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New Director Named at Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences

Margaret Levi, Internationally Accomplished Political Scientist, Starts March 31

Stanford, CA – December 12, 2013 – Renowned political scientist Margaret Levi has accepted an appointment as director of the [Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford](#) (CASBS). She succeeds Dr. Iris Litt, who has twice served as interim director and was the first female director of the Center.

“CASBS’s mission is to find the best possible ways to promote behavioral and social science,” Levi said. “It has to take greater advantage of its position as part of Stanford.”

While the Center’s focus has always been interdisciplinary by design, Levi intends to extend that vision beyond the traditional behavioral sciences to include physics, biology, design, engineering, business, and the arts.

“We can create a very different kind of conversation,” she said. “The Center will be a base where people can develop major research projects.” She plans to do that by “always having several major projects going on at the center – research projects, conferences, and colloquia,” for example. She hopes to increase group-based work and long-term collaborations, even as she applies herself to attracting additional funding and quality fellows.

Margaret Levi is well-known to the Center. As a Fellow (Class of 1994), she worked on [Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism](#) and the multi-authored *Analytic Narratives*, both part of the Center’s [Tyler Collection](#), while here. She has served on the Center’s Board of Directors, first as a member beginning in 2002 and eventually as the Chair of the Board in 2007-2009, including during the time the Center merged with Stanford in 2008.

Levi is the Jere L. Bacharach Professor of International Studies in the Department of Political Science at the University of Washington and a senior fellow at the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. She is a former President of the [American Political Science Association](#) and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She earned her bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr College in 1968 and her PhD from Harvard University in 1974.

Of the appointment, Ann Arvin, vice provost and dean of research, said, "We are delighted that Margaret Levi has decided to bring her remarkable experience and accomplishments as a scholar of the social sciences to the directorship of CASBS at this important time in its long and distinguished history. With her vision and under her leadership, it is clear that CASBS will be a vibrant place where new thinking from the social and behavioral sciences is brought to bear on the many 21st century problems where such expertise is critical for finding solutions."

Litt calls Levi's selection "an inspired decision," adding that Levi's experience as a Fellow and Board Chair gives her a "multifaceted perspective that will inform her ability to lead the Center to new heights.

Search committee Chair and CASBS board member Roberta Katz, vice president for strategic planning and a member of President Hennessy's staff, cites the clarity of Levi's vision, her intelligence, and warmth along with a proven track record of getting things done. "The Center has had a very important role to play in moving behavioral sciences forward over time," Katz said. "Margaret's vision encompasses a strengthening of that role for the institution."

Board Chair Paul Brest said, "We needed somebody who's a well-recognized star in behavioral science. It's important we move forward with a more proactive agenda, connect to Stanford more deeply, and increase research projects."

Levi is the 10th director in the Center's 60-year history. She starts March 31, 2014, though she will come to the Center throughout the transition time – in particular for orientation for spring Fellows, the Board meeting, and other significant Center events.

Dr. Litt to continue through March 2014

Dr. Litt will continue as Director through the end of March. During those three months, she and Levi will work together, with support from Center staff. Litt said that as CASBS begins to celebrate its 60th anniversary, "Margaret will build on the solid foundation of the Fellowship Program to create new, complementary, initiatives. I look forward to working with her in the transition."

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