



**Priority Statement Title:** Instituting Adequate Representation on NIH Study Sections

**Priority Statement Code:** CJ4H

**Domain:** Cellular, Tissue, Joint and Function

### **Priority Statement**

#### **Background and Relevance**

Extramural funding forms the foundation for a long and effective research program. Most grant applications are peer-reviewed at the national level by a select group of scientists and physicians. It is our opinion that these review groups, in general, lack competent reviewers with biomechanical expertise. Because biomechanics is interdisciplinary, it often crosses study section boundaries, which means that focusing on one study section will not be effective. For example, within the MOSS (Musculoskeletal, Oral and Skin Sciences) IRG, the study sections ACTS, MRS, MTE, ODCS, SBDD, SBSR, SMEP could all potentially review applications with significant biomechanical content. The future of the biomechanical discipline largely depends on fair and knowledgeable reviews of proposals with biomechanical content.

#### **Objectives**

1. To facilitate adequate representation of biomechanical expertise on NIH study sections and other major funding agencies.
2. To encourage appropriate NIH Program Officers to attend the annual ASB meeting in order to have an educational workshop.
3. To create a mock study section for the annual ASB meeting to model the review process.

#### **Recommended Actions**

1. Contact the ASB Executive Board and request a list of qualified reviewers from amongst their membership and submit this list to Center for Scientific Review (CSR).
2. Mine the NIH **RePort** database to define ASB members with NIH funding and request from them the list of study sections from whom they have received reviews.
3. Encourage ASB to request specific examples from members where biomechanical expertise was clearly lacking in the review of their proposal.
4. Suggest that ASB encourage members to act as reviewers for the study section appropriate to their field of interest.