Status of Leadership Changes at Federal Agencies and Programs of Importance to the Research and Education Communities

OVERVIEW

As the Obama Administration attempts to formulate and implement its ambitious agendas in a wide range of policy areas, it faces the challenge of filling presidentially nominated and appointed positions across the government. Experts in Presidential transitions estimate that the Administration as a whole includes approximately 500 Senate-confirmed positions, and a total of roughly 3,000 positions that may be filled by Presidential appointment. At this time, all of President Obama’s Cabinet level nominees except the Secretary of Health and Human Services have been confirmed. However, many of the sub-cabinet appointees who will be defining and implementing agencies’ policies and programs are not yet in place.

This effort is particularly important as it pertains to the recently passed American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the stimulus bill). Federal agencies are required to obligate the funding provided in this bill on very short time scales. In order to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of these funds at agencies such as the Department of Energy and the Department of Health and Human Services, the Obama Administration is trying to ensure that key leadership positions are filled expeditiously.

In addition, President Obama’s first budget request, which is for fiscal year (FY) 2010, is currently being prepared and is expected to be sent to Congress in May. The people in positions that were filled early at the executive agencies have therefore had a greater opportunity to advocate for their programs to the White House and shape the President’s request.

As of mid-April, the Obama Administration is well ahead of the “nominations pace” set by George W. Bush in 2001. After President Obama’s 78th day in office (April 7), he had sent 126 nominations to the Senate compared to the 66 President Bush had sent to the Senate after the same period of time in 2001. The Senate had confirmed 60 of President Obama’s nominations by Day 78 compared to the 30 Bush nominees it approved during the same span. The record number of Senate confirmations secured by a modern president after 100 days is 83, as done by Ronald Reagan in 1981. (President Obama will have been in office for 100 days as of April 29.)

Below, Lewis-Burke describes the leadership in place at agencies important to the research and education communities, as well as several key positions at those agencies that still remain to be filled.
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The Senate has confirmed John Holdren to be Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Dr. Holdren was Director of the Woods Hole Research Center and a Professor of Environmental Policy and Director of the Science, Technology and Public Policy Program at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. In addition to being the Director of OSTP, Dr. Holdren also holds the title of Assistant to the President for Science and Technology. This position did not require Senate confirmation.

Dr. Holdren has indicated that OSTP will have four Associate Directors. An Associate Director of Environment has been nominated (see below); the other Associate Directors will be in the areas of Science, Technology, and International Affairs. These positions all will require Senate confirmation.

President Obama has nominated Sherburne “Shere” Abbott to serve as Associate Director of Environment in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Ms. Abbott currently serves as the Director of the Center for Science and Practice of Sustainability in the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost at the University of Texas at Austin. She previously served as the Chief International Officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). While at AAAS, she established and directed the Center for Science, Innovation, and Sustainable Development. Before joining AAAS, Ms. Abbott worked at the National Research Council.

Jim Kohlenberger is serving as John Holdren’s chief of staff. He spent eight years in the Clinton White House as Senior Domestic Policy Advisor to Vice President Al Gore, where his issues included policies related to harnessing science and technology for economic growth. Since leaving the White House, he has run his own consulting business and served as Executive Director of the Voice on the Net Coalition, as well as a Senior Fellow at the Benton Foundation. Most recently, he served on President Obama’s transition team as one of the National Science Foundation Review team leads.

Thomas Kalil has been named Deputy Director for Policy at OSTP, after serving as co-lead of the transition’s OSTP Review Team. Previously, he was the Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Science and Technology at the University of California, Berkeley; Deputy Assistant to President Bill Clinton for Technology and Economic Policy; and the Deputy Director of the White House National Economic Council.
Assistant Director for Federal Research and Development

Kei Koizumi, the former Director of the American Association for the Advancement of Science Research and Development Budget and Policy Program, was appointed to serve as the Assistant Director for Federal Research and Development at OSTP. He assisted President Obama during the transition as a member of the Technology, Innovation and Government Reform Policy Working Group.

PCAST

President Obama has named his co-chairs of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST): Dr. Holdren, Dr. Eric Lander, and Dr. Harold Varmus. Dr. Lander is Founding Director of the Broad Institute at MIT and Harvard; his training is in mathematics although he currently focuses his research on genomics. Dr. Varmus is President of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and a former Director of the National Institutes of Health. PCAST members do not need Senate confirmation and an incoming President has traditionally repopulated PCAST with new members selected by his Administration. Dr. Holdren has indicated that the White House hopes to announce the PCAST roster in April.

Office of Management and Budget

OMB Director

President Obama’s nominee for Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Peter Orszag, has been confirmed by the full Senate. He previously served as Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

Program Associate Directors

The Program Associate Directors (PADs) at the Office of Management and Budget oversee the development, presentation, and defense of their portion of the President’s budget and the Administration’s legislative, regulatory, and management agenda. In addition, they work with Departments, Agencies and the Congress to enact the President’s program in their specific area. President Obama has announced two PADs of interest to the university and research communities.

Sally Ericsson has been named as the PAD for Natural Resource Programs. This position at OMB includes oversight of federal energy, science, space, environment, and agriculture programs. Ms. Ericsson has previously served as Director of Outreach at the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, Associate Director for Natural Resources on the White House Council on Environmental Quality during the Clinton Administration, and Deputy Chief of Staff at the Department of Commerce.

Xavier de Souza Briggs has been named as the PAD for General Government Programs. This position at OMB includes oversight of federal transportation, commerce, and homeland security programs. Dr. Briggs was most recently an Associate Professor of Sociology and Urban Planning in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. He is also a former faculty member of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. In the Clinton Administration, he served as a senior policy official and Presidential appointee at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
Special Assistants and White House Councils

Director, White House Office of Health Reform
President Obama has named Nancy-Ann DeParle to be Counselor to the President and Director of the White House Office of Health Reform. She previously served as a fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, a Senior Adviser to JP Morgan Partners LLC, and a trustee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In the Clinton Administration, Ms. DeParle was Administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration.

Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change
President Obama has named Carol Browner to be Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change. Ms. Browner was Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from 1993 to 2001 and also served as Florida Secretary of the Environment.

Deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change
President Obama has named Heather Zichal to be Deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change. Ms. Zichal advised the Obama presidential campaign on energy and environment issues and is a former legislative director for Sen. John F. Kerry (D-MA).

Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality
President Obama has named Nancy Sutley to lead the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Prior to her appointment, she was the Deputy Mayor for Energy and Environment for the City of Los Angeles, California. Ms. Sutley has also been Energy Advisor to California Governor Gray Davis and Deputy Secretary for Policy and Intergovernmental Relations in the California Environmental Protection Agency.

Director, White House Office of Urban Affairs
President Obama has named Adolfo Carrion Jr. to be Director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs. Mr. Carrion has served two terms as Bronx Borough President and one term as the President of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO).

Special Assistant to the President for Urban Affairs
President Obama has named Derek Douglas to be Special Assistant to the President for Urban Affairs. Mr. Douglas’s previous positions include Director of New York Governor David Paterson’s Washington, D.C. Office and Associate Director of Economic Policy and Director of the Economic Mobility Program at the Center for American Progress.
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Secretary of Health and Human Services
After President Obama’s initial nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services, Thomas Daschle, withdrew from consideration after a controversy over unpaid taxes, the President nominated Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius to fill the post. Governor Sebelius has already appeared before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and the Senate Finance Committee for her confirmation hearings and is awaiting approval from the full Senate.

Assistant Secretary for Health
President Obama has nominated Howard Koh to serve as Assistant Secretary for Health. The Assistant Secretary for Health serves as the primary advisor to the Secretary of Health and Human Services on matters involving the nation’s public health and oversees the Office of Public Health and Science for the Department. Dr. Koh is the Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice at the Harvard School of Public Health, where he is also Director of the Center for Public Health Preparedness. Previously, Dr. Koh served as Commissioner of Public Health for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
David Blumenthal has been named by President Obama as National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. In this role, Dr. Blumenthal will lead the federal programs designed to enable implementation of a nationwide interoperable, privacy-protected health information technology infrastructure, as authorized in the stimulus bill. Dr. Blumenthal previously served as a physician and Director of the Institute for Health Policy at the Massachusetts General Hospital/Partners HealthCare System. He was also the Samuel O. Thier Professor of Medicine and Professor of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School. In addition, he served as Director of the Harvard University Interfaculty Program for Health Systems Improvement and was Senior Vice President at Boston’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Dr. Blumenthal was a Senior Health Advisor for President Obama during the presidential campaign.

National Institutes of Health

NIH Director -- Position Remains Unfilled
Elias Zerhouni stepped down as Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on October 31, 2008 and Raynard Kington, who previously served as the Principal Deputy Director of NIH and Associate Director of NIH for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research, has been the Acting NIH Director since then. He will continue in this position until a new Director is nominated and confirmed. A nominee is unlikely to be announced until after Governor Sebelius has been confirmed as Secretary.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC Director -- Position Remains Unfilled
Richard E. Besser is serving as Acting Director of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and will continue to do so until a new Director is nominated and confirmed. Previously, he served as
Director of the CDC Coordinating Office for Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response. He replaced Julie Gerberding after she officially stepped down as Director in January 2009.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

NSF Director
Arden Bement, who has been Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) since 2004, continues in that position. Should President Obama wish to appoint a new NSF Director, that person would be subject to Senate confirmation. No nominee for the position has been announced at this time.

Deputy Director
Kathie Olsen stepped down as Deputy Director of NSF on January 20 and became Senior Advisor in the NSF Office of Information and Resource Management, which provides administrative and logistic support functions to the NSF community. Dr. Olsen’s replacement, when nominated, will be subject to Senate confirmation. Cora Marrett, the head of the NSF Education and Human Resources Directorate, is serving as Acting Deputy Director in the interim.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Secretary of Energy
President Obama’s nominee for Secretary of Energy, Steven Chu, has been confirmed by the full Senate. He previously served as Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and held positions at Stanford University and AT&T Bell Laboratories. He was co-winner of the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1997.

Secretary Chu has outlined his priorities and goals for the Department of Energy, which include: science and discovery, including transformational science, training the next generation of scientists and engineers, and connecting basic and applied sciences within the department; changing the landscape of energy demand and supply via energy efficiency and conservation and development of clean, safe, low-carbon energy supplies; economic prosperity, through creation of green jobs and increased competitiveness; national security; and positioning the U.S. to lead on climate change policy, technology, and science.

Under Secretary of Energy
President Obama has nominated Kristina M. Johnson to serve as Under Secretary of Energy. Dr. Johnson is currently the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Johns Hopkins University. Before coming to Johns Hopkins, she was the Dean of Duke University’s Pratt School of Engineering and served on the faculty of the University of Colorado-Boulder. Dr. Johnson is known for her work in optoelectronics and photonics. The Under Secretary for Energy has authority over the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; Environmental Management; Fossil Energy; Nuclear Energy; Electricity; and Civilian Waste and Legacy Management offices. Dr. Johnson’s confirmation hearing in front of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has been scheduled for April 23.
Under Secretary for Science
President Obama has nominated Steven Koonin as Under Secretary for Science. This position was previously held by Raymond Orbach (Dr. Orbach also served as Director of the Office of Science). Dr. Koonin is currently the Chief Scientist for British Petroleum (BP) where he guides the company’s long-range technology strategy, particularly in alternative and renewable energy sources. Dr. Koonin worked closely with Secretary of Energy Steven Chu at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory as part of the Energy Biosciences Institute, a 10-year, $500 million research partnership between BP, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Illinois. Previously, Dr. Koonin served as Provost of the California Institute of Technology. Dr. Koonin’s research interests include theoretical and computational physics and global environmental science.

Director of the Office of Science -- Position Remains Unfilled
Patricia Dehmer is serving as Acting Director of the Department of Energy Office of Science until a permanent Director is named. She replaced Raymond Orbach, who also served as Under Secretary for Science. Dr. Dehmer’s permanent position at the Department is Deputy Director for Science Programs in the Office of Science. In this position she provides scientific and management oversight for the six program offices (basic energy sciences, biological and environmental sciences, fusion energy science, advanced scientific computing research, high energy physics, and nuclear physics). Before joining the Department in 1995, Dr. Dehmer worked in atomic, molecular, and optical physics at Argonne National Laboratory.

Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
President Obama has nominated Cathy Zoi to serve as Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at the Department of Energy. This position manages the department’s applied research programs, including renewable energy activities, such as the biomass, solar, wind, and geothermal programs, and energy efficiency activities, such as building technologies, vehicle technologies, and weatherization. Ms. Zoi was Chief of Staff in the White House Office on Environmental Policy in the Clinton Administration and was also a manager at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency where she pioneered the Energy Star Program. Most recently, she served as the founding Chief Executive Officer of the Alliance for Climate Protection, an organization established and chaired by former Vice President Al Gore.

Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
President Obama has nominated Ines Triay to serve as Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management at the Department of Energy. The Assistant Secretary oversees the Department’s efforts to clean-up the environmental legacy of decades of nuclear weapons development and government-sponsored nuclear energy research. Dr. Triay has served as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management since November 2008. Dr. Triay also spent 14 years at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs
President Obama has nominated David Sandalow to serve as Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs. The Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs has primary responsibility for the Department of Energy's international energy activities including international cooperation in science and technology. Mr. Sandalow is currently Energy and

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Environment Scholar and a senior fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies Program of the Brookings Institution. Mr. Sandalow has served as Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment and Science and Senior Director for Environmental Affairs at the National Security Council in the Clinton Administration.

Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy -- Position Remains Unfilled
Victor K. Der is currently serving as Acting Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy. He replaced James Slutz. The Assistant Secretary oversees research and development on new fossil energy technologies; manages the Department of Energy's FutureGen initiative; and advises the Secretary on federal coal, oil, and natural gas programs.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Secretary of Defense
Secretary Robert Gates continues as Secretary of Defense after serving in that position for the Bush Administration since he was originally confirmed by the full Senate in 2006. Before being named Secretary of Defense, Secretary Gates was the President of Texas A&M University. He also served as Director of Central Intelligence from 1991 until 1993. In his time at the Pentagon, he has been a strong advocate within the Department of Defense and with Congress for increased funding for defense basic research and a strengthening of the relationship between the Department and the university community.

Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics
President Obama has nominated Ashton Carter to be Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. The responsibilities of this position include establishing and managing Department of Defense research and development activities. Dr. Carter, a physicist and current Chair of the International Relations, Security, and Science faculty at Harvard’s Kennedy School, served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy from 1993 to 1996. From 1998 to 2000, he was deputy to former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry in the North Korea Policy Review. Dr. Carter has also served on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Science and Technology for Countering Terrorism and advised on the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. Dr. Carter has appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee for his confirmation hearing and is awaiting full Senate confirmation.

Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Laboratories and Basic Sciences -- Position Remains Unfilled
Robin Staffin is serving as Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Laboratories and Basic Sciences. He replaced William S. Rees, Jr., who stepped down as Deputy Under Secretary earlier this year after serving in that position since 2006. The Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Laboratories and Basic Sciences is responsible for providing scientific leadership, management oversight, policy guidance, and coordination of the basic research programs of the Military Services and Defense Agencies. In addition, the Deputy Under Secretary is responsible for Department of Defense science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and workforce issues, grants policy, defense laboratories policy, and international science and technology programs. Dr. Staffin’s permanent position at the Department is Director for Basic
Research in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics.

DARPA Director -- Position Remains Unfilled
Robert Leheny is serving as Acting Director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Dr. Leheny has been Deputy Director of DARPA since 2003, and prior to that, he was Director of DARPA’s Microsystems Technology Office and a program manager in the area of optoelectronics. The previous DARPA Director, Tony Tether, officially stepped down on February 20. Dr. Tether had served as DARPA Director since 2001.

Director of Defense Research and Engineering -- Position Remains Unfilled
The position of Director of Defense Research and Engineering within the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics has been vacant since 2007. The Principal Deputy Director, Defense Research and Engineering, is Alan Shaffer.

Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Science and Technology
Andre Van Tilborg, who served as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Science and Technology during the Bush Administration, remains in that position.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NASA Administrator -- Position Remains Unfilled
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Associate Administrator Christopher Scolese is overseeing operations at NASA until a new Administrator is nominated and confirmed. He replaced Michael Griffin who stepped down as Administrator of NASA on January 20. Dr. Griffin served as NASA Administrator since 2005.

Senior Advisors
Alan Ladwig and George Whitesides began work Jan. 21 as senior advisers in the NASA Administrator’s office. Mr. Ladwig, a space consultant who resigned his position with Whitney, Bradley & Brown, Inc. in November, was NASA’s Associate Administrator for Policy and Plans during the 1990s. Prior to joining the NASA transition team, Mr. Whitesides took a leave of absence from the National Space Society, where he was Executive Director since 2004.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Secretary of Commerce
After President Obama’s first two nominees for Secretary of Commerce, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), withdrew from consideration, the President nominated former Governor of Washington state Gary Locke to fill the post. Secretary Locke has been confirmed by the full Senate.

Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
President Obama has nominated Lawrence Strickling to be the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information at the Department of Commerce. The Assistant Secretary for
Communications and Information manages the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and is the President’s principal advisor on telecommunications policy. (NTIA is the agency responsible for distributing much of the broadband funding provided in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.) Mr. Strickling served as a Policy Coordinator for President Obama during his bid for the White House and was responsible for technology and telecommunications issues. Prior to joining the campaign, Mr. Strickling was Chief Regulatory and Chief Compliance Officer at Broadwing Communications. Mr. Strickling served at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) during the Clinton Administration.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Jane Lubchenco has been confirmed by the full Senate as Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Dr. Lubchenco was previously the Wayne and Gladys Valley Professor of Marine Biology and a Distinguished Professor of Zoology at Oregon State. Dr. Lubchenco is the first woman to head NOAA, which supports research in oceans and atmospheric science and environmental education programs and includes the National Ocean Service, National Weather Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service.

National Institute of Standards and Technology

NIST Director -- Position Remains Unfilled

Dr. Patrick Gallagher is serving as the Acting Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) within the Department of Commerce. Dr. Gallagher is also the Deputy Director of NIST and is a former Director of the NIST Center for Neutron Research. The NIST Director position has been vacant since September 2007.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Secretary of the Interior

President Obama’s nominee for Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, has been confirmed by the full Senate. Secretary Salazar previously served as a Democratic Senator from the State of Colorado.

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

President Obama has nominated Anne Castle to serve as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the Department of the Interior. The Assistant Secretary manages and directs Department of Interior programs supporting the development and implementation of national water and science policies, advises the Secretary on scientific issues, and coordinates and integrates the United States Geological Survey’s scientific activities with the other bureaus in the Department. Ms. Castle is currently a partner at Holland & Hart LLP specializing in water rights and water quality law.
U.S. Geological Survey

USGS Director -- Position Remains Unfilled
Suzette Kimball, Associate Director for Geology at the U.S. Geological Survey, is serving as Acting Director until a new Director is named. Dr. Kimball replaced former Director Mark Myers. Dr. Kimball was previously the Associate Director for Geology. Before joining Geology, Dr. Kimball served as the Eastern Regional Director and the Eastern Regional Executive for Biology at the Survey.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

EPA Administrator
President Obama’s nominee for Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Lisa Jackson, has been confirmed by the full Senate. Administrator Jackson previously served as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

Assistant Administrator for Research and Development -- Position Remains Unfilled
George Gray, who served as both the Assistant Administrator for Research and Development (the head of the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Research and Development) and the EPA Science Advisor, has officially stepped down. Before departing, he recommended that the two positions he left vacant be filled by different people. Lek Kadel is currently serving as the Acting Assistant Administrator for Research and Development and Kevin Teichman is serving as Acting EPA Science Advisor.

Senior Policy Counsel on Climate Change
EPA has hired Lisa Heinzerling as senior policy counsel on climate change within the immediate office of the EPA Administrator. She is currently on a leave of absence from the Georgetown University Law Center and previously served as an Assistant Attorney General in Massachusetts.

OTHER CABINET-LEVEL CONFIRMATIONS

Many Cabinet-level picks not mentioned above have been approved by the Senate. They include: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, and Attorney General Eric Holder.