

**SPR 16TH ANNUAL MEETING
PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS I
May 27, 2008**

Advocacy and Public Policy

Researchers often complain about the lack of attention to research findings to guide policy and decision making. Policymakers often complain that researchers address topics that are not policy-relevant, produce ambiguous or conflicting findings or report findings in ways that are inaccessible to policymakers. Both groups suggest that high-quality research could and should be used to inform and shape policies and practices. This will only happen, however, as researchers better understand the questions and problems that concern policymakers and when policymakers and practitioners better understand what constitutes high-quality research and demand it. These two workshops are designed for researchers and advocates of science-based information to better understand the policymaking process and needs of policymakers, opportunities for involvement and influence in the process, and hands-on experience in effectively communicating scientific information to policymakers.

Advocacy: Understanding the Legislative Process and the Role of Science

Annie Toro, J.D., M.P.H. is the Associate Executive Director for Public Interest Government Relations and Director, Congressional Fellowship Program at the American Psychological Association. This half-day training session will provide participants with an overview of the federal legislative process and effective strategies for informing and influencing federal policy makers. The workshop will include an opportunity for hands-on experience delivering scientific information to policymakers using an example of a detailed briefing regarding a timely federal policy issue.

Learning objectives of this workshop include:

- 1) Increased understanding of the importance of advocacy and use of science in the process
- 2) Increased understanding of the federal legislative process
- 3) Increased knowledge regarding strategies for effectively conveying scientific information with policymakers