

section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA. If it is determined that the requirements are met, a permit will be issued jointly to the Grant PUD, the WDFW, and the YN for the purpose of carrying out the enhancement program. NMFS will publish a record of its final action in the **Federal Register**.

The general effects on the environment considered include the impacts on the physical, biological, and socioeconomic environments of the upper Columbia River Basin, particularly in the Wenatchee River Subbasin in which the program is located.

Dated: November 28, 2006.

**Angela Somma,**

*Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E6-20377 Filed 11-30-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 112706C]

#### Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee is hosting a public workshop, which is open to the public, on December 18–20, 2006. The primary purpose of the meetings is to evaluate aspects of the Council's groundfish harvest policies and assessment methodologies.

**DATES:** The workshop is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. on Monday, December 18, 2006 and conclude at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, December 20, 2006. The workshop will start at 9 a.m. each day and end at 5 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday, or as necessary to complete each day's business.

**ADDRESSES:** All meetings will be held at the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037; telephone: (858) 546-7000.

*Council address:* Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220-1384.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. John DeVore, Pacific Fishery

Management Council; telephone: (503) 820-2280.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The workshop will address the following three issues: (1) Evaluate the performance of the 40–10 harvest policy for stocks with different life history and stock-recruit patterns, (2) Evaluate alternative methods to estimate proxies for initial or unfished biomass (B0) and the biomass that produces maximum sustainable yield (BMSY) and provide recommendations on their use, and (3) Provide recommendations on the use of priors for key assessment parameters in stock assessment models. Parameter for which priors could potentially be useful include natural mortality, stock-recruit, steepness, survey catchability, and recruitment variability. Workshop participants will develop guidance for stock assessment authors and provide recommendations for consideration by the Council and its advisory bodies. No management actions will be decided at this workshop.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agendas may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Advisory body action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Ms. Carolyn Porter at (503) 820-2280 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: November 28, 2006.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E6-20320 Filed 11-30-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Postsecondary Education; Overview Information; Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement (McNair) Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.217A.*

*Dates: Applications Available: December 1, 2006.*

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: January 31, 2007.*

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: April 2, 2007.*

*Eligible Applicants:* Institutions of higher education and consortia of those institutions.

*Estimated Available Funds:* The Administration requested \$380,100,000 for the Federal TRIO Programs for FY 2007, \$41,900,000 of which we intend to use for new awards for the McNair Program. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

*Estimated Range of Awards:*

\$220,000–\$365,000.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:*

\$234,000.

*Maximum Award:* We will not fund any application at an amount exceeding the maximum amounts specified below for a single budget period of 12 months. We may choose not to further consider or review applications with budgets that exceed the maximum amounts specified below, if we conclude, during our initial review of the application, that the proposed goals and objectives cannot be obtained with the specified maximum amount.

- For an applicant who is not currently receiving a McNair Program grant, the maximum award amount is \$220,000 for a project that will serve a minimum of 25 participants.

- For an applicant who is currently receiving a McNair Program grant, the maximum award is the greater of (a) \$220,000 or (b) an amount equal to \$9,000 multiplied by the number of participants the applicant is proposing to serve, not to exceed 105 percent of the applicant's grant award amount for FY 2006.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 180.

**Note:** The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

*Project Period:* Four years except applicants whose peer review scores are within the highest ten percent of scores of all applicants receiving awards will receive five-year awards.

#### Full Text of Announcement

##### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* The purpose of the McNair Program is to award grants to institutions of higher education for projects designed to provide disadvantaged college students with effective preparation for doctoral study.

*Program Authority:* 20 U.S.C. 1070a–11 and 1070a–15.

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 85, and 86.

(b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 647.

**Note:** The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Note:** The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

## II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* The Administration requested \$380,100,000 for the Federal TRIO Programs for FY 2007, \$41,900,000 of which we intend to use for new awards for the McNair Program. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

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*Estimated Number of Awards:* 180.

**Note:** The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

*Project Period:* Four years except applicants whose peer review scores are within the highest ten percent of scores of all applicants receiving awards will receive five-year awards.

## III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* Institutions of higher education and consortia of those institutions.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This program does not involve cost sharing or matching.

## IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address to Request Application Package:* Eileen S. Bland, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., suite 7000, Washington, DC 20006–8510. Telephone: (202) 502–7600 or by e-mail: [TRIO@ed.gov](mailto:TRIO@ed.gov).

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1–800–877–8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission:*

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package and instructions for this program.

**Page Limit:** The program narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the program narrative (Part III) to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5” x 11”, on one side only, with 1” margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Page numbers and an identifier may be within the 1” margin.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, *except* titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, captions, and all text in charts, tables, and graphs, which may be single spaced.

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. Applications submitted in any other font (including Times Roman and Arial Narrow) will be rejected.

- Use not less than 12-point font.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) and Department of Education Supplemental Information Required for SF 424; Part II, the Budget Information Summary Form (ED Form 524); Part III-A, McNair Program Profile; and Part IV, Department of Education Certifications and Assurances and Survey forms. The

page limit also does not apply to the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) statement nor does it apply to a table of contents. If you include any attachments or appendices not specifically requested, these items will be counted as part of the program narrative (Part III) for purposes of the page limit requirement. You must include your complete response to the selection criteria in the program narrative (Part III).

We will reject your application if—

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

3. *Submission Dates and Times:*

*Applications Available:* December 1, 2006.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* January 31, 2007.

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the *Grants.gov* Apply site (*Grants.gov*). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically or by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to Section IV. 6. *Other Submission Requirements* in this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* April 2, 2007.

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

5. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

6. *Other Submission Requirements:*

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. *Electronic Submission of Applications.*

Applications for grants under the McNair Program—CFDA Number 84.217A must be submitted electronically using the *Grants.gov* Apply site at: <http://www.Grants.gov>. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application.

You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under *Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement*.

You may access the electronic grant application for the McNair Program at: <http://www.Grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package for this program by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.326, not 84.326A).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the *Grants.gov* site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by *Grants.gov* are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted, and must be date and time stamped by the *Grants.gov* system no later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not consider your application if it is date and time stamped by the *Grants.gov* system later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. When we retrieve your application from *Grants.gov*, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the *Grants.gov* system after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through *Grants.gov*.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through *Grants.gov* that are included in the application package for this program to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the *Grants.gov* system. You can also find the Education

Submission Procedures pertaining to *Grants.gov* at: <http://e-Grants.ed.gov/help/GrantsgovSubmissionProcedures.pdf>.

- To submit your application via *Grants.gov*, you must complete all the steps in the *Grants.gov* registration process (see [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp)). These steps include (1) registering your organization, a multi-part process that includes registration with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (2) registering yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (3) getting authorized as an AOR by your organization. Details on these steps are outlined in the *Grants.gov* 3-Step Registration Guide (see <http://www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>). You also must provide on your application the same D-U-N-S Number used with this registration. Please note that the registration process may take five or more business days to complete, and you must have completed all registration steps to allow you to submit successfully an application via *Grants.gov*. In addition you will need to update your CCR registration on an annual basis. This may take three or more business days to complete.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications. Please note that two of these forms—the SF 424 and the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424—have replaced the ED 424 (Application for Federal Education Assistance).

- You must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from *Grants.gov* an automatic notification of

receipt that contains a *Grants.gov* tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by *Grants.gov* only, not receipt by the Department.) The Department then will retrieve your application from *Grants.gov* and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your application and has assigned your application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

*Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System:* If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through *Grants.gov*, please contact the *Grants.gov* Support Desk at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a *Grants.gov* Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the *Grants.gov* system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with *Grants.gov*, along with the *Grants.gov* Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the *Grants.gov* system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.

**Note:** The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the *Grants.gov* system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to *Grants.gov* before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the *Grants.gov* system.

*Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement:* You qualify for an

exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the *Grants.gov* system because—

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the *Grants.gov* system; and
- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevent you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Linda Byrd-Johnson, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., suite 7000, Washington, DC 20006–8510. FAX: (202) 219–7074.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

#### b. *Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.*

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the applicable following address:

#### *By mail through the U.S. Postal Service:*

U.S. Department of Education,  
Application Control Center,  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.217A),  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.,  
Washington, DC 20202–4260; or

#### *By mail through a commercial carrier:*

U.S. Department of Education,  
Application Control Center—Stop  
4260, Attention: (CFDA Number  
84.217A), 7100 Old Landover Road,  
Landover, MD 20785–1506.

Regardless of which address you use, you must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark,

- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service,

- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or

- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark, or
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

**Note:** The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

#### c. *Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.*

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application, by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education,  
Application Control Center,  
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.217A),  
550 12th Street, SW., Room 7041,  
Potomac Center Plaza, Washington,  
DC 20202–4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

**Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications:** If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department:

- (1) You must indicate on the envelope and—if not provided by the Department—in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

- (2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245–6288.

### V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 647.21 and are listed in the application package for this competition.

**Note:** Under the “Objectives” selection criterion, in 34 CFR 647.21(b), applicants must provide data that address both process and outcome objectives as listed on the McNair Program Profile relative to the purpose of the McNair Program as described in 34 CFR 647.1.

The McNair Program Profile (Part III–A) in the application package details specific information that applicants must submit regarding four specific process and outcome objectives listed in the profile. Applicants may, but are not required to, develop additional objectives for their projects.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* The Secretary will select applications for funding in rank-order, based on each application’s total score for the selection criteria and prior experience, pursuant to 34 CFR 647.20 through 647.22. If, after the approval of higher-ranked applications, there are insufficient funds for two or more applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will choose among the tied applications to achieve an equitable geographical distribution of all new projects.

### VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notice (GAN). We may also notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Reporting:* At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditures information as specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118.

4. *Performance Measures:* The success of the McNair Program is measured by the increase in the percentage of McNair Program participants who enroll in and persist in graduate school. All McNair Program grantees will be required to

submit an annual performance report regarding this measure.

## VII. Agency Contact

*For Further Information Contact:*  
Eileen S. Bland, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., suite 7000, Washington, DC 20006-8510. Telephone: (202) 502-7600 or by e-mail: [TRIO@ed.gov](mailto:TRIO@ed.gov).

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed in this section.

## VIII. Other Information

*Electronic Access to This Document:*  
You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC area at (202) 512-1530.

**Note:** The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Dated: November 28, 2006.

**James F. Manning,**

*Acting Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.*

[FR Doc. E6-20370 Filed 11-30-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Advisory Committee Student Financial Assistance: Hearing

**AGENCY:** Advisory Commission on Student Financial Assistance, Education.

**ACTION:** Notice of upcoming hearing.

**SUMMARY:** This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of a forthcoming hearing of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (The Advisory Committee). Individuals who will need accommodations for a disability in order

to attend the hearing (i.e., interpreting services, assistive listening devices, and/or materials in alternative format) should notify the Advisory Committee no later than Monday, December 11, 2006, by contacting Ms. Hope Gray at (202) 219-2099 or via e-mail at [Hope.Gray@ed.gov](mailto:Hope.Gray@ed.gov). We will attempt to meet requests after this date, but cannot guarantee availability of the requested accommodation. The hearing site is accessible to individuals with disabilities. This notice also describes the functions of the Advisory Committee. Notice of this hearing is required under Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. This document is intended to notify the general public.

**DATES:** Monday, December 18, 2006, beginning at 9:30 a.m. and ending at approximately 3:30 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The University of Illinois at Chicago, Student Service Building, Conference Room B/C, 1200 W. Harrison Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Erin B. Renner, Director of Government Relations or Ms. Julie J. Johnson, Assistant Director, Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, Capitol Place, 80 F Street, NW., Suite 413, Washington, DC 20202-7582, (202) 219-2099.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance is established under Section 491 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended by Public Law 100-50 (20 U.S.C. 1098). The Advisory Committee serves as an independent source of advice and counsel to the Congress and the Secretary of Education on student financial aid policy. Since its inception, the congressional mandate requires the Advisory Committee to conduct objectives, nonpartisan, and independent analyses on important aspects of the student assistance programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, and to make recommendations that will result in the maintenance of access to postsecondary education for low- and middle-income students. In addition, Congress expanded the Advisory Committee's mission in the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 to include several important areas: access, Title IV modernization, distance education, and early information and needs assessment. Specifically, the Advisory Committee is to review, monitor and evaluate the Department of Education's progress in these areas and report recommended improvements to Congress and the Secretary.

The Advisory Committee has scheduled the hearing on Monday, December 18 in Chicago, IL, to conduct activities related to its congressionally requested study to make textbooks more affordable (Textbook Study). This one-year study, which was requested by members of the Education and the Workforce Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, will investigate further the problem of rising textbook prices; determine the impact of rising textbook prices on students' ability to afford a postsecondary education; and make recommendations to Congress, the Secretary, and other stakeholders on what can be done to make textbooks more affordable for students. Over the course of the study, the Committee will conduct three field hearings that will include testimony from stakeholders around the country who are currently working to make textbooks more affordable for students.

The proposed agenda includes expert testimony and discussions by prominent higher education community leaders, state representatives, and institutions who will share what they are doing to make textbooks more affordable for students. The Advisory Committee will also conduct a roundtable discussion among Advisory Committee members and panelists on its recently released report on the impact of financial barriers on bachelor's degree attainment, titled *Mortgaging Our Future: How Financial Barriers to College Undercut America's Global Competitiveness*. This report can be accessed at the following Web address: <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/mof.pdf>.

The Advisory Committee invites the public to submit written comments on the Textbook Study to the following e-mail address: [ACSFA@ed.gov](mailto:ACSFA@ed.gov). Information regarding the Textbook Study will also be available on the Advisory Committee's Web site, <http://www.ed.gov/ACSFA>. To be included in the hearing materials, we must receive your comments on or before Monday, December 11, 2006; additional comments should be provided to the Committee no later than January 29, 2007.

Space for the hearing is limited and you are encouraged to register early if you plan to attend. You may register by sending an e-mail to the following address: [ACSFA@ed.gov](mailto:ACSFA@ed.gov) or [Tracy.Deanna.Jones@ed.gov](mailto:Tracy.Deanna.Jones@ed.gov). Please include your name, title, affiliation, complete address (including internet and e-mail address, if available), and telephone and fax numbers. If you are unable to register electronically, you may fax your registration information to the Advisory Committee staff office at