A new study in Friday's issue of Science is titled, "Survival Analysis of Faculty Retention in Science and Engineering by Gender." According to the authors, "For all STEM disciplines considered together, the percentage of women hired is lower than men, but the retention rates are comparable. This indicates that, if the women are hired, they will likely persist and that recruitment is a more pressing issue than retention in achieving gender parity. However, the long span of faculty careers provides considerable inertia in the system...Although our data do show an increase in percentage of women hired, the goal of 50% women may not be achieved until as late as 2050. Thus, if current trends continue, it may take 100 years before women are 50% of the faculty in STEM departments."

http://www.sciencemag.org/content/335/6070/864.abstract

President Obama, last week, released his proposed fiscal year 2013 budget. The Administration is proposing significant cuts to Medicare indirect medical education (IME) payments. For NIH, the President would freeze the NIH budget at $30.9 billion. The budget proposal further states,"...NIH intends in FY 2013 to discontinue outyear inflationary allowances for competing and continuation grants; reduce non-competing continuation grants by one percent below the FY 2012 level, and negotiate the budget's of competing grants to avoid growth in the average award size. NIH will also continue the current policy to equalize success rates of new investigators to those of established investigators. It will also establish a process for additional scrutiny and review by the Institute or Center Advisory Council of awards to any principal investigator with existing grants of $1.5 million or more in total costs." AAMC has issued a statement on the President's proposals. Friday's issue of AAMC Washington Highlights provides a useful summary of President Obama's FY 2013 budget proposal on issues of importance to academic medicine. For more information, please see:

http://www.hhs.gov/budget/#brief
http://officeofbudget.od.nih.gov/br.html
https://www.aamc.org/newsroom/newsreleases/273718/120213.html
https://www.aamc.org/advocacy/washhigh/

The NIH last week posted the annual update of the Biomedical Research and Development Price Index (BRDPI). The estimated growth in the BRDPI for FY 2011 is 2.8 percent. The revised estimate for FY 2010 is 2.9 percent, up slightly from the 2.8 percent preliminary estimate posted last year. The following pattern of growth in the BRDPI is projected: 2.2 percent for FY 2012; 2.8 percent for FY 2013; 2.9 percent for FY 2014; and 3.1 percent for FY 2015, FY 2016, and FY 2017, respectively. The memo notes, "Forecasted growth for FY 2011 reflects the effect of the freeze on the NIH investigator salary limitation ("cap") for that year. The projected change for FY 2012 adjusts for the reduction ($20,000) in the NIH salary cap and anticipates the continued freeze on salaries of Federal civilian employees for calendar year 2012." Please see: http://officeofbudget.od.nih.gov/pdfs/FY13/BRDPI_Proj_Jan_2012_Final.pdf

Dr. Sally Rockey, the NIH deputy director for extramural research, has posted new data on the age distribution of NIH principal investigators and medical school faculty. Dr. Rockey reports, "In 1980, less than 1% of PIs were over age 65, and now PIs over age 65 constitute nearly 7% of the total. In parallel, in 1980, close to 18% of all PIs were age 36 and under. That number has fallen to about 3% in recent years." She also reports, "Another factor that jumps out is the increasing gap between entry into faculty and receipt of the first R01. Although not all AAMC faculty members apply for NIH research grants, the gap is interesting and suggests that institutions and other non-NIH funding sources are increasingly responsible for research start-up costs." Please see: http://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/rock-talk/