are meeting with your Representative to discuss the FY 2016 appropriations budget that the House and Senate are trying to finalize. Your congressman does serve on a committee with a direct connection to science and you represent a big university that conducts a lot of research. **The Representative, however, believes that we must cut federal spending in order to reduce the deficit.** Your objective is to explain why the federal government should invest in fundamental research and why it should be given sustainable funding.

Want more?



- Engaging Scientists and Engineers in Policy
www.aaas.org/esep
- Communicating Science
<http://www.aaas.org/pes/communicatingscience>
- Office of Government Relations
<http://www.aaas.org/program/govrelations>