

GSS/SSS July 2007 NEWSLETTER
Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections
American Statistical Association

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Don't forget these upcoming events ~~

- **2007 JSM:** See website for details: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/JSM/2007/>
July 29 – August 2, 2007
- **JSM 2008 Invited Sessions**
July 9 – August 23, 2007

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**Plan to Attend the Section Business Meetings**

*By Steve Cohen, Chair, Government Statistics Section*

ASA is mostly a volunteer organization with a professional staff handling finances, logistics, coordination, etc. Without volunteers ASA would not function—No JSM 2007, no special topic ASA Section sponsored conferences such as the International Conference on Establishment Surveys III. Do you want to get involved with shaping ASA and the statistical profession? Have you wondered how the sections operate? How they sponsor conferences and events? Do you know how the sections were involved in the JSM 2007 program? Do you want to have input in how your section is run? Want to get your ideas heard? Want to network? Plan to attend the section business meetings at JSM. The meetings are open to all members and nonmembers:

- Social Statistics Section Business Meeting, Monday July 30th at 5:30 pm in the Vienna room at the Grand America
- Government Statistics Section Business Meeting, Tuesday July 31st at 5:30 pm in room 150D-F at the Convention Center

\*\* Check the final program for last minute room changes.

At the business meeting relax, grab a quick bite to eat, chat, network, learn about future professional opportunities for your research, arrange for dinner with your colleagues, and more.

#### *What's the agenda at the GSS business meeting?*

At 6 pm Steve Cohen, the Section Chair, will bring the formal program to a start by introducing the GSS executive board. (The section's elected leadership votes on the direction over the year.) This is the formal mechanism to be heard though we always appreciate input from our members. We meet at the annual meeting plus at ASA offices in December and March. We will review the accomplishments of last year, the status of the section's finances, honor members who have received awards, discuss upcoming conferences, and poll the audience for upcoming events, ideas, etc.

The Council of Sections, who oversees the sections, has asked each section to review its charter. We reviewed the charter in detail at our December meeting at ASA. Our charter will be up for adoption at the next election for section officers. I will have copies of the charter and will highlight the changes.

#### *What's the agenda at the SSS business meeting?*

Following a similar pattern, Jennifer Madans, the Section Chair, leads the business meeting. She introduces the Board members and several make presentations on the status of the budget, the programs, the scholarship and award committees, and publications.

So come on out to the meetings. Introduce yourself to the sections' Executive Board members and let us know what you want from your section. And if you'd like to be involved, just let us know. We are always looking for members who want to volunteer their time and energy—including running for an elected office.

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### **Maximizing Your JSM Experience: A Checklist for JSM 2007**

Last year at this time Beth Kilss developed a checklist to help you get ready for the 2006 meetings in Seattle. Well, it turns out that many folks found it useful and provided lots of positive feedback, so we decided it was worth repeating.

Now that the Joint Statistical Meetings are right around the corner, you're probably in the middle of making your plans for Salt Lake City -- right? If you're like a lot of us, you keep meaning to make your plans and start working on the slides for your presentation, and, oh, yes, sign up for that Roundtable Luncheon. The list goes on and on....

So, it's a good thing you're reading this article, because the GSS and SSS Executive Board members believe that your JSM experience should be enjoyable, stimulating, and stress-free. To help you achieve this goal, once again we offer ten suggestions for getting the most out of your 2007 JSM experience:

- 1. Prepare Ahead of Time** – For those who are session chairs, authors, discussants, or poster presenters, the American Statistical Association's (ASA's) Web site offers excellent, useful guidelines for preparing for your role. Don't wait until the last minute, but, rather, take advantage of the material available to prepare yourself. The following link leads you to information that will help you prepare for any role you may have this year:  
<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2007/index.cfm?fuseaction=speakers>
- 2. Be Informed** – Being a member of ASA and one or more sections will be a much more rewarding experience if you know what's going on. One way, of course, is to go to ASA's Web site at [www.amstat.org](http://www.amstat.org). Another is to regularly read ASA's monthly membership magazine *Amstat News*. When you do, be sure to check under the Section News each month for the GSS and SSS articles. The May 2007 issue also includes a lot of useful information about JSM 2007 (pages 28-34).
- 3. Plan Your Schedule for JSM 2007 in Advance** – Because the program for JSM is online, you don't have to wait until you get to Salt Lake City to decide on which sessions you want to attend. There is so much to choose from that you may run into conflicts, but doing a careful review of the sessions, business meetings, luncheons, and special events you want to attend will allow you to maximize your participation. In fact, ASA offers a function

online called "My Program" to help you create and prioritize a virtual program of the things you want to attend. Check out: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2007/onlineprogram/index.cfm?fuseaction=main>

4. **Know Your Section's Sessions** – The Section's Program Chairs for 2007 and 2008 have worked very hard to put together an exciting group of sessions, roundtables, and other activities for this year's program. In the most recent GSS-SSS Newsletters and columns in *Amstat News* issues, you will find details about the invited sessions (April), roundtable luncheons (May), and topic contributed and contributed sessions (June).
5. **Know Your Section's Activities** – Both Sections have an annual Business Meeting and Mixer. The Social Statistics Section Business Meeting will be on **Monday, July 30, at 5:30 pm** in the Vienna room at the Grand America. The Government Statistics Section Business Meeting will be on **Tuesday, July 31, at 5:30 pm** in room 150D-F at the Convention Center. At the Business Meeting and Mixer, you'll get a chance to meet your fellow section members and hear what's been going on over the past year, as well as look ahead at what's coming. And last, but not least, you'll be able to enjoy food and drink in a very relaxed atmosphere where we can all get to know each other a little better.
6. **Meet the Section Officers** – If you come to number 5 above, you'll get to meet the current officers in person.

Current officers for the GSS include: Stephen Cohen, Chair, 2007; Stephanie Shipp, Chair, 2006; Carol C. House, Chair, 2008; Roberta L. Sangster, Program Chair, 2007; Michael E. Davern, Program Chair, 2008; Lester R. Curtin, Secretary/Treasurer, 2007-2008; Carolee Bush, Council of Sections Rep, 2007-2009; Sonya Vartivarian, Publications Officer, 2007-2008; Joan Turek, COPAFS Rep, 2006-2007; Chet Bowie, COPAFS Rep 2007-2008; Carrie R. Simon, Newsletter Editor; Bill Wong, Assistant Editor, *Amstat Online*; Tai Phan, GSSLIST Coordinator; and Monica Clark, ASA Ex Officio.

Current officers for the SSS include: Jennifer H. Madans, Chair, 2007; Susan Schechter, Chair, 2006; Linda Gage, Chair, 2008; Allen L. Schirm, Program Chair, 2007; Juanita Tamayo Lott, Program Chair, 2006; Jana L. Asher, Program Chair, 2008; Dawn Von Thurn Nelson, Secretary/Treasurer, 2007; Daniel Weinberg, Council of Sections Rep, 2007-2009; Sharon M. Stern, Publications Officer, 2007-2008; and Monica Clark, ASA Ex Officio.

7. **Express Your Opinion** – We welcome your thoughts and ideas about the Sections' sessions, activities, newsletter, *Amstat News* column in Section News, the GSS/SSS portion of the ASA Web site, or anything else on your mind that relates to our organization. We want to better serve our membership well, but we need your input to help us do that. To contact the GSS officers, go to ASA's Web site at: <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/>. To contact the SSS officers, go to ASA's Web site at: <http://www.amstat.org/sections/ssoc/>. At both sites, click on "Officers" to view contact information. We're looking forward to hearing from you!
8. **Find Out What Your Association Is Doing** – Attend the ASA Open Meeting, the President's Address, and any other open meeting sponsored by a section you may be interested in joining. Check the online program for dates and times: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2007/index.cfm>.
9. **Do Something New** – If you're not a member of the Government Statistics Section or the Social Statistics Section and are interested in learning more, plan to attend the Business Meeting and Mixer to find out what we're all about. We welcome your attendance. Or, attend the Student Paper Awards Session to be held **Sunday, July 29, at 2:00 pm** in room 355-B at the Convention Center. You should also attend the Presentation of 2007 Roger Herriot Award and Reception on **Monday, July 30, at 3:40 pm** in room 254-C in the Convention Center. Take a closer look at the program this year and plan on doing or attending something you've never done or attended before! Try it! You'll like it!

**And last, but not least –**

10. **Make Your Travel Plans** – By now, you should at least have made your hotel reservations if you're planning to stay in the conference hotels, as they are the most convenient to the meetings. And don't wait till the last minute to make airline reservations, because August is a busy time for vacations and flights are often booked months in advance. Pick up the phone now!

See you in Salt Lake City!

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Dr. Nancy Kirkendall to Receive the 2007 Herriot Award for Innovation

by Daniel H. Weinberg, US Census Bureau, Chair of the Award Committee



Soon after his death in 1994, the Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections along with the Washington Statistical Society established the *Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics* intended to recognize individuals who, like Roger, develop unique and innovative approaches to the solution of statistical problems in federal data collection programs. The award is meant to reflect the special characteristics that marked Roger's career.

Throughout her professional career in the federal government, both at the Energy Information Administration (EIA) and at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), **Dr. Nancy J. Kirkendall** has been an innovator and leader in the federal statistical community, and has been selected to receive the 2007 Herriot Award.

She has been a leader in issues of measurement:

- Helping to establish and further a partnership between statistical agencies and the National Science Foundation to fund research proposals that addressed key statistical methodological concerns.

- Developing the methodology for a set of weekly petroleum surveys.

- Maintaining the integrity of EIA data collections.

- Developing innovative imputation methods to control for non-response bias.

She has been a leader in improving the efficiency of data collection programs:

- While at OMB, supporting the Census Bureau's efforts to establish the American Community Survey in a challenging budget climate.

- Leading an effort to establish information quality standards for federal statistical agencies.

- Investigating new methods for disclosure limitation.

- Improving EIA survey assessments and performance measurement.

She has been a leader in encouraging the use of statistical data for policy analysis:

- Studying the effect of daylight savings time on peak daily electricity loads, using a quasi-experimental design.

- Analyzing the cost of ethanol fuel subsidies, using Monte Carlo techniques.

Nancy Kirkendall received her Ph.D. in Statistics from the George Washington University in 1974. She currently holds the position of Director, Statistics and Methods Group, Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy.

Please join us for presentation of the 2007 Herriot Award, July 30, 2007, 3:40 PM, Convention Center 254-C. Cake and refreshments will be served.

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## Romesh Silva to Receive the Wray Jackson Smith 2007 Scholarship



On April 25, 2007, Juanita Tamayo Lott, chair of the Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Committee, announced that the committee had selected Romesh Silva as the 2007 scholarship winner. Romesh is a doctoral candidate in demography at the University of California Berkeley. This award provided funds for Romesh's participation at the July 2007 conference, "Recent Developments in Capture-Recaptures Methods and Their Applications," at University of Reading, UK, including presentation of an original paper on estimation of elusive populations and two pre-conference short courses. Romesh is also a presenter at JSM 2007 in the Contributed Session 116 ("Estimating Mortality and Migration") sponsored by the Social Statistics Section.

Other members of the 2007 Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Committee are Michael P. Cohen and Robert Kominski.

Congratulations to Romesh on winning this prestigious award!

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Start Thinking About JSM 2008 Invited Sessions

Please start thinking about GSS and SSS Invited Sessions for the 2008 JSM meeting in Denver. Online submission of invited session proposals starts on July 9 and ends on August 23. GSS and SSS have both been allocated 3 invited sessions on the 2008 program. The GSS and SSS memberships are doing a great variety of innovative things and now is the opportunity to organize a session to let everyone know about it at JSM in 2008. The guidelines from the JSM web site say that "Invited sessions are **110 minutes in length**, can take a variety of formats, and **typically include from two to six participants**." Feel free to contact Michael Davern (daver004@umn.edu) or Jana Asher (jana@asher-resnick.us) for more information.

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### Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology 2007 Research Conference, November 5-7, 2007

*Submitted by Nancy Bates*

The 2007 Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) Research Conference will be held November 5-7, 2007 at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia. The Conference provides a forum for experts from around the world to discuss and exchange current research and methodological topics relevant to Federal government statistical programs. Each day of the conference will offer papers on a wide range of topics including the use of advanced technologies for survey design and data collection, processing and dissemination, variance estimation, treatment of missing data, improving coverage and response rates, confidentiality and disclosure issues, record linkage, sample design and estimation, cognitive research, and data quality.

Technical demonstrations on a variety of applications will run concurrently on the second day of the conference. Applications include demonstrations of audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (ACASI), a pen-based data collection system, computer-assisted recording interviewing (CARI), the use of hand-held computers for data collection, the use of GPS hand-held receivers in agricultural surveys, and data dissemination using the web. Sessions feature papers and demonstrations by government, private sector, and academic researchers from nine countries.

In the opening plenary session, Jon Krosnick from Stanford University will be our guest speaker. All paper sessions will include an open discussion and some sessions will include a formal discussion.

**Conference Fee: Registration is \$195.** For a copy of the advance program and registration information please refer to: <http://www.fcsm.gov/events/>

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GOVERNMENT STATISTICS SECTION

The mission of the Government Statistics Section (GSS) is to promote the use of sound statistical theory and methods in the production of data at all levels of government - be it Federal, State, local, or international; assist in the broad dissemination of those data; and encourage good statistical practice by all users. Areas of interest for the Section include all that involve the production, dissemination, and application of governmental statistics, including concern with statistical policy issues, quality and usefulness of governmental data products, special problems of State and local data, comparability of data among different countries, and the role of professional statisticians in the public sector.

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SOCIAL STATISTICS SECTION

The Social Statistics Section seeks to advance research in social statistics, both in areas which involve the use of methods of statistical inquiry, and in those which involve the use of statistical data and the development of statistical measurement. This section will also plan for active participation in the affairs of the American Statistical Association by those interested in these matters and for representation of activities in this major field in the program of the ASA.

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