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Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research

The Owens Observer

Newsletter of the
Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research

February 16, 2026

Things are busy at OIBR, with a number of important events and deadlines coming up. First up is the March 6th edition of Tea Time, which is OIBR's new **early career mentoring** program. Applications for the **OIBR Faculty Seed Grant Program** are due March 16th. On April 3rd, we'll be hosting **Russell Sage Foundation President Bruce Western** for the annual Owens Lecture and for an information session on Russell Sage Foundation funding. Be sure also to add the annual end-of-year **Gathering in the Garden** to your calendar. The event will be held on April 30th. You'll find details about all of these opportunities/events in the newsletter along with faculty news, including a research profile on **OIBR Distinguished Scholar Sarah Shannon**, as well as NIH policy updates. Happy almost spring!

Jody Clay-Warner
Director

Upcoming Events



We are pleased to announce **Tea Time**, a new OIBR offering for early career faculty for learning, sharing, and camaraderie. Each month, an OIBR Distinguished Scholar will present information on a professional development topic, allowing time for discussion and Q&A.

The next session will be held on Friday, **March 6** from 10:00am – 11:00am in the OIBR conference room (249A Brooks Hall). Tea, coffee, sparkling water, and cookies will be available.

Dr. **Scott Ardoin**, Educational Psychology, will be hosting the session. Early career affiliates should RSVP [here](#) to secure your spot. Each session is limited to 12 participants.

The next sessions will be:

April 10 with **Katie Ehrlich**, Psychology, RSVP [here](#)

May 1 with **Steve Beach**, Psychology, RSVP [here](#)

Attend one or all of these events. RSVP is required, and space is limited.



RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

Supporting innovative social science research that explores cutting-edge methods, questions, and policies for the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States.

RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

INFORMATION SESSION

Join us for an informational session with Bruce Western, president of the Russell Sage Foundation. Dr. Western will provide an overview of the Foundation's mission, research priorities, and grant funding opportunities. This session will be valuable for faculty seeking external funding in the social and behavioral sciences.



Friday, April 3
10:30 - 11:30am



Miller Learning
Center
Room 250

Hosted by



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2026 Annual William A. Owens Lecture

with

Dr. Bruce Western
Russell Sage Foundation

“Poor Justice:
Case Studies in
Punishment &
Inequality”

April 3, 2026

UGA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

LECTURE 3:00 - 4:00PM
RECEPTION 4:00 - 5:00PM

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



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SAVE THE DATE

Join us for an informal, year-end get together

A Gathering at the Garden

APRIL 30, 2026 | 4:30 - 6PM

UGA Founders Memorial Garden
325 S. Lumpkin St., Athens

More details to follow



Research Spotlight

Examining the Hidden Costs of Justice: A Multi-State Study of Monetary Sanctions



[Learn More](#)

Faculty News

OIBR Distinguished Scholar and GDP Graduate, **Rifat Haider** and his research team were selected as national winners in the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) “*Unlocking Insights: Analyzing All of Us Data for Drug Addiction Research*” Challenge.



The winning project, “*Predicting Imminent Opioid Overdose Among People with Opioid Dependence Using Multi-Modal Data*,” was recognized for its innovative use of data from the NIH *All of Us* Research Program to improve understanding of overdose risk and inform prevention efforts. The team received a \$16,666 cash prize in recognition of the quality and impact of their work.

“Using All of Us data allows us to ask new questions about opioid overdose risk that have real potential to inform prevention and policy,” said Haider.

The project was conducted in close collaboration with Haider’s PhD students—Samantha Clinton, Golam Sarwar, and Md. Hafizur Rahman—who contributed substantially to the study’s design, analysis, and interpretation. The award highlights both a meaningful research contribution and a strong student training outcome. Winners were publicly announced by NIDA on January 30.

Policy Updates



NIH Extends Leniency for New Common Forms Implementation

The NIH has issued **Notice NOT-OD-26-033** to *adjust the timeline* for rolling out the new **Common Forms** for Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support.

Key Points:

- NIH is extending the **leniency period through May 2026**, giving applicants and institutions more time to adopt the new Common Forms.
- During this period, NIH will still *accept the legacy NIH Biosketch and Other Support formats*, and system validations for the Common Forms will remain at a **warning level**—*not blocking submissions* for non-compliance.
- NIH *encourages early use* of the Common Forms but will only enforce mandatory

compliance after the leniency ends (with system validations becoming errors).
• The extension aligns the Common Forms implementation timeline with NIH's **Research Security Training** certification requirements (covered in NOT-OD-26-017).

Opportunities

OIBR Faculty Seed Grants



The Owens Institute for Behavioral Research (OIBR) invites applications for Faculty Seed Grants in the social and behavioral sciences. Seed grant projects should directly contribute to the future submission of an external grant proposal. Typical seed grant projects involve the collection/analysis of preliminary data or a proof-of-concept. The project budget is limited to \$15,000. Funds will be available July 1, 2026, and must be spent by June 30, 2027. **Applications are due March 16.** Full details and submission instructions are available on the [OIBR website](#).

OIBR Pivot Funds

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, with the subject line "Pivot Funds."

OIBR News



OIBR has an opening for a **Senior Accountant**. Please share this opportunity with anyone you think may be interested in joining our fantastic team! Anyone interested can apply [here](#). Any questions about the position can be sent to **Jenny Claire Carey** at jccarey@uga.edu.

Online Open Office Hours

Kim Cherewick, Assistant Director, and **Jenny Claire Carey**, Post Award Operations Manager, will be hosting weekly office hours. Drop in via [Zoom](#) from **10–11am every Monday** to ask any grant-related questions. Contact Kim at ksilvis@uga.edu with any questions.



Have news? Please send kudos, announcements or other items to Andrea Horsman at 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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