

# Undergraduates in Physics Aren't Interested in Politics: That's a Problem

FYI Science Policy Communications Intern

Hale Stolberg

# Overview

- What is FYI?
- What does FYI do?
- Why is it important?





FYI is an authoritative news and resource center for federal science policy.

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FYI: Science Policy News from AIP

- Bulletin
- This Week
- Budget Tracker
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- Leadership Tracker
- Opportunities

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**FYI Bulletin**

**US Ramps Up Planning for Space Nuclear Technology**  
31 July 2020

**Kratsios Steps In After Griffin Resigns as Pentagon R&D Head**  
24 July 2020

**Discussions Intensify on Systemic Racism in Physics**

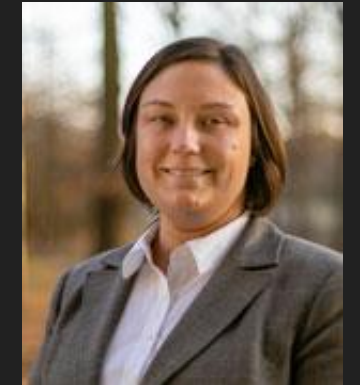
**FYI This Week**

**The Week of August 3, 2020**

- Science Proposals Vie for Inclusion in COVID Relief
- Panel Urges Research Reactor Refit
- Questions Remain on NSF Fellowship Priorities
- Plus: Upcoming Events / Opportunities / Around the Web

FYI THIS WEEK ARCHIVE

**FYI Trackers**



# What does FYI do?



## This Week

Issued each Monday, FYI This Week highlights upcoming science policy events and summarizes news from the past week.



## Bulletin

The FYI Bulletin is a news service covering federal science policy developments.

## FYI Trackers

A set of online resources with up-to-date information on federal science budgets, bills, and policymakers.

### Budget

Up-to-date details on federal budgets and appropriations relevant to the physical sciences

### Bill

Up-to-date information on recent authorization bills in Congress relevant to the physical sciences

### Leadership

Index of high-level federal officials who have responsibility for appropriating funds, setting policy, or managing programs relevant to the physical sciences.

# What Have I Done at FYI?

## US Ramps Up Planning for Space Nuclear Technology

31 Jul 2020

NASA and the Department of Energy are expanding their collaboration as part of a broader White House push to develop nuclear power systems for space applications. The initiative comes as NASA faces key decisions on what fuel sources and technology development paths to pursue.



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### THE WEEK AHEAD



The rocket nosecone containing the Mars Perseverance rover at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on July 7.

(Image credit – NASA / Kennedy Space Center)

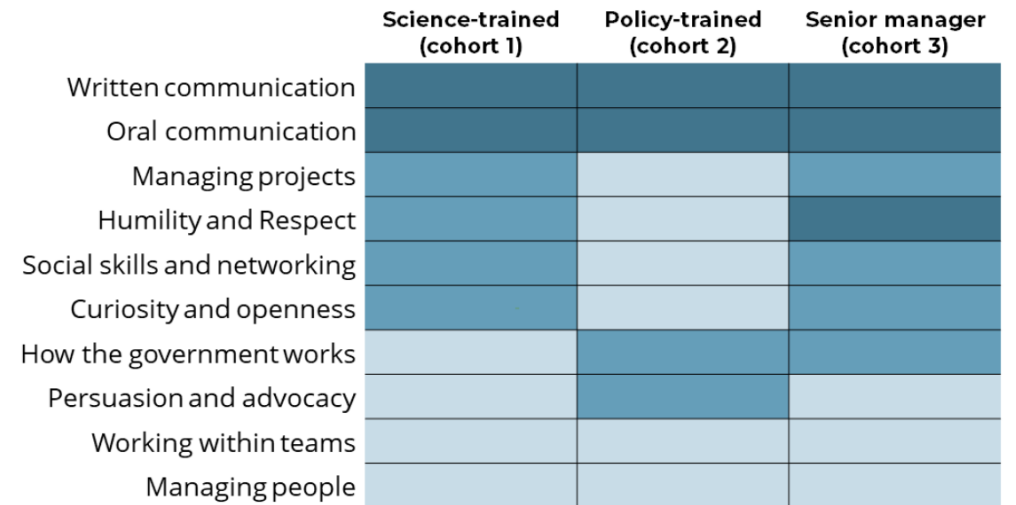
### NASA's Perseverance Rover Ready to Launch for Mars

NASA is scheduled to launch its flagship Mars Perseverance rover from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as early as Thursday morning. Taking advantage of an opportunity for a rapid journey that opens every two years, the rover will be the third mission heading to Mars this summer, following successful launches by the United Arab Emirates and China. NASA officials will provide [briefings](#) throughout the week on the rover's capabilities, the science activities it will perform, and the mission's [helicopter demonstration](#). Perseverance is the first in an expected series of NASA and European Space Agency missions that together aim to gather and return samples from the planet's surface to Earth. First announced in 2012 as a follow-on to the agency's Curiosity rover, NASA originally planned to spend between \$1.3 billion and \$1.7 billion on the project, though development costs ultimately rose to \$2.4 billion. Perseverance is scheduled to land on Mars in February 2021.

# Why Should Undergraduates Learn How to Communicate Through Policy?

Source: Guerra, Pomeroy, & Heustis, "Science Policy Careers for PhD-trained scientists," Scientific Citizenship Initiative at Harvard Medical School, June 2020

## MOST CITED SKILLS AND TRAITS FOR SUCCESS IN SCIENCE POLICY



Respondents: ■ Two-thirds or more ■ One-third to two thirds ■ Less than one-third

## Lawsuits Challenge ICE Demand To Class In Person or Leave US

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Publication date: 10 July 2020 Number: 66

Universities are suing to block a r  
Immigration and Customs Enforc  
force international students to lea  
they can only take online classes i  
Together with scientific societies,  
the policy could have catastrophi  
U.S. higher education system and  
countless students.

## Questions Remain Over NSF Graduate Fellowship Priorities

The National Science Foundation is facing continued pushback over its [inclusion](#) of discipline-specific priorities in its recent solicitation of applications for the Graduate Research Fellowship Program. Responding to a [wave of criticism](#) over the solicitation, NSF issued a [statement](#) on July 28 emphasizing that it continues to encourage applications across all fields of science, while explaining that the priorities reflect a “move to align with a coordinated federal strategy to secure America’s position as a global leader in research and innovation in artificial intelligence, quantum information science, and other emergent areas.” It argued that such prioritization is not unusual, noting it has previously “underscored agency-wide areas of emphasis while continuing to support a broad range of research.” However, the statement sparked [another round](#) of questions on social media, such as how the prioritization would bear on the application review process. Responding to a query from FYI, NSF would not directly state whether it is merely encouraging applications that incorporate the priority areas or if such applications would have a higher chance of being funded. A [petition](#) calling on NSF to rescind the priorities has garnered over 3,000 signatures, arguing that the program has historically supported outstanding emerging scientists regardless of what discipline they are interested in.

## Remove priority research areas from NSF GRFP



 Chelsea Catania, PhD started this petition to National Science Foundation and 6 others

The National Science Foundation recently released the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) Program solicitation for the Fiscal Year 2021 competition. The solicitation included a revision which stated:

3,354 have signed. Let's get to 5,000!

-  Alexa Salinas signed this petition
-  Luke Miller signed 34 minutes ago
-  Corey Kaminsky signed 11 hours ago

First name

Last name

Email

Evanston, 60202

United States

Display my name and comment on this petition

 [Sign this petition](#)



# How Can Undergraduates Engage in Politics and Policy

- The Usual Suspects
  - Society Advocacy
  - Congressional Visits
  - Contact your representative
- So Much More!
  - Congressional Internships
  - Engagement with State and Local Lawmakers
  - Submit an Op-Ed
  - Take a Politics Class
  - Network



**Questions?**