Letter from The Chair

By Simone Gray, 2022 GSS Chair

Hi GSS Members!

The weather is finally warming up and Spring has arrived! I wanted to send a quick note to introduce you to the newest members of our Executive Board and to let you know about upcoming activities for our section.

Updates to the GSS Executive Board

We welcome to the GSS Executive Board Claire Bowen (2021 Chair-elect) and Lisa Mirel (2021 Program Chair-elect). I would also like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing board members Jenny Thompson (Past Chair) and Will Cecere (Program Chair) for their outstanding contributions to the section over the years.

Upcoming GSS Activities

GSS will be co-sponsoring another Seasonal Adjustment Practitioners Workshop this summer. Tentative dates are June 8th and 9th. More details to follow as we continue to work on this program. We will also kick off another mentoring program for 2022-2023. If you would like to get more involved with our section, please consider joining one of our committees. To do that, email our Publications Officer Kathi Irvine (kirvine@usgs.gov) to get plugged in. We also have elections coming up for positions that will start in January 2023. Meet our candidates and get ready to vote!

We can't wait to see you at some of our upcoming events throughout this season. Continue to stay safe and productive in all you do.

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GOVERNMENT STATISTICS SECTION

Congratulations to Student Paper Award Winners

Joint awards with Survey Research Methods Section and Social Statistics Section

2021 Winners

Yutao Liu, Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Neha Agarwala, University of Maryland,
Claire Kelling, Penn State
Eli Ben-Michael, Harvard University
Sheridan Lloyd Grant, Univ. of Washington

2022 Winners

Olivier Binette, Duke University; “On the reliability of Multiple Systems Estimation for the Quantification of Modern Slavery”
Peter Gao, University of Washington; “Smoothed Model-Assisted Small Area Estimation”
Dae-Gyu Jang, Iowa State University; “A-Optimal Split Questionnaire Designs for Multivariate Continuous Variables”
Tamy Moraes Tsujimoto, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; “Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve for complex survey data”
Yibo Wang, University of Michigan; “Sample Size Estimation in Respondent-Driven Sampling”

Call for Nominations: DUE APRIL 1, 2022

2022 Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics

Details: washstat.org/awards/herriot.html.

The award is intended to reflect the 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.
Meet the Candidates

Chair– Elect: Bob Sivinski

Bob Sivinski is a third-generation civil serv-

ant. As a Senior Statistician in the Office of the
Chief Statistician of the U.S., he designs

and implements poli-
cies to support the

integrity, objectivity,

accuracy, and useful-

ness of federal sci-
cence and statistics.

He’s always looking

for opportunities to help federal statisti-
cians coordinate across agencies, tackle difficult meas-
urement challenges, communicate effec-
tively with senior

officials, and advance their careers.

Bob began his federal career at the National
Highway Traffic Safety Administration at the
Department of Transportation, where he de-

signed surveys, contributed to benefit-cost analyses, and conducted retrospective re-
views of traffic safety regulations. He’s an
active member of the Federal Committee on
Statistical Methodology, the American Sta-

tistical Association, and the American Asso-
ciation for Public Opinion Research, and he
leads the public policy program of the Wash-
ington Statistical Society. In his free time, he’s con-

sumed with finding the perfect start-

word for Wordle.

Secretary/Treasurer: Nancy Murray

Nancy is excited to have the opportunity to

become more involved in the Government Sta-
tistics Section (GSS) as Secretary/Treasurer.

She was able to learn more about GSS and

statisticians working in government through a

mentoring roundtable at JSM 2019 in Denver. In

late 2020, she joined the Cen-
ters for Disease Control and Pre-
vention (CDC) as a Statisti-
cian. She earned her Bachelor's in

Statistics from the University of

Knoxville in

Tennessee, which is also her

hometown. She moved south in 2014 to Atlan-
ta, Georgia to attend Emory University, where

she earned both a Master’s and Doctrate in

Biostatistics. Nancy’s research, both at Emory

and CDC, has centered around modeling and

using the best model for estimation despite its

simplicities or complexities.

Nancy believes as statisticians and data scien-
tists in government, daily work has the poten-
tial to impact not only other scientists but also

family, friends, and the public. Therefore, the

work of GSS members cannot exist in a vacu-

um. By connecting with other statisticians in
government, GSS members can establish rela-
tionships to help advance science across agen-
cies at various levels. If elected as Secretary/

Treasurer, she will help ensure all meetings,

opportunities, and necessary information are

carried to her fellow GSS members. In doing

so, she hopes that GSS member relationships can

flourish.

Chair– Elect: Jiashen You

Jiashen You is a statistician with the govern-
ment spanning many roles of researcher, pro-
gram manager, educator and data policymaker
over several federal agencies. Jiashen was fortu-
nate to observe, work with and learn from many
dedicated statistical professionals in fields rang-
ing from urban planning, regulatory affairs, law
enforcement to decen-
nal census. These experiences taught

humility, and Jiashen discovered how statisticians could be such an un-

assuming job title with an all-

encompassing work portfolio that requires lifelong learning.

Jiashen is grateful for the opportunity to

serve. More importantly, they gave Jiashen the perspective of how saturated government statis-
tics are in our everyday life and how crucial it is upon us to promote the use of sound theory and

methods in producing data products.

In pursuit of greater data transparency, more

reliability, and easier but responsible ac-
cess, Jiashen has led the efforts to build EEOC’s

Enterprise Data Warehouse and establish its

single-source-of-truth analytical tool; launched the

agency’s first interactive mapping and query

tool; and created public use files subject to the

confidentiality protection standards of a federal statistical agency. However, some of

Jiashen's most rewarding recent experiences came from volunteerism in the ASA communi-

Last year, as the Chair of the LGBT+ Ad-
vocacy Committee, Jiashen led a successful

campaign to raise over $30K for the endowment of the annual ASA Pride Scholarship, making it

the fundraising event with the most outside do-
nors ever. Jiashen is a firm believer of "pay it

forward" and has been actively volunteering as a mentor in several professional and alumni

groups, including the current GSS mentoring program. While some of us enjoy filling and

comparing our March madness brackets, the

month has been extra rewarding as

Jiashen leads the coordination as well as taking part in the judging process myself from time to time for a

long-run community engagement tradition by

the Washington Statistical Society in supporting

local Science and Engineering Fairs.

Jiashen looks forward to the opportunity to

serve you and to develop diversity and inclusion plans as we recruit more civic-service-minded

members to join our family.

Secretary/Treasurer: Robert Ashmead

Robert is a Research Scientist with the Ohio

Colleges of Medicine Government Resource

Center and a part-time Research Mathematical

Statistician with the U.S. Census Bu-

reau, Center for

Enterprise Dissemina-
tion. He holds a Phd in Bio-

statistics and MS in Statis-
tics from The Ohio State

University, as

well as a BA in Mathematics from the College

of Wooster. He is the current Vice President of
the Columbus ASA Chapter. In his roles at

the Ohio Colleges of Medicine Government

Resource Center and the U.S. Census Bureau
he has gained experience in working in gov-

ernment statistics at both the State and Federal
level, and he can bring that firsthand experi-

ence to the GSS role.
Dr. Erica Dawson Luke is a mathematical statistician in the Population Health and Surveillance Branch (PHSB) in Division of Population Health in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As a mathematician statistician in PHSB, she performs data and statistical analyses, and provides technical assistance to states on data and statistical programming related issues pertaining to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). In addition to her role as a statistician, she assists PHSB with BRFSS questionnaire development. Dr. Dawson Luke has research experience in HIV, cardiovascular disease, and other chronic diseases. She is passionate about disease prevention and promoting healthier lifestyles.

Dr. Dawson Luke earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from Fort Valley State University, a Master of Arts degree in Mathematics from Fort Valley State University, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from The University of Alabama at Birmingham. In her spare time, Dr. Dawson Luke enjoys cooking, doing community outreach, and spending time with her family.

Don’t Forget to Vote!

C.O.S. Representative: Elizabeth Petraglia

Elizabeth Petraglia is a senior statistician at Westat, in Rockville, MD. Elizabeth has been at Westat since graduating with a PhD in statistics from The Ohio State University in 2015. Working at Westat has given Dr. Petraglia the opportunity to interact with statisticians and analysts across federal agencies, and a real appreciation for how unique, vibrant, and innovative the government statistics community is! Elizabeth is active in the Washington Statistical Society, having led their K-12 statistical poster competition for the past several years, and is one of the two newsletter editors for the Survey Research Methods Section. Elizabeth is thrilled to have the opportunity to run for GSS Publications Officer, since she thinks 2023 will be an exciting year—more events to publicize, and less teleworking with a cat on her shoulder (although she is not ready to give that up entirely quite yet!).

C.O.S. Representative: Erica Dawson Luke

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publications officer: Henry Olaisen

Dr. Henry Olaisen is currently Research Director for the Robert Graham Center at the American Academy of Family Physicians. As a social entrepreneur in Silicon Valley — working at the intersection of health, technology, and workforce development — Dr. Olaisen has been a driving force behind the development of the Health IT Academy of Family Physicians. In his role as Research Director, Dr. Olaisen is responsible for overseeing all research projects, including efforts to improve the use of health IT in primary care. As a former statistician, Dr. Olaisen is deeply committed to improve the use of health IT in primary care, and is dedicated to building the next generation of health IT leaders.
Mike has served our government as an economist for over 10 years. In addition, he has been a community meetup organizer for 5 years and served as an adjunct professor for 3. His core values are education and community. He is familiar with topics Federal Statistical Agencies are currently dealing with related to differential privacy, high-frequency data, economic measurement, challenges of data collections, and alternative data sources. As a community organizer at the Statistical Seminars DC, he hosted and taught seminars on the topics related to statistical computing/data science. He has also hosted events related to federal career/hiring workshops for the general public. He understands the needs required to deliver a successful event/conference/workshop/seminar from the General Assembly and other institutions. He is knowledgeable about the various social media marketing tools and how to leverage those tools to promote events.

Moreover, as the previous event leader for the Government Advances Statistical Programming (GASP), I am aware of the importance of contacting organizations/communities focused on federal statistics to bring important and relevant topics into the public eye for discussion to expand the public knowledge and find solutions to problems. He values the importance of continuing the different awards, workshops, contests, and seminars offered by the Government Statistical Section. The various positions that he has held have been an asset in developing skills as an effective community leader. He has supported various organizations related to education on data science, statistics, and issues related to Federal Statistical agencies.

Lisa M. Frehill has worked in academic, non-profit, and government settings since earning her doctoral degree in Sociology and Systems and Industrial Engineering from the University of Arizona. In addition to teaching research methods, statistics, and program evaluation (among other things) at New Mexico State University, she has more than two decades experience deploying qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand the connections between education and labor market outcomes. As the IMLS Senior Statistician, Dr. Frehill published datasets and data file documentation, along with technical reports and research about museums, libraries, and other cultural organizations. She is now a Social Science Research Specialist at the Department of Energy, Office of Civil Rights and Diversity, where her work focuses on statistical analysis and reporting about the internal DOE workforce. In 2022, she was the Planning Committee chair for the Government Advances in Statistical Programming (GASP) workshop organized by the Computational Statistics for the Advancement of Official Statistics interest group of the FCSM.

Contact Kathi Irvine for Future Publication Content kirvine@usgs.gov