



WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2** Nominees Announced for 2014-2015 WSS Board
- 3** SEMINARS
- 11** CALL FOR PAPERS
- 13** WSS MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT
- 14** SPOTLIGHT A WSS MEMBER!
- 15** SEEKING AWARD NOMINATIONS
- 17** GET INVOLVED!
- 22** COURSES & WORKSHOPS
- 28** EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- 31** WSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, COMMITTEES, AND PROGRAMS
- 35** FROM THE WSS NEWS EDITOR

Nominees Announced for 2014-2015 WSS Board

In accordance with the WSS bylaws, we are announcing the slate of nominees for the 2014-2015 Board. The election will be held in May and open for approximately three weeks. Candidates other than those proposed by the Nominating and Election Committee may be nominated by petition of at least 2 percent of the members and received two weeks prior to balloting. Petitioned names should be submitted to the Past-President, Nancy Bates nancy.a.bates@census.gov.

For President-elect (2-nominees):

Michael Larsen: George Washington University

Michael Sinclair: Mathematica

For At-Large (4 nominees):

Wendy Barboza: NASS

Dhuly Chowdury: RTI

Erin Tenebaum: NORC

Fourth nominee yet to be named

For Secretary (1 nominee)

Darcy Miller (NASS)

For Methodology Program Chair-elect (2 nominees):

Pam McGovern: NASS

Michael Yang: NORC

SEMINARS

Statistical Poster Competition

Title: **Disclosure Avoidance Techniques at the U.S. Census Bureau: Current Practices and Research**

Date/Time: **April 21, 2015**
12:30– 1:30 pm

Speakers: Bei Wang, Census Bureau
William Wisniewski, Census Bureau

Chair: Chris Chapman, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center

To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar, or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station. Parking in the area of BLS is available at Union Station. For parking information see <http://www.unionstationdc.com/parking>. No validation is available from BLS for reduced parking rates.

Abstracts:**Design a Disclosure Application System: iPrivacyProtection**

The Census Bureau has developed an LP based cell suppression software for 2012 Econ census. The new system is the result of a 3 year research effort and is more robust and effective than previous systems. The opportunity exists now, while the internal design is fresh and still being modified, to develop a front end product that is useful for everyone.

The ultimate goal is to design an effective Disclosure Application System, called iPrivacyProtection. The system shall release the burden on programmers, eliminate manual errors, and provide new tools for the user. Here, the user is generally the data producer who provides disclosure avoidance data released to the public.

A Disclosure Application System (iPrivacyProtection) is an interactive application system that helps users, both programmers and analysts, apply cell suppression methodology, generate suppression pattern, and review suppression data, by putting the power of data protection into the hands of a user –the data producer– to select the best protective pattern.

A disclosure application generally includes two parts, a core processor and a graphic user interface (GUI). The first part is to generate disclosure-applied data. Depending on disclosure methodology used, that can be cell suppression, noise, or something else. The second part is to allow user to control the process. Our current disclosure process requires a 3-tier operation, which involves a diverse set of units from separate divisions. The normal disclosure production circle includes several areas' efforts. One group gathers requirements from another group (subject area) and helps to prepare disclosure input data. The programming area applies the disclosure and converts disclosure output data into a user preferred data format. Finally, subject area reviews. This manual circle could be repeated many times due to requirement changes, data changes etc. It often creates errors during transactions and requires a great deal of resource coordination. An automated iPrivacyProtection requires no coordination among different areas, eliminates manual transactions, and maintains data integrity. Most important, the user, the data producer, is in control of the process. Users can change the parameters associated with their requirements, apply disclosure program to generate disclosure-applied data. Finally, the data can be saved and reviewed.

I'll walk you through the iPrivacyProtection in this talk.

-Bei Wang, U.S. Bureau of the Census

Disclosure Avoidance Techniques at the U.S. Census Bureau: Current Practices and Research

The U.S. Census Bureau collects its survey and census data under U.S. Code Title 13, which promises confidentiality to its respondents. The agency also has the responsibility of releasing data for the purpose of statistical analysis. In common with most national statistical institutes, the Census Bureau's goal is to release as much high quality data as possible while maintaining the pledge of confidentiality. We apply disclosure avoidance techniques prior to releasing our data products publicly to protect the confidentiality of our respondents and their data. This talk discusses the various types of data we release, the disclosure review process, restricted access procedures, disclosure avoidance techniques currently being used, and current disclosure avoidance research.

-William Wisniewski, U.S. Bureau of the Census

POC: chapman.chris@bls.gov

WebEx:

<https://dol.webex.com/dol/j.php?MTID=m69a620d8696b01c99fd54a831f149d88>

Audio:

Call-in toll-free number (Verizon): 1-866-747-9048 (US)

Call-in number (Verizon): 1-517-233-2139

(US) Attendee access code: 938 454 2

Particular computer configurations may not be compatible with WebEx.

PLEASE FORWARD THIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO OTHERS WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE TOPIC

Title: **Teaching Precursors to Data Science in Introductory and Second Courses in Statistics**

Date/Time: **April 28, 2015**
3:15– 4:30 pm
Informal reception to follow at East Street Café at Union Station

Speakers: Nicholas J. Horton, Professor of Statistics, Amherst College

Chair: Steve H. Cohen, Senior Fellow, NORC

Sponsor: WSS Statistics Education Committee

Location: Offices of Mathematica-MPR 1101 1st Street NE, 12th Floor, Washington DC 20002

Once in the building, take the elevators to the 12th floor and inform the secretary that you are attending the WSS seminar. Please call Mathematica's main office number (202 484-9220) if you have trouble finding the building.

By Metro: Take the Red Line to either the NoMa-Gallaudet U (used to be called New York Ave) Station or Union Station. From the NoMa-Gallaudet U Station, follow signs to exit at M Street. Then walk 1 block west on M street and 2 blocks south on 1st Street NE (the building will be on your right). From Union Station, walk north along 1st Street NE for about 4-5 blocks until you reach L Street (the building will be on your left after crossing L street).

By Car: Pay parking is available in the building parking garage, which is located 1 block east of North Capitol on L Street NE.

RSVP: To be placed on the seminar attendance list, please email Carol Joyce Blumberg at cblumberg@gmail.com.

Abstract: Statistics students need to develop the capacity to make sense of the staggering amount of information collected in our increasingly data-centered world. Data science is an important part of modern statistics, but our introductory and second statistics courses often neglect this fact. This talk discusses ways to provide a practical foundation for students to learn to “compute with data” as defined by Nolan and Temple Lang (2010), as well as develop “data habits of mind” (Finzer, 2013). We describe how introductory and second courses can integrate two key precursors to data science: the use of reproducible analysis tools and access to large databases. By introducing students to commonplace tools for data management, visualization, and reproducible analysis in data science and applying these to real-world scenarios, we prepare them to think statistically in the era of big data.

POC: Carol Joyce Blumberg, cblumberg@gmail.com

WebEx event address:

<https://mprwebex.mathematica-mpr.com/orion/joinmeeting.do?MK=995818462>

Meeting Number: 995-818-462. No password is required.

Audio: For remote access via audio only or if the WebEx connection does not work, call either (609) 945-6996 or (202) 554-7500. Then enter the access code of 995-818-462.

Title: **Curb-Stoning Part III**

Date/Time: **June 9th, 2015**
12:30– 2:30 pm

Chair: Nancy Bates, Census Bureau

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Location: Offices of Mathematica-MPR (near L Street, north of Union Station)
1101 First Street NE, 12th Floor
Washington DC 20002

Schedule

Time	Speaker	Affiliation	Point of Contact
12:30	Mike Fleming	WSS	charles.fleming@bhox.com
12:40	Regina Faranda	Office of Opinion Research	FarandaRD@State.gov
1:00	M. Rita Thissen	RTI International	rthissen@rti.org
1:20	Rodrick J. Marquette	Census Bureau	Rodrick.J.Marquette@census.gov
1:40	Aref N. Dajani	Census Bureau	Aref.N.Dajani@census.gov
2:00	Fritz Scheuren*	NORC	scheuren@aol.com

*discussant

Abstract:

This Washington Statistical Society conference on curb-stoning is the third in a series of events on the same subject. The first event was sponsored by the WSS Methodology Section last December, and the second event was recently produced by the New England Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research. Curb-stoning is a colloquialism for the practice of statistical enumerators and their supervisors to fabricate respondent data. Their techniques may be clever and even sophisticated. The speakers of this event will discuss the motives for curb-stoning, programs to detect its occurrence, and methods to discourage its practice.

The Cheater Problem Revisited: Lessons from Six Decades of State Department Polling

Nearly 70 years after Leo Crespi's paper "The Cheater Problem in Polling," the challenge of preventing, detecting, and - in those rare instances - mitigating the damage from falsification remains. In the U.S. Department of State's Office of Opinion Research, which owes its founding to Dr. Crespi and other survey pioneers, we face this issue in some of the 200 surveys we conduct in nearly 100 countries yearly. Our office has faced institutional challenges in confronting falsification, including the instinct to shy away from tarnishing all of our research in the eyes of a sometimes skeptical audience, doubly so when the stakes of representing international publics are high. We have also grappled with limited capacity, both in terms of time for uncovering possible fraud and in the technical ability to systematically do so. This presentation will underscore the need to weave the ethos of confronting falsification into the fabric of survey research, and not just in an international context. It will focus specifically on the quality control process that State's Office of Opinion Research has developed over several years. The process includes a procedural checklist that our researchers must follow before reporting data, changes to our requirements for collecting paradata and metadata, and systematic guidance on approaching field firms to deal with cases of possible fraud.

~ Regina Faranda

Acting Director, Office of Opinion Research, U.S. Department of State

Technical Aids for Detering and Detecting Falsification of Survey Data

Quality assurance teams encounter ever-changing challenges in confirming the authenticity of interviewer-collected survey data. At RTI, several precautionary measures during and after data collection aid the monitoring of data collectors and review of data after receipt. When feasible, computer audio-recorded interviewing (CARI) allows detailed oversight of in-person surveys and augments live-monitoring of telephone interviews. Collection of global positioning system (GPS) coordinates can confirm the location of interviews conducted by field staff using mobile devices. For some surveys, on-location image-capture helps to validate authenticity. After data receipt at RTI, datasets undergo systematic review for high levels of unit or item non-response, paradata outliers, duplicate records and unexpectedly high levels of CARI refusals. The combination of these techniques provides an adaptable, multi-sourced, evidence-based process for quality assurance and control.

~ M. Rita Thissen

Department Manager, Center for Technology Solutions, Research Computing Division, RTI International, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Curbstoning Detection and Prevention at Census: New Initiatives

Curbstoning detection and prevention is one of several survey lifecycle quality assurance techniques conducted at Census. Recommendations from the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Commerce, corroborated by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, are being implemented Bureau-wide with the full backing of the Census Director. This presentation highlights new initiatives planned or currently underway to detect and prevent curbstoning at Census.

These operational initiatives include a centralized reinterview program, a redesign of the reinterview sample, implementation of Computer Audio Recorded Interviewing (CARI) pioneered by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI), and extensive use of paradata and administrative data. These curbstoning detection and prevention initiatives together will promote accurate, objective decisions made quickly and cost-effectively to ensure that our data and our employees adhere to our quality standards.

~Aref N. Dajani and Rodrick J. Marquette
U.S. Census

WebEx event address; for attendees:

<https://mprwebex.mathematica-mpr.com/orion/meeting/meetingInfo?MeetingKey=999482355&siteurl=mprwebex>

Meeting Nuber: 999 482 355

Audio/no video: **609-945-6996 (access code: 999 482 355)**

Note: Particular computer configurations might not be compatible with WebEx.

CALL FOR PAPERS**FCSM RESEARCH CONFERENCE****December 1-3, 2015****Washington, DC****CALL FOR PAPERS****Abstract submission deadline May 5, 2015**

The Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) is planning a research conference to be held at the **Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC** on **December 1-3, 2015**. The conference provides a forum for experts from around the world to discuss and exchange current research and methodological knowledge relevant to statistical programs. Papers must be original and not previously published or disseminated.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:**Survey Design and Data Collection**

- Questionnaire design issues
- Improving coverage and response rates
- Instrument design and pretesting
- Uses of innovative methods for data collection, processing, and dissemination
- Adaptive/responsive design
- Advances in frame development
- Innovative methods in sample design
- Multi-mode and web data collection
- Field monitoring and management

Evaluation

- Census and survey evaluation methodologies
- Collection and analysis of survey paradata
- Identifying and reducing sources of survey error
- Measuring process and data quality
- Nonsampling error: estimation and evaluation
- Innovative approaches to program evaluation
- Nonresponse and measurement error research

Estimation and Analysis

- Bayesian statistical methods
- Variance estimation
- Small area estimation
- Exposure analysis and modeling
- Forecasting, time series, and seasonal adjustment
- Methods of statistical / econometric modeling
- Meta-analysis
- Model-based survey estimation adjustment
- Treatment of missing data/imputation methodologies
- Application of microdata techniques to economic data
- Analysis of complex surveys

Cross-Cutting Topics

- Big data and official statistics
- Impact of the global economy on national statistics
- Special issues related to establishment surveys
- Confidentiality, privacy, and disclosure issues
- Data mining, warehousing, and metadata
- Design and analysis of longitudinal studies
- Measurement issues and bridging changes
- Use of data for policymaking
- Statistical uses and quality of administrative records
- Data sharing and linking
- Quality standards, best practices, and guidelines
- Geospatial statistics
- Economic measurement concepts and techniques
- Development of economic statistical indicators
- Statistical literacy and communication of results

Submission Instructions: Participants are encouraged to submit research papers and organized panels that focus on cross-cutting research topics, innovative designs and approaches, or provide solutions to important challenges that have broad appeal. Participants should not submit abstracts that simply describe a data collection program or are highly specialized. Participants can submit an individual paper, an organized session, or a technical demonstration. An organized session should be 3-4 papers with a discussant. The committee will consider individual papers if the organized panel is rejected. To submit as abstract for consideration, use the template and instructions found at <http://fcsmsites.usa.gov/> or www.copafs.org for your submission.

Deadline: Submit the abstract via email to fcsm.conf@gmail.com as soon as possible but no later than **May 5, 2015**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Please note that authors/ presenters are responsible for their travel expenses, but the registration fee is waived for one presenter per paper.

To obtain conference information or to be included on the mailing list, contact:

Anna Holau, Conference Coordinator
Email: fcsm.conf@gmail.com
Phone: 301-763-2308

For questions about abstracts or the

Michael Planty, Program Chair
Email: Michael.Planty@usdoj.gov
Phone: 202-514-9746

Washington Statistical Society

Member Spotlight

Introducing your fellow members and showcasing the diversity of the WSS membership



Meet WSS Member Taylor Lewis...

1. Where do you work and what do you do?

I am a mathematical statistician for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), where the bulk of my time is spent working on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). I also consult with other divisions within the agency on various research projects. Often my role is to propose the specific statistical method(s) to be used in the study or to design the sample for a survey or an audit of some kind.

2. What attracted you to your current position?

OPM offers a remarkably flexible work environment. I feel very fortunate to have been granted generous telecommuting arrangements and, at times, an unconventional work schedule, so that I could maintain full-time employment while pursuing a doctorate from the Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) at the University of Maryland. Plus, I felt the FEVS would be an ideal survey to use for my dissertation research, and being on the inside certainly makes life easier when trying to secure the pertinent permissions and assemble all necessary data.

3. Finish this sentence: "I joined WSS to..."

...network and stay connected with former colleagues.

4. What was your first job?

Working behind the counter at Firehook Bakery in Old Town, Alexandria.

5. Why did you join the statistics profession?

When I was in middle school, my brother and I were addicted to the Madden NFL football video game on the Sega Genesis console. We kept detailed record books on things like most rushing yards, passing yards, receiving yards, sacks, interceptions, etc. I realized then that I had a passion for statistics.

6. What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

I have been a lifelong fan of *Saturday Night Live* (seeing a live recording is on my bucket list!) and I always got a big kick out of putting together humorous skits in high school and college. So perhaps I would try to make it as a writer on a sketch comedy show or sitcom.

7. If you could give your 18-year-old self one piece of advice, what would it be?

Although I know you are proud to demonstrate your recently acquired ability to grow facial hair, you must shave off those muttonchops!

8. Finish this sentence: "On an ideal Saturday, I would..."?

On an ideal Saturday, I would be leisurely strolling through a quaint, medieval city in Europe with my wife, Katie, our daughter, Tessa, and our standard schnauzer, Willow.

9. Have you had any great career mentors? If so, what made them great?

I worked for Glenn White at Ernst & Young as a summer intern before my last year as an undergraduate statistics major at Virginia Tech. Although my time there was brief, Glenn has remained in touch over the last decade, proving to be a great mentor and friend. In particular, I have benefited from his encouraging me to attend WSS events, his introducing me to countless well-respected professionals in the DC area, his writing letters of recommendation on my behalf, and his honest responses to my (sometimes naïve) questions.

10. Is there anything else you would like to share with the WSS members.

I suspect I am in the vast minority of WSS members who are actually native to the Washington, DC, area. I grew up in Alexandria, Virginia.

SPOTLIGHT A WSS MEMBER!

Washington Statistical Society's Spotlight on Members Program

The WSS Board of Directors has established a program to highlight members who have made or are making notable contributions to the work of their organization or their professional field of expertise. We know that WSS members are doing interesting work in the fields of statistics, survey methodology, and the social sciences. Through this program, we hope to spotlight the accomplishments of our fellow WSS members.

This is our first request for nominations, to be featured in an upcoming issue of WSS News. We are interested in featuring members at all levels of the employment spectrum including recent graduates, mid-career employees, and those seasoned veterans.

Please feel free to nominate more than one person or a team working together. You may also nominate yourself as well. The nominees must be members of the WSS and not currently affiliated with the Board.

Please provide us with the following information about your nominee or nominees.

1. Your name, email address, and telephone number
2. Name or names of nominee(s)
3. Organizational affiliation
4. Job title
5. Their contact information including email address and telephone number
6. A brief narrative describing the reasons for your nomination
7. A photo of the nominee, although not required, would be greatly appreciated

Please submit your nominations or direct any questions to, John Finamore (jfinamore@nsf.gov), member of the WSS Board.

We look forward to hearing from you.

SEEKING AWARD NOMINATIONS

Roger Herriot Award

Roger Herriot was the Associate Commissioner of Statistical Standards and Methodology at the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) when he died in 1994. Prior to his service at NCES, he also held several positions at the U.S. Census Bureau, including Chief of the Population Division. Soon after his death, the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association (ASA) along with the Washington Statistical Society (a chapter of ASA) established the Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics. The award is intended to recognize individuals or teams who, like Roger, develop unique and innovative approaches to the solution of statistical problems in federal data collection programs.

Nominations are sought for the **2015 Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics**. The award is intended to reflect the special characteristics that marked Roger Herriot's career including:

- Dedication to the issues of measurement;
- Improvements in the efficiency of data collection programs; and
- Improvements and use of statistical data for policy analysis.

The award is not limited to senior members of an organization, nor is it to be considered as a culmination of a long period of service. Individuals or teams at all levels within Federal statistical agencies, other government organizations, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, and the academic community may be nominated on the basis of their contributions. As innovation often requires or results from teamwork, team nominations are encouraged. Team innovations often are more lasting, resulting in real paradigm shifts, not just one-off improvements. For an example, see the 1998 Herriot (team) award.

The recipient of the 2013 Roger Herriot Award will be chosen by a committee comprising representatives of the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections of the American Statistical Association, and of the Washington Statistical Society. Roger Herriot was associated with, and strongly supportive of, these organizations during his career. The award consists of a \$1,000 honorarium and a framed citation, which will be presented at a ceremony at the Joint Statistical Meetings in August 2013. The Washington Statistical Society will also host a seminar given by the winner on a subject of his or her own choosing.

Past Award Recipients:

1995 - Joseph Waksberg (Westat)
1996 - Monroe Sirken (National Center for Health Statistics)
1997 - Constance Citro (National Academy of Sciences)
1998 - Roderick Harrison (U.S. Census Bureau), Clyde Tucker (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
1999 - Thomas Jabine (SSA, EIA, CNSTAT)
2000 - Donald Dillman (Washington State University)
2001 - Jeanne Griffith (OMB, NCES, NSF)
2002 - Daniel Weinberg (U. S. Census Bureau)
2003 - David Banks (FDA, BTS, NIST)
2004 - Paula Schneider (U.S. Census Bureau)
2005 - Robert E. Fay III (U.S. Census Bureau)
2006 - Nathaniel Schenker (National Center for Health Statistics)
2007 - Nancy J. Kirkendall (Office of Management and Budget)
2008 - Elizabeth Martin (U.S. Census Bureau)
2009 - Lynda Carlson (National Science Foundation)
2010 - Katharine Abraham (University of Maryland)
2011 - Michael Messner (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)
2012 - Paul Biemer (RTI International)
2013 - Exact Match Team (Social Security Administration, Census Bureau, and Internal Revenue Service)
2014 - Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics study; Abowd, Haltiwanger, Lane

Nominations for the 2015 award will be accepted beginning in **January 2015**. Nomination packages should contain:

- A cover letter from the nominator that includes references to specific examples of the nominee's contributions to innovation in Federal statistics. These contributions can be to methodology, procedure, organization, administration, or other areas of Federal statistics, and need not have been made by or while a Federal employee.
- Up to six additional letters in support that demonstrate the innovativeness of each contribution.
- A current vita for the nominee with current contact information. For team nominations, the vitae of all team members should be included.

The committee may consider nominations made for prior years, but it encourages resubmission of those nominations with updated information.

For more information, contact Fritz Scheuren, Chair of the 2016 Roger Herriot Award Committee, at 202-320-3446 or Scheuren@aol.com. **Completed packages must be received by April 1, 2015**. Electronic submissions in MS-Word or as a "pdf" file are strongly encouraged.

GET INVOLVED!

The coordinators for the WSS K-12 Student Poster competition are looking for volunteers for judging the poster competition this year.

The Washington Statistical Society, in collaboration with The American Statistical Association runs a Statistical Poster Competition for school children in grades K-12 in the Washington DC metro area. This is part of the Poster competition run by ASA with the WSS judging and awarding prizes to local children. There are four age groups and children may work singly or in small groups under the supervision of a teacher or guide. Winning entries of the WSS competition are automatically advanced to the second round of the national competition where they may win addition prizes and recognition. Local area winners and their guides/teachers are invited to attend the WSS annual dinner as guests to receive their prizes. Our aim is to encourage a new generation of children to explore the exciting world of math and statistics.

Please let me know if you are interested in serving as a judge. The judging will be held at the Westat conference center in Rockville. It usually involves a 3-4 hour commitment in the afternoon. Last year, the judging was held from 1-5pm on a Saturday afternoon for example.

This year, the judging will be held on either 4/25 or 4/26 (Saturday or Sunday). If you are interested, email Barnali Das at barnalidas@westat.com and please indicate which of those dates will work for you. For questions or more information please contact Barnali Das at barnalidas@westat.com.

The Washington Statistical Society Mentoring Program

By meeting others in our profession we can quickly learn the ropes, advance our careers, and contribute to the statistical profession. To facilitate engagement and to encourage the transfer of valuable experience between Washington Statistical Society (WSS) members, the WSS is starting a mentoring program in 2015. (The program is also open to nonmembers, but they would eventually become WSS members through this program.) Matching mentors and mentees offers a great opportunity for mentees to develop as statisticians, mentors to “give back” to newer members of our profession, and for everyone to stay connected to the WSS. We are currently looking for mentors and mentees for 2015.

What are the benefits of a mentoring program?

The WSS Mentorship Initiative was inspired by and draws on the mentoring initiative underway throughout ASA that encourages chapters and sections to consider mentoring programs (“President’s Corner”, AMSTAT News, February, 2015). It also suggests the initiation of a regular acknowledgement, such as the annual selection, of an outstanding mentor. The WSS is a leader in this regard having started the Jeanne Griffith award program more than a decade ago. The potential benefits of participating in the program are described well by the ASA Committee on Applied Statisticians:

For mentors: (1) a connection with skills and perspectives of recently trained professionals, (2) development and enhancement of communication and leadership skills, and (3) satisfaction of passing on skills and knowledge that can enhance the career and personal growth of the mentee and contribute to maturity of the profession. The program may answer important questions including: How do you identify and introduce opportunity to others? How do you describe your own experiences to others to encourage them to take more strategic risks? How do you teach others to network effectively? Mentors usually get more from their relationships by learning something along the way about the new challenges of their mentees.

For mentees: 1) a role model, but more accurately a sounding board, for questions about methods of analysis and communication of results, 2) a source of perspective, encouragement, and motivation leading to greater self-confidence and esteem. Help in establishing professional development plans, career goals and acceleration of their achievement; and 3) a source of professional/social contacts with other applied statisticians in the field—“plugs you into the power network”. The mentoring program may answer important questions including: How do you create opportunities for yourself? How do you promote yourself? How do you network with others? How did you get to where you want to be? What are next steps?

How does the WSS Mentoring Program work?

If you are an Interested, first complete a simple application form on the WSS website (below). The information will be used to match a mentor to a mentee, taking into account their stage of career, area of statistical expertise, and goals for mentoring. The WSS Mentoring Program committee will host a kickoff meeting in the Spring of 2015 to get the program off to a great start with guidance and suggestions about productive and fruitful ways to interact. Program materials will be provided to help guide the mentors and mentees through potential conversations, although the topics discussed are up to the mentor and mentees themselves. The program will continue through the correspondence between the mentor and mentee for at least six months into the Fall of 2015. Those in the program will meet either on the phone, on Skype, or face-to-face with their mentees a few times during the time period. Participants will be asked to complete a short evaluation survey at the end of that period to learn and improve on the program. The main purpose of the survey will be to assess our mentor-mentee matching system. The survey responses will be completely de-identified to ensure anonymity. We encourage mentors and mentees to continue to meet after the formal program period if it is mutually productive.

How do I get started?

Please complete the application form at the WSS website, WashingtonStatisticalSociety.org/mentoring/ by **April 17, 2015**. If you are interested, but have questions about the program, contact one of the committee members: Mark Otto (Mark.Otto@FWS.Gov), Jaki McCarthy (Jaki.mccarthy@nass.usda.gov), Dhuly Chowdhury (DChowdhury@RTI.org), or Tom Krenzke (TomKrenzke@Westat.Com).
--Submitted by the WSS mentoring committee members

Washington Statistical Society

2015 JSM Student Travel Award Application

The Washington Statistical Society (WSS) is offering a Student Travel Award for a local area student in a degree program (bachelors, masters, or doctoral) in the areas of statistics, survey methodology, or allied survey research disciplines. Support is offered for a student to attend the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM), to be held in Seattle, Washington (USA) August 8-13, 2015. Applications must be received no later than May 8, 2015 and are to contain: 1) a copy of your most recent transcript or advising report from your university, 2) a one to two page essay describing your interest in statistics/survey research methods and your interest in attending JSM, and 3) a letter of support either by a current member of the WSS or a faculty advisor (see below).

One award will be granted to a student attending a school local to the DC, MD or VA area. The award will cover conference hotel and travel expenses up to \$1,000, early-bird student conference registration (\$95), and a one-year student membership to the WSS.

In addition to attending the JSM sessions, the winner is expected to attend the Survey Research Methods Section Business Meeting in order to be recognized by the WSS. The winner is also expected to prepare an essay on his/her experience at the JSM to be published in the WSS Fall Newsletter.

Applicant Name: _____ Full time student [] Part-time []

Department: _____ University _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Degree: _____ Anticipated graduation date: _____

Are you presenting a paper or poster at JSM? YES NO

Have you previously attended any professional meeting on statistics, survey research, or a related discipline?

If YES, please describe (meeting, location, dates):

YES NO

Signature of Applicant _____ Date Submitted _____

As a current WSS member and/or faculty advisor, I endorse this student's request:

Signature _____ Printed Name _____ Date _____

APPLICATION CHECKLIST – PLEASE ATTACH THE FOLLOWING:

- [] Copy of most recent transcript or advising report from your university.
- [] Double-spaced essay, no more than two pages, describing your interest in statistics/survey research methods and your interest in attending JSM.
- [] Letter of support from a current WSS member or faculty advisor.

Application materials should be sent via email to Kennon R. Copeland (copeland-kennon@norc.org). Phone: (301) 834-9432.

Applications must be received by **May 8, 2015.**



The American Association for the Advancement of Science needs scientists, engineers and physicians to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the Washington DC Metro, during the 2015-16 school year.

The details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. The hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day orientation session before being assigned to schools. To see how volunteers are assisting their teachers, view the video clips at www.seniorscientist.org.

If you care about K-12 STEM education and have time to share your knowledge with students and teachers, please send a note to bcalinge@aaas.org with your home address, indicating your interest, or call 202-326-6629.

COURSES & WORKSHOPS

Total Survey Error

MAY 4-5, 2015

Presented by Paul P. Biemer and Lars Lyberg

Registration and Payment Due by April 20, 2015

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=050415

Introduction to Survey Estimation

MAY 28-29, 2015

Presented by David Morganstein and Sunghee Lee

Registration and Payment Due by May 14, 2015

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=052815

Practical Tools for Nonresponse Bias Studies

SEPTEMBER 18, 2015

Presented by Jill Montaquila and Kristen Olson

Registration and Payment Due by September 4, 2015

https://projects.isr.umich.edu/jpsm/html_content.cfm?CourseID=091815



WHAT: A Workshop: Writing for Publication on Public Opinion and Survey Research

WHEN: Monday, **April 27th 1:00 – 4:30pm** (check-in & refreshments start 12:30pm)

WHERE: Barbara Jordan Conference Center (1330 G Street, NW – 1 block west of Metro Center)

Do you study or work in the public opinion, survey research, or related fields? In the course of your day-to-day research or work projects, do you ever think: “I have something unique and interesting that I should share with the profession – I should get this published!” But if you’re outside academia, writing for scientific publication is not necessarily a part of your daily working life and it can be challenging to anticipate what journals are looking for from authors.

Here’s a hands-on workshop to help you improve your writing for peer-reviewed publication. DC-AAPOR has assembled a panel of editors from several major journals including *Journal of Official Statistics*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and *Journal of Survey Statistics & Methodology*, as well as book authors. The panelists DC-AAPOR has selected are well-known, frequently-published, and have lots of experience to share on what editors and journal referees are looking for when they consider your submissions.

AGENDA:

I) Our four panelists (Ingegerd Jansson, Scott Keeter, Patricia Moy, Roger Tourangeau) will share:

- a) What the characteristics are of a publishable journal article, monograph chapter, research note, or book review
- b) Which journals and other forums publish different types of work
- c) How to interpret submission guidelines and contributor instructions
- d) How to navigate the submission and review process
- e) How to address rejection and editor comments for resubmission
- f) What to expect from start to finish
- g) How to best collaborate with co-authors
- h) Best practices for scientific writing – style, presentation, and organization

II) Panelist Q&A and discussion

III) Refreshment break

IV) Interactive session working through real proposals:

Registrants will be invited to volunteer manuscripts or outlines of proposed writing projects before the event – Our panelist will breakout into roundtable sessions to provide direct

feedback and commentary.

MATERIALS: A bound manual of the slides, notes, handouts including helpful references and resources will be provided to registrants.

INTENDED AUDIENCE: no prior research or publication experience required! Anybody with an interest in contributing to the literature of our discipline can benefit from this. Those more experienced in writing for publication will also get some expert advice.

COST:

	Early 4/3-4/10	Regular 4/11-4/17	Late 4/18-4/27
Student/Retiree	\$35	\$60	\$90
Member	\$60	\$90	\$120
Non-Member	\$90	\$120	\$150

REGISTRATION LINK:

www.eventbrite.com/e/a-workshop-writing-for-publication-on-public-opinion-and-survey-research-tickets-16423809055

THE PANELISTS:

Ingegerd Jansson, Co-Editor in Chief of the Journal of Official Statistics (www.degruyter.com/view/j/jjos), Senior Methodologist, Statistics Sweden, organizer of ASA 2015 JSM Roundtable “Writing for Publication.”

Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research, Pew Research Center, and past president of AAPOR. His books include *A New Engagement? Political Participation, Civic Life, and the Changing American Citizen*, *The Diminishing Divide: Religion's Changing Role in American Politics*, and *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters*.

Patricia Moy, Editor of Public Opinion Quarterly (poq.oxfordjournals.org), Editor-in-chief of Oxford Bibliographies in Communication (www.oxfordbibliographies.com/page/communication), and Professor of Communication and Adjunct Professor of Political Science, University of Washington, and current president of WAPOR.

Roger Tourangeau, Co-Editor of Journal of Survey Statistics & Methodology (<http://jssam.oxfordjournals.org>), Vice President and Associate Director at Westat and Research Professor Emeritus, University of Michigan and past director of JPSM. His recent books include *The Science of Web Surveys*, *The Psychology of Survey Response (2006 AAPOR Book Award)*, and lead editor of *Hard-to-Survey Populations*.

QUESTIONS: Contact DC-AAPOR Program Chair Carl Ramirez at ramirezcgao@gao.gov.

WSS Short Course: Introduction to Small Area Estimation

Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2015

Time: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Place: Mathematica Policy Research
1100 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002

Course Content:

This short course will be based on the book “*Small Area Estimation*, by J.N.K. Rao, 2003, Wiley”, and a number of research papers written by researchers on the topic. Often lectures will be drawn from research conducted by Dr. Datta and other researchers in the field. Topics include introduction to small area estimation, direct and indirect estimators in domain estimation, model-based approaches to small area estimation, area-level and unit-level models, empirical best linear unbiased prediction for point estimation and mean squared error estimation, small area estimation applications by R, hierarchical Bayes and empirical Bayes methods in small area estimation, and more applications of R.

Some useful references:

- Datta, G.S. (2009). Model-based approach to small area estimation. In: *Handbook of Statistics: Sample Surveys: Inference and Analysis*, Volume 29B, Edited by D. Pfeiffermann and C.R. Rao, pp. 251-288.
- Datta, G.S. and Ghosh, M. (2012). Small area shrinkage estimation. *Statistical Science*, 27, 95-114.
- Rao, J.N.K. (2003). *Small Area Estimation*, Wiley.

About the Instructors: Dr. Gauri S. Datta, Department of Statistics, University of Georgia, and U.S. Census Bureau, email: gaurisdatta@gmail.com; and Dr. Adrijo Chakraborty, NORC, email: chakraborty-adrijo@norc.org. Dr. Datta is a professor at the University of Georgia and a Mathematical Statistician at the US Census Bureau. An elected fellow of the American Statistical Association and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, Dr. Datta has published extensively his methodological and applied research on small area estimation in leading journals of statistics. Adrijo Chakraborty joined NORC as a Statistician after receiving PhD in Statistics from University of Georgia in 2014. His primary research interests are in small area estimation, survey sampling, Bayesian statistics, and statistical computing. Adrijo's responsibility in NORC includes application of model-based survey sampling methodologies, development and implementation of Bayesian methodologies for small area estimation, analyzing complex survey data.

Course Schedule:

8:15 - 9:00	Coffee, Breakfast, Check in
9:00 - 10:30	Introduction to small area estimation Direct and Indirect estimators in domain estimation
10:30 - 10:45	Break
10:45 - 12:15	Model-based approaches to small area estimation Area-level and unit-level models
12:15 - 1:15	Lunch (provided)
1:15 - 2:45	Empirical best linear unbiased prediction: point estimation and mean squared error estimation Small Area Estimation applications by R
2:45 - 3:00	Break
3:00 - 4:30	Hierarchical Bayes and empirical Bayes methods in small area estimation More applications of R

Advance registration: In addition to your RSVP here, please go to <https://www.123signup.com/register?id=yrgyg> to register and pay for the class. Online registration will close on May 1, 2015; earlier if the course fills up.

Registration Fee:

Full-time students (at most 8): \$50 advance, \$70 at the door
WSS members: \$160 advance, \$180 at the door
All others: \$210 advance, \$240 at the door

Contact person: Yang Cheng, 301-763-3287, yang.cheng@census.gov

**Forthcoming Info-Metrics Institute Training/Tutorial Short Classes
American University, Washington, DC**

**Nonparametric Kernel Methods for Practitioners across the Sciences
May 18 - 22, 2015**

Jeffrey S. Racine (McMaster University)

**Interdisciplinary Applications of Microeconometrics
May 25 - 29, 2015**

William Greene (New York University)

For specific topics studied in these classes see our web page:
<http://www.american.edu/cas/economics/info-metrics/econometrics.cfm>

Registration opens soon. Space is limited. To register in advance or for more information on these courses, please visit our Info-Metrics Summer Program web page, or contact Yang Liu at info-metrics@american.edu.

Info-Metrics Institute
American University
4400 Massachusetts Ave NW, Kreeger 104
Washington, DC 20016-8029
<http://www.american.edu/info-metrics>

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Census Bureau has a new and exciting job opening. The incumbent will be responsible for directing research and evaluations that explore the feasibility and applicability of new theories and methods to improve the efficiency of lifecycle activities and data quality for Census Bureau Demographic surveys. The incumbent will have the opportunity to; collaborate with multi-disciplined experts to design innovative and cutting edge methods, recommend comprehensive strategies, develop new framework to identify solutions to current program challenges, and mentor staff with diverse backgrounds and capabilities.

Job Title: Supervisory Mathematical Statistician
Department: Department Of Commerce
Agency: Census Bureau

<https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/399826900>

Senior Survey Methodologist

Social & Scientific Systems, Inc. (SSS) works to improve public health worldwide by providing technical, research, and program management services to government, nonprofit, and commercial clients. The SSS team offers a synergy of expertise in clinical research services, epidemiology and public health studies, health data management and analysis, and program evaluation and policy analysis. Please join our dedicated staff of employee-owners in an environment that values diversity and supports health, well-being, and professional growth.

SSS is seeking a **Senior Survey Methodologist** to support health related research studies. Examples of the methodological areas of interest include, but are not limited to sample designs, the use of paradata, questionnaire design, pretesting methods, the design and testing of survey questions and questionnaires, methods to increase response rates, experiments, and nonresponse and survey error measurement and reduction. You will provide sampling and survey design expertise across all modes (in-person, telephone, self-administered) and will share responsibility with project staff in development activities. You will work with a team of substantive and operational specialists to implement and evaluate surveys for a wide variety of clients in the public and private sectors. The ideal candidate will be able to manage working on multiple projects simultaneously, be flexible, and enjoy working with multidisciplinary teams. This position also has significant responsibilities for proposal development, frequently contributing to sampling, methodology, pretest, and analysis sections. This position has project supervisory responsibilities when acting as project or proposal director or task leader; in addition, this position may include administrative supervisory responsibility for 1-3 professional-level staff members. Excellent oral and written communication skills are essential. Competency in use of standard statistical software packages to perform statistical analyses is highly desirable. Position location can be at either our headquarters in Silver Spring, MD or at our Durham, NC offices in Research Triangle Park.

Responsibilities

- Develop and lead sampling, study design and implementation plans for complex survey research projects
- Collaborate with project staff on sampling and data collection plans and procedures
- Design and testing of survey instruments
- Identify improvements in sampling design and survey processes to improve survey quality and/or reduce costs.
- Communicate methodological issues with clients and other project team members verbally and in writing
- Serve as lead author for technical reports and proposals
- Serve as a sampling, survey design and analytic mentor
- Present research papers at professional conferences and submit articles for publication in journals

Qualifications

- Master's degree with 10+ years of relevant survey methods research experience or Ph.D. with 5+ years of relevant survey research experience
- Relevant experience includes preparing sample designs, drawing samples, developing data collection designs, leading survey project teams, maximizing response, minimizing error, meeting cost and schedule goals, performing statistical weighting procedures, preparing analytic files, conducting analysis and maintaining good client relations;
- Demonstrated advanced knowledge of the principles, processes of survey research methods;

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Yang Cheng (301) 763-3287 yang.cheng@census.gov

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John Dixon (202) 691-7516 dixon.john@bls.gov

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Debbie Griffin Deb_Griffin3@verizon.net

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**Phillip Kott (301) 468-8281 pkott@rti.org

***RTI Rep.*

Elizabeth Johnson ejohns40@gmu.edu

FROM THE WSS NEWS EDITOR

Items for publication in the **May, 2015** issue of WSS NEWS will be accepted thru the **30th** of **preceding month**.

Email items to wss.editor@gmail.com.

The authors are responsible for verifying the contents of their submissions. Submissions requiring extensive revisions on length and/or contents will be returned.

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