

NEWS RELEASE

Office of External Communications

Houston, TX 77204-5017 Fax: 713.743.8199

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2007

Contact: Marisa Ramirez
713.743.8152 (office)
713.204.9798 (cell)
mrcannon@uh.edu

**RESEARCHERS AT UH CONSIDER PANEL STUDY
TO SHOW THE FACE OF PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES**
Center for Public Policy to Examine Same Group of People Over Their Lifetimes

HOUSTON, August 20, 2007—The University of Houston Center for Public Policy (CPP) has received \$130,000 in seed money from Houston Endowment to consider a way that better investigates the long-term economic, social and behavioral dynamics of the Houston region.

A committee, to be seated this fall, will have a goal of creating a panel study to research how public policy issues affect real people over the long term. Panel studies survey the same sample of people over an extended period of time. Unlike other studies, panel studies usually are conducted annually and provide clinical data to reflect a more accurate picture of how public policy initiatives affect real people, as well as other important changes in the population.

"That means we will get more than just a snapshot on issues such as healthcare, crime, immigration and economic mobility," said Jim Granato, center director. "We will be able to see how people evolve over their lifetimes, and how policies are working or not working. That information will be of great interest to decision-makers in the public and private sectors."

A committee comprised of experts from various UH departments and other universities in Houston and across the country will be convened in the fall to consider the details of the project, such as the size of the population sample to survey and the kinds of issues on which to survey them. Granato says planning should be completed in the summer of 2008, with the study beginning in earnest after that.

To date, this kind of study has not been attempted in Houston and is typically not done in cities or metropolitan areas because of the expense it entails. Typically, surveys measure a sample population once, with subsequent surveys going to a different sample.

The survey will be a public resource, with all findings and raw data accessible online.

"Houston is a large, diverse city—a microcosm of the rest of the world," Granato said. "What happens here is an indication of what may happen in the rest of the country. The kind of on going study we're talking about is tremendously important."

Granato came to CPP last year from the National Science Foundation, where his approach to research paired theoretical analysis and real-world application. It is in this way that he hopes to address public policy issues.

Founded 25 years ago, the UH Center for Public Policy has a distinguished record of service to the university and the community, notably in the areas of economic forecasting, survey research and government internships for local university students. In the past year, the CPP has broadened its mission with the aim of becoming a more prominent public policy resource for leaders, planners, scholars and others working to better understand Houston and help shape its future.

For more information on the UH Center for Public Policy, visit www.uh.edu/cpp/.

About the University of Houston

The University of Houston, Texas' premier metropolitan research and teaching institution, is home to more than 40 research centers and institutes and sponsors more than 300 partnerships with corporate, civic and governmental entities. UH, the most diverse research university in the country, stands at the forefront of education, research and service with more than 35,000 students.

For more information about UH visit the university's 'Newsroom' at www.uh.edu/admin/media/newsroom.

