Section on Government Statistics Executive Committee Meeting (conference call)
12/15/15

In attendance: Wendy Martinez, Jennifer Parker, Morgan Earp, Kennon Copeland, Michael Hawes, Sylvia Dohrmann, Amy O'Hara, Jill Montaquila, Aneesah Williams, Rick Peterson, Jenny Thompson, Bill Wong

Welcome and Attendance

Approval of minutes from GSS meeting at the JSM in August: Jennifer will make any corrections and send final version of minutes to Bill by the end of the week. Bill had one correction.

a. Update: Jennifer sent August minutes to Bill on 1/4/16.

Finances

Treasurers report. Jennifer provided the treasurer’s report (copied at the bottom of these minutes.)

Wendy began discussion about increasing costs of meetings at JSM.

Wendy: Can we have the executive board meetings outside the JSM convention hotel? Rick: yes, we can do this and it’s less expensive. To do this, usually someone pays with a credit card and the ASA reimburses right away. The approach reduces the ‘extra food’ problem. Sylvia reminded us that having meetings offsite makes it more difficult for people to drop in – like the ASA president- and more difficult if people need to split meetings. On the other hand, it’s easier to avoid double booking since more times are available and sometimes drop-ins are disruptive. Morgan – having a meeting outside of the conference could be good for people with dietary restrictions.

Ken provided an update on corporate sponsor recruitment: We have one sponsor, the USDA-ERS, who has submitted payment. BEA and BTS have confirmed sponsorship and planning to submit payment this month. Ken is going to follow up with others who contributed last year, Census and EIA, and see if they can contribute during the rest of this year. Ken can continue in this role next year.
JSM 2016 reports were given

Morgan has draft of JSM 2016 schedule. We have 3 invited sessions plus one from the competition, for 4. Some of our submitted sessions were similar to others from other sections

a. Update:

Sylvia sent the list of invited sessions:
1. Survey Costs and Survey Designs: Trade-Offs and Advances
3. Quality of Alternative Sources for Social, Economic, and Health Data
4. Computing for Nonlinear Methods with Large Data Sets

These sessions were also announced here: http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2015/12/01/government-statistics-section-news/

Advertising for the Topic Contributed sessions. People will need to start thinking about topics and papers. Call is already out. There is advertising already in the list serve. We could do additional advertising on the GSS list serve.

We have two roundtables confirmed, one on methodology and one on ASA ethics.

Data Challenge. Wendy has been spreading the word about the data challenge. She had gotten some response but hasn’t tabulated them yet. Wendy will also advertise using ASA Connect, which gets to everyone. Wendy will work with Morgan to reserve one Topic Contributed session at the JSM for entries. Last year (2015 JSM), we also had 4 people in speed posters. Last year, SMRS hosted the student paper. Statistics Graphic section may do a data challenge also but we haven’t seen any announcement from them yet. Please send information about the data challenge to people you know who might be interested.

Awards
Announcements are going out about the awards.

2016 student paper completion. Michael: Deadline is today at 5:00 pm.
There are 15 applicants so far.

The following updates were obtained after the Dec meeting.

a) Jeanne Griffith. Wendy sent an email to Jeanne Griffith award committee
members reminding them to send the announcement about the award to
Bill Wong. Anna Nevias and Kevin Cecco will be co-chairing the
committee for 2016.

b) Herriot. Bill Wong updated the GSS webpage with information about the
Herriot award (David Hubble, chair; Mary Batcher and David Banks,
members)

c) Wray Jackson Smith. Joe Salvo, committee chair, has an announcement
ready for the Wray Jackson Smith award. Jennifer Park will be rotating
off the WJS committee. Mike Davern will appoint a new member.

Ken gave Council of Sections update

1. Proposal to create new section on Lifetime data analysis was not
approved. Recall that many on the GSS board had been opposed to this in
August.

2. See email from Ken about sending bullets to ASA for slides promoting
section membership. Of the 20,000 ASA members, only about 50% belong
to a section. ASA is looking more generally at this and would like to
increase the proportion of members who belong to a section. Each section
should develop slides with bullets that characterize section. These slides
could include statements from members on why they've joined and how
they've benefited.

     Ken and Jenny will work on content for these slides. Ideas should be
sent to them.

     a. Update: Jenny sent an email to board members asking for ideas
before January 8. The original email is pasted below.

Section membership. We discussed a handful of ideas to increase section
membership.
Should we hold a bigger mixer at JSM? Ours is small and crowded. JSM is a place to be visible to potential members. Do people know that they can come to the mixer if they're not a member? How do the rooms get decided? Would it make sense to have a joint mixer with SSS? Open bar? Drink tickets? SMRS has a big turnout but doesn't charge for drinks. SRMS (like some other sections) usually has a sponsor for the mixer.

What about interactions with other conferences – like FCSM?

AMSTAT news. Jill wrote an article about government data sets for the newsletter that could work for AMSTAT news.

We could co-host seminars with WSS or DC AAPOR of interest to government statistics since much of the likely pool for GSS works in the DC area.

What about career development and other non-technical outreach? Open talks about the federal stat system? Michael mentioned possible downtown meeting space in Chicago for GSS talks during the JSM.

How many GSS members are from other countries? Rick – about 50, most from Canada.

Has anyone thought about trying a joint section activity with SRMS or Defense?

ASA Webinars have reduced registration for members. We could partner with other sections or reach more broadly – Statistics Canada or The Royal Statistical society.

Webinars provide visibility to the section and are priced so that paying for webinar and joining section are similar.

The more we put ourselves out there, the more visibility we get. Hopefully this will translate to increased memberships.

We discussed having GSS host a one-day workshop on seasonal adjustment, jointly coordinated by Census and BLS for outreach. Wendy and Jenny are working on this.

Sylvia gave an update on communication activities.

We had items in Amstat news in July, Oct, Nov, Dec. In January, we can submit an article that Jill wrote for the newsletter about government statistics. We can write articles about the different federal agencies for the newsletter that we could post Amstat News later if we like.
Jill gave an update on the election. We have a full slate for the election.

Charter- Rick reported that there are no new issues on new GSS charter. We will vote on the GSS charter during the next election.

Officers Handbook. Mike and Wendy will meet later to talk about the Officers handbook. The handbook will be an issue that Mike can take on next year.

The COS updated their charter and have a template for new sections including a generic description of officer duties. It will be helpful to have a GSS section officers' handbook available on our section officers’ webpage.

Wendy thanked everyone for serving on the board. Jill will be rotating off. Ken did two years as COS representative and Jenny is new COS representative. Amy is chair-elect. Mike Davern is JSM chair. Wendy will be on the board as past-chair.
Dear ASA Council of Sections Representatives,

Did you know that only 50% of the 19,000+ ASA members belong to a Section? We would like to see that percent increase. We speculate that if a member understands what Sections do, the member would be more willing to sign up to become a Section member. We think that one method for delivering this message is to develop an IN-REACH slide set to include here:

https://www.amstat.org/membersonly/index.cfm?fuseaction=infoslides

To prepare these slides we need for you to share with us three bullets that would characterize your Section and would persuade an ASA member to join your Section. We will include a reminder that each member gets one free membership to a new Section per year.

We also think that it would be beneficial to be able to include statements from members talking about why they joined the Section and how they have benefited from being a member. We would like to get the bullets by January 29, 2016, but please also be thinking about who would be good representative members from your Section. We will be in touch about this part of the project after the first of the year.

Please e-mail either or both of us:
Anna Nevius (nevius@comcast.net)
Cyndy Long (long_c@palmer.edu)

COS Representatives to the ASA Board of Directors

Rick Peterson
Continuing Education & Chapter and Sections Associate

American Statistical Association
Treasurer’s Report – December 2015
Government Statistics Section
Jennifer Parker

Prepared: December 11, 2015

Account

Balance January 1, 2015: $21,869.08
Balance November 30, 2015: $17,483.91

Selected sources of revenue and expense

Revenue:
Membership dues 1/1-11/30: $1012.00
Contributions (USDA 9/15): $400.00

Expenses:
2015 JSM
Food functions: $3662.07
Travel awards: $1000.00
Data challenge: $1000.00
Other awards
Jeanne Griffith $500.00
Herriot $200.00

Membership

12/15: 419 GSS, 354 GSS/SSS
8/15: 419 GSS, 361 GSS/SSS
3/15: 436 GSS, 359 GSS/SSS