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UNIVERSITY OF  
**GEORGIA**

Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research

## The Owens Observer


Newsletter of the  
Owens Institute for  
Behavioral Research

# December 15, 2025

I'm pleased to share our final 2025 newsletter with you. The newsletter includes important updates and information, along with a welcome to new OIBR affiliates. The first item you will see is a save-the-date for the **2026 Owens Lecture**, which will feature the **Director of the Russell Sage Foundation, Bruce Western**. Dr Western, who is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, will be delivering an academic talk on his research on mass incarceration, as our 2026 Owens Lecturer, as well as holding a **session on the ins-and-outs of foundation funding**, in his role as Director of Russell Sage. The newsletter also includes a feature article on new STEM-education research conducted by **Logan Fiorella and Deborah Barany**. Finally, I want to draw your attention to information about **OIBR's Pivot Fund**, which is designed to help faculty whose research program is no longer fundable in today's climate. These applications are accepted at any time, and we provide a response within two weeks. I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday break. See you all next year!

**Jody Clay-Warner**  
Director

# Upcoming Events



**2026 Annual  
William A. Owens Lecture**  
with  
**Dr. Bruce Western**  
Russell Sage Foundation

**Save  
the  
Date**

**April 3, 2026  
at 3pm**

Bruce Western is a leading sociologist whose research explores poverty, inequality, and the social impact of incarceration. A Principal Investigator of the Square One Project, he reimagines responses to violence amid poverty and racial inequality. Western is the award-winning author of *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison* and *Punishment and Inequality in America*, and has advised national panels on reducing racial disparities and addressing COVID-19 in U.S. prisons.

Hosted by Owens Institute for Behavioral Research

## Research Spotlight

**Advancing Evidence-Based Video Instruction  
in STEM Learning**



[Learn More](#)

## Faculty News

### Welcome New Affiliates

**Karen Johnson**, Associate Professor, Social Work

**Inseok Song**, Associate Professor, Physics & Astronomy

**Qiong Wang**, Assistant Professor, College of Environment + Design

## Policy Updates



### **NIH Form Updates Coming January 25**

NIH has announced upcoming changes to its Biosketch and Current & Pending Support formats, which will be required for all proposal submissions, JIAs, RPPRs, and prior approval requests due on or after **January 25**. Beginning on that date, NIH will mandate the use of **SciENcv** to generate these forms. Updated templates are expected to be available in SciENcv around **December 15**.

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-26-018.html>)

## Opportunities



**CARMA**

This is just a friendly reminder that the [Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis \(CARMA\)](#) is an incredibly valuable resource available to you via OIBR's sponsorship of UGA's institutional membership. As a UGA faculty member, you can set up a profile, sign up for programs and courses, and request to receive their newsletter. Please contact Kim Cherewick at [ksilvis@uga.edu](mailto:ksilvis@uga.edu) with any questions.

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## OIBR Pivot Funds 2026

The OIBR Pivot Fund 2026 allows researchers to continue to conduct important work, while responding to the current funding climate. Funds can be used to collect data, purchase data sets or equipment, or for other needs, as identified by the investigator, to facilitate submission of an external grant proposal. Funds cannot be used for conference travel or personnel funding (faculty or student). The budget cannot exceed \$5,000.

The application should contain: 1) one paragraph describing your current research; 2) one to two sentences explaining how you are pivoting your research; 3) one page describing the project for which you are seeking funding, your qualifications for conducting the proposed research, and intended external grant mechanism(s); 4) budget, budget justification, and timeline; and 5) a current CV.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the OIBR Leadership Team. Send applications (as a single PDF in the order listed above) to [oibr@uga.edu](mailto:oibr@uga.edu), with the subject line "Pivot Funds."

OIBR News



The FY2025 OIBR Annual Report highlights the Institute’s mission to advance social and behavioral science research at UGA through expert grant support, interdisciplinary collaboration, seed funding, and professional development. This year’s report showcases cutting-edge research, Center activities, events that brought scholars together, and the impact of projects supported by the William and Barbara Owens endowment. OIBR’s services are offered at no cost to faculty, reflecting our commitment to reducing administrative burden and empowering researchers to focus on their science.

OIBR FY25 Annual Report

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*Have news? Please send kudos, announcements or other items to Andrea Horsman at [ahorsman@uga.edu](mailto:ahorsman@uga.edu). Distribution occurs monthly on the second Monday of the month. The deadline for submissions is the first Wednesday.*



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