TASK FORCE ON RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT IN RESEARCH
6/10/12

Date Task Force initiated: 12/22/11

Task Force Members: Jennifer Crocker (chair), Jennifer Beer, Steven Breckler, Fabrizio Butera, Susan Fiske, Alan Kraut, Brenda Major, Alan Omoto, Gary VandenBos, Simine Vazire

Activities:
- The Task Force met in San Diego on January 28, 2012 to consider recommendations to improve how we do our science and practices that would advance our science faster. Members of the Task Force represent a wide range of professional associations in psychology broadly, and personality and social psychology in particular

Noteworthy Points:
The Task Force was appointed by Todd Heatherton in the context of critiques and challenges of our methods and practices. Our goal was to propose recommendations that would improve the way we do our science. Several proposals were considered, including dissemination of replications and failures to replicate, increased sharing of data, addressing so-called questionable research practices, addressing "false positive psychology," improvements to graduate training, and addressing the competitive climate of the discipline. The Task Force discussions were guided by these questions: On what do we agree? Can we make recommendations now? Are there other proposals that we can't and won't ever agree on? Are there proposals that require extensive discussion? Are there implementation issues? What are the action steps? What's the next step?

Issues for Discussion:
The Task Force agreed on the following points, recommendations, and next steps:

1. Replication is the key to building our science
   a. Possibilities:
      i. web site for depositing replications and failures to replicate
         1. Who would review, maintain, fund the site?
         2. Next steps? Suggestions?
      ii. discussion thread for asking/answering questions regarding replications and failures to replicate
         1. Next steps:
            a. Explore examples from other disciplines (e.g., math)
            b. Researchgate as an example (http://www.researchgate.net/)
            c. Ask our journals to do a special issue on replication (including successful and failed replications)? (For the same reasons a special issue on data sharing would be good – set an example, get well-respected people to participate, etc. – see 2.d.i below)

2. Data sharing advances science, and should be encouraged but not (yet) mandated
    a. Too much resistance at this stage
    b. We need some guidelines, examples of data sharing agreements
    c. Logistical issues to be solved
        i. Who should store the data? Journals? University archives? ICPSR and similar sites? Permanence is key.
            1. Sage offered to archive data on its site for its journals
            2. Social Psychology Network is developing voluntary linkages to data files for members' publications listed on their profile page
        ii. Data must be interpretable (detailed codebook)
        iii. Protection of participants is paramount
        iv. Data can be publicly available or made available in limited way (password protected web site; release by PI)
        v. How will originators of data get credit?
            1. Added to list of authors?
            2. New category of authorship of the data?
            3. URI for data sets that can be cited, have impact factors?
    d. Next steps:
        i. Each of us put something on our society listserves requesting examples of data sharing agreements, stimulus sharing agreements; collect examples and send to one person on task force
        ii. Distribute examples of data and stimulus sharing agreements through society list serves, web sites, journal web sites, etc. (ideas about dissemination anyone?)
        iii. Ask our society journals about developing special issues on a thematic topic in which all authors in the special issue agree to share their data
            1. As an experiment, we'll discover the advantages and problems
            2. It models data sharing rather than requires it
            3. Best if at least some authors are highly regarded, well-known
        iv. Add a checkbox at the manuscript submission stage about whether authors agree to share the data included in the published articles with others, and under what conditions; don't require a yes for publication. Merely asking at the submission stage may increase willingness. Willingness to share could then be included as an item in the author's note, encouraging people to request data
        v. Raise this issue at meetings of editors, publishers
        vi. Conduct survey of SPSP members to see what are the biggest obstacles to data sharing (Simine). Issues to ask about:
            1. How much lag do people want before data are made available?
            2. What kind of process do people want? (publicly available vs. some kind of application process)
            3. What kind of credit do people want when their data are used by others? (citation, co-authorship, something in between?)

3. We should not attempt to legislate research practices or data reporting beyond existing standards
    a. Issues are specific to methods and projects, so general mandates will not fit all research
    b. Replication is the key to uncovering false positives and other problems
    c. Sharing data would encourage more transparency with analyses

4. Graduate training on responsible research conduct could be promoted by:
    a. Workshops on ethics in summer schools (SISP, EASP)
    b. FAABS project on ethical dilemmas
    c. Graduate Student Committee, Training Committee of SPSP. Others?
    d. Next steps:
        i. Contact our societies that have graduate student committees, training committees, summer schools and suggest that they take up this issue

Proposals for Vote:

The members of the Task Force ask that the SPSP EC discuss the recommendations, endorse them, and ask the appropriate committees (e.g., Publications Committee, Graduate Student Committee, Training Committee, SISP Committee) to implement these recommendations

Budget Requests: none