ASA Government Statistics Section

GSS: AN EXCITING 2019 - LOOKING TO 2020

Greetings GSS Members and Commmunity,

It has been an honor to serve GSS as Chair in 2019. This includes seeing the exciting launch of two brand-new GSS initiatives in 2019 – the Virtual Workshop and GSS JSM Mentoring – both intended to reach beyond traditional offerings and further serve our members. I would like to thank the members of GSS's 2019 Executive Board (p4) who have all worked to make this year's ambitious GSS program a big success. We welcome to the GSS Executive Board GSS Chair-Elect 2020 Mike Messner (EPA) and JSM Program-Chair Elect 2020 Will Cecere (Westat), both of whom have already jumped right in. Personal thanks goes to GSS Chair-Elect 2019 Jenny Thompson (Census), who has served GSS for many years in multiple capacities and will continue to work on behalf of the community as GSS Chair 2020. Thank you GSS, for this opportunity to serve. I look forward to seeing further success for GSS in 2020! - *Elizabeth Mannshardt, GSS Chair 2019*

Jenny T.

Content

GSS Wraps up 2019 - Heads into 2020

GSS sponsored a full program at JSM 2019 including a **Student Paper Competition** (p5), the **Data Challenge Expo** (p4), and recognizing GSS Awardees. In 2019 GSS also launched new initiatives including GSS JSM Mentoring and a series of cutting edge, emerging topics offered as a Virtual Workshop with ASA's Professional Development series and jointly sponsored by ASA's Social Statistics Section. Check out the upcoming 2020 offerings and registration (p2) – 2019 content is online.

In addition to a significant presence at JSM, GSS also sponsors and promotes relevant conferences including the 2019 Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop and the 2020 International Conference on Establishment Statistics VI, as well as promotes professional offerings.

Along with significant updates in 2019 to the GSS website - *NEW!* GSS has a blog! Check for photos and articles on GSS events and GSS in Amstat News.

GSS would like to thank and recognize our 2019 sponsors WESTAT and NORC whose contributions help GSS serve its community.

Along with continuing a full agenda for GSS in 2020, look for proposed updates to the GSS Charter up for member vote (p4) in the ASA 2020 Elections along with GSS Executive Board candidates. Also this spring look for calls for GSS 2020 Award Nominations and Competitions. Winners will be recognized at JSM 2020.

GSS 2019 INITIATIVES

GSS continues to provide professional development opportunities to the government statistics community

GSS Professional Development Virtual Workshop 2019-2020

This fall, GSS and SSS kicked off **FREE** virtual workshops on **Usage of Blended Data and Combining Alternative Source Data: Methods, Challenges, and Considerations in the Era of Big Data** as part of the ASA's Professional Development (PD) Series. These workshops are aimed for audiences who may not be able to travel to conferences but are interested in continuing education opportunities. The virtual workshop consists of a series of 1.5-hour webinars that include virtual participation in a group discussion and in some cases activities using data and code provided by the presenter. Each virtual workshop component is designed to educate on one aspect of blended data from an acknowledged expert in the field, with a focus on applications to surveys and censuses (demographic and establishment).
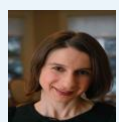
The first three workshops have been extremely well-attended, with over 85 participants apiece. Training materials are posted on the GSS website. Three more seminars are scheduled for 2020 and registration is now open. There is no cost to participate, but registration is required (group registration is allowed).

2020 Virtual Workshop Program – Registration Now Open!

Thursday, January 16, 2020 - 1:00 p.m. EST
Introduction to Python for Data Science **Hunter Glanz**, Assistant Professor, Department of Statistics, Calif Polytechnic State Univ. Free Registration

Thursday Feb 13, 2020 - 12:00 p.m. EST
Interpretability vs. Explainability in Machine Learning for High Stakes Decisions - Cynthia Rudin, Associate Professor, Duke University. Free Registration

Thursday Mar 12, 2020 - 1:00 p.m. EST
Differential Privacy - Matthew Graham, Center for Economic Studies, U.S. Census Bureau. Free Registration

Full details including abstracts and speaker bios can be found on the GSS Virtual Workshop website.

GSS Chair Elizabeth Mannshardt and GSS Chair-Elect Jenny Thompson would like to thank **Urban Landreman** *(GSS, HCPHD),* **Liana Fox** *(SSS, Census), and* **Donna LaLonde** *(ASA PD) for their hard work on the organizing committee in making the GSS Professional Development Virtual Workshop series a big success.*

2019 Virtual Workshop Program

All materials for past virtual workshop sessions, including slides and code, are posted on the GSS Virtual Workshop website, along with links to access the videos provided by ASA Professional Development.

Introduction to Big Data and Machine Learning for Survey Researchers (September) - **Trent Buskirk**, Professor, Bowling Green State University

Overview (October) - **Frauke Krueter,** Director of Joint Program in Survey Methodology, University of Maryland

How Rare is Rare? The Importance of Validation (November)**- Aric LaBarr,** Associate Professor, North Carolina State University's Institute for Advanced Analytics

GSS MENTORING ROUND TABLE AT JSM 2019

GSS Mentoring hosted a Round table at JSM 2019 as well as promoted ASA mentoring events. The mentoring session was designed to encourage diverse participation and engage young professionals and students with more senior, advanced-career members of the GSS community. The GSS mentoring session provided an opportunity for an informal "meet and greet" between GSS mentors and mentees, as well as organized mentor/mentee activities. Activities, based on a professional mentoring program, provided small group face-to-face time, opportunities for career discussions, and targeted coaching on "professional small talk". Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from both Mentee participants and GSS Mentors. Featured on the new GSS Blog.

GSS Mentee feedback:

"The mentors were very informative, particularly in regards to advice on finding careers and securing jobs in government." - Katherine Allen, NCSU; GSS Mentee and PhD Candidate, North Carolina State University. *"The mentors answered the mentees' questions thoughtfully."*

"They were all personable and shared their more human aspects of their stories with us." - Nancy Murray, Emory; GSS Mentee and PhD Candidate, Emory University. *"I walked away with advice for applying to government positions, a better understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of working in the government, and leadership tips. I encourage GSS to hold this roundtable in future years if possible!"*

GSS Mentors also had enthusiastic feedback:

"I had a wonderful time! We did end up having a general discussion, which I personally found very helpful. It was interesting to hear about what the mentees are hoping for with their careers and also to hear about the experiences of the other mentors. It made me realize that we all come to our place in life, education, and careers in different ways, bringing home the point that there is no one "right" way." - Wendy Martinez, ASA President-Elect 2019 (BLS)

"The students were great. I was impressed by their reasons for attending the session and how carefully they listened and participated in the session. I also thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the students and Wendy and Barry!" - Stephanie Shipp, Deputy Director and Professor (UVA). *"I know I found that I learn as much, if not more, by being a mentor and by participating in the session. I hope we succeeded in honoring Steven Spielberg's quote:* "The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves." (Steven Spielberg)*"*

"It was fun being a participant at the mentoring round table. We indeed had a very open conversation. I think this program should continue." - Barry Nussbaum, ASA Past-President (retired EPA)
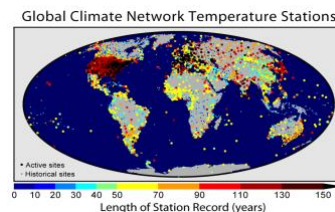
To participate in next year's Mentoring Round Table at JSM, visit the GSS Professional Development Mentoring page or contact GSS Chair 2019 Elizabeth Mannshardt at mannshardt@stat.ncsu.edu

GSS partners with ASA Sections and members to cross-promote professional development opportunities, such as SSPA's Statistical Career Planning and Development Webinar, the NISS Data Science webinar, Census's ROAM lecture, and WSS's discussion on The Imposter Syndrome. Contact the GSS Executive Board.

GSS Student Awards and Competitions

Data Challenge Expo 2020

Three ASA Sections (Government, Computing, and Graphics) are proud to sponsor the Data Challenge Expo 2020. The data set for DCE 2020 will be the Global Historical Climatology Network (GHCN). Contestants must use some portion of the GHCN data, but are strongly encouraged to combine other data sources in the analysis. Contestants will present their results in a speed poster session at JSM. Winners will be recognized at the GSS Business Meeting and Social with Awards Ceremony at JSM. Abstracts must be submitted by Feb 4th 2020 to the JSM website. Further details: https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/awards/dataexpo

Global Climate Network Temperature Stations

Data Challenge Expo Award Winners 2019

We had a great turn-out! Contestants presented their results at JSM.

Educational Category

1st place: Xiang Shen, George Washington University

2nd place: Ben Schweitzer, Miami University

3rd place (tie): Alison Tuiyott, Miami University

3rd place (tie): Jacob Gertszten and Damian Chambon, University of Virginia

**Jacob Gerszten
UVA**

Professional Category

Quentin Brummet, Creating Tract-Level Housing Characteristics in the NYCHVS, NORC (Ed Muldrow, NORC pictured with Wendy Martinez from GSS/ASA President-Elect 2019)

Don't Forget to Vote in the ASA 2020 Election
– and Look for Updates to the GSS Charter!

The Executive Board aims to keep the governing documents of the Section up to date and in line with new initiatives and emerging needs. Changes have been proposed to update language in the GSS Charter regarding the functioning of the Executive Board and an Operating Procedures manual has been developed to address dynamic duties and roles. Members will have an opportunity to vote on these changes in the ASA 2020 Election. A list of proposed changes and an Operating Procedures outline can be found on the GSS website: https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/aboutus/charter

GSS 2019 Executive Board

Elizabeth Mannshardt (EPA) – Chair
Katherine (Jenny) Thompson (Census) – Chair-Elect
Marilyn Seastrom (DOE) – Past-Chair
Tara Murphy (NASS) – Secretary/Treasurer
Jeffery Gonzalez (BLS) – Program Chair
Michael Yang (NORC) – Program Chair-Elect
Jenny Guarino (USDOT) – Publications Officer
Jennifer Parker (NCHS) – Council of Sections Rep
Michael Davern (NORC) – COPAFS Representative
Wendy Martinez (BLS) - COPAFS Representative

GSS Incoming Officers 2020

Chair-Elect 2020
       -Michael Messner (EPA)
Program Chair-Elect 2020
       -William Cecere (Westat)

GSS Sponsored Conferences

Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop 2019 a Big Success!

150 people from around the world participated in SAPW 2019 at BLS in November, which included presentations from Canada and New Zealand. 95 people attended in-person and the rest joined remotely from the US, the UK, Mexico, Spain, Italy, Austria, and Romania. Participants shared experiences in producing seasonal adjustments, including lessons-learned, best practices, and applied research. Steve Matthews from Statistics Canada offered participant feedback: *"As with the first two workshops, the day included very interesting talks, and I came away with many potential connections to make and ideas to explore. In particular, the remote access via zoom meeting was very smooth - the quality of the video and audio were both excellent. The remote access was a game-changer for me and I appreciate the effort your team put in to get it all working ahead of time. I do hope that the series will continue."* Slides and recordings will be posted mid-December on the GSS Blog.

Sneak Peak! GSS Program at JSM 2020

GSS is already building an exciting Program for JSM 2020 in Philadelphia!
GSS Program Chair 2020: Michael Yang; GSS Program Chair-Elect 2020: Will Cecere

GSS Invited Sessions – Transparent, Efficient and Accessible Reporting on the Quality of Multiple Input Data Sources; How the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics Advances Excellence in Federal Statistics; Robust and efficient inferences in observational studies and from nonrandom samples; Learning from Permuted Data and the Analysis of Linked Files

GSS Contributed Sessions and Roundtable Proposals - Submissions open Dec 3, 2019 – Feb 4, 2020

GSS/SRMS/SSS Student Paper Competition 2020
GSS, Survey Research Methods Section (SRMS), and Social Statistics Section (SSS) of ASA are pleased to announce a competition for student and post-graduate papers. Competition winners will present their papers at a topic-contributed session during JSM 2020. **Applications due December 21, 2019**

2019 winner Joshua Bon (Queensland University of Technology) stated, "*I was delighted to attend JSM 2019 in Denver with support from the SRMS, GSS, and SSS through their student paper competition. It was a fantastic opportunity to present my research, and inspiring to see the numerous ways statistics can have positive impacts in our society. **A highlight for me was the warm welcome I received attending the business meetings of the sections.** Thank you all for the hospitality you extended to a very jet-lagged Australian!*"

Bikram Karmakar (University of Pennsylvania), 2019 winner, shared his experience: "*The SRMS/GSS/SSS award gave me an excellent platform to share my research at JSM, the biggest gathering of statisticians and professionals. Among my fellow awardees, I have found a few good friends who has helped me expand my research interest. I can now reach out to them with my questions. Last but not least, **I also appreciated the opportunity to meet and chat with the distinguished members of the sections during the meetings organized by the sections**.*"

Information on the 2020 competition and guidelines: https://community.amstat.org/governmentstatisticssection/awards/competitions

International Conference on Establishment Statistics 2020

New Orleans, Louisiana, June 15-18, 2020. Continuing in the tradition of ICES-I to ICES V, ICES VI will explore new areas of establishment statistics, as well as reflect state-of-the-art methodology, promoting discussion of a broad range of issues related to the statistics of businesses, farms, or institutions. Participants come from academia, government statistical agencies, private businesses, statistical associations, and other sectors with an interest in international best practices in conceptualization, design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination. http://ww2.amstat.org/meetings/ices/2020/