

**GSS/SSS July 2014 NEWSLETTER**  
**Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections**  
**American Statistical Association**

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**UPCOMING DEADLINES AND EVENTS:**

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|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>August 2-7</b>      | JSM 2014—Boston, Massachusetts                                                     |
| <b>September 22-24</b> | 2014 ASA Biopharmaceutical Section FDA-Industry Statistics Workshop—Washington, DC |
| <b>December 15-16</b>  | 2014 FCSM Policy Conference—Washington, DC                                         |

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**UPCOMING JSM 2014 EVENTS** **NEW!**

*Submitted by Grace O'Neill (GSS Program Chair) and Mike Sinclair (SSS Program Chair)*

The sessions begin on Sunday, August 3 at 2:00 pm and the final sessions are on Thursday, August 7 at 10:30 am. We have summarized the GSS and SSS sponsored Invited (I), Contributed (C) and Topic-Contributed (TC) sessions by date and time to help

you plan your week. The room location is bolded for Boston Convention & Exhibition Center = **CC**, Westin Boston Waterfront = **W** and Seaport Boston Hotel = **S**. We have also listed the winning student papers (SP) – try to stop by these sessions and show your support for their work. This calendar also reminds you of the section business meetings in **bold**. The business meeting is a great place to learn about the sections and is a great place to network with other members.

**SUNDAY (August 3)**

- 2:00 pm** Modeling Driver Behavior Using Advance Data Collection Methods - *Feng Guo, Virginia Tech (TC)* – **CC-153A**
- 2:00** Causal Inference When Covariates Are Measured with Error - *Elizabeth A. Stuart, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (I)* – **CC-157C**
- 4:00** Measurements of Social Well-Being - *Donsig Jang, Mathematica Policy Research (C)* – **CC-153A**

**MONDAY (August 4)**

- 8:30 am** Valuing Life: Issues in Traffic Fatalities - *David Banks, Duke University (TC)* – **CC-212**
- 8:30** Social Media Analysis - *Daniel Kasprzyk, NORC at the University of Chicago (I)* – **CC-213**
- 10:30** Statistical Modeling, Missing Data, and Observational Studies *Ned English, NORC at the University of Chicago (C)* – **CC-207**
- 10:30** Measuring Same-Sex Couples, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity in Population-Based Surveys - *Christopher H. Johnson, CDC (I)* – **CC-206A**
- 2:00 pm** Statisticians Need to Adapt to the Changing Payer Evidence Generation Paradigm - *lanju Zhang, AbbVie (TC)* – **CC-206A**
- 5:30** **Social Statistics Business Committee Meeting – S-Lighthouse 1**

**TUESDAY (August 5)**

- 8:30 am** Nontraditional Data Collection Methods: Success and Challenges - *Li Leung, USDOT/RITA/BTS (TC)* – **CC-212**
- 8:30** Models for Education Data and Other Applications - *Nicholas K. Beyler, Mathematica Policy Research (C)* – **CC-257B**
- 10:30** Survey Inference and Sample Size Estimation - *Section Michael Sinclair, Mathematica Policy Research (C)* – **CC-257A**

**2:00 pm** The Past, Present, and Future of Federal Surveys: Observations from the Committee on National Statistics - *Carol C. House, National Academies, Committee on National Statistics (I)* – **CC-156A**

**5:30** **Government Statistics Section Business Meeting - W-Alcott**

**WEDNESDAY (August 6)**

**8:30 am** Latent Variable Models: Inference and Testing - *Mark Reiser, Arizona State University (TC)* – **CC-153A**

**10:30** Statistical Analysis of Educational Data: Challenges and Opportunities - *Jeffrey D. Kromrey, University of South Florida (I)* – **CC-151B**

**10:30** Privacy at What Cost? The Differential Effects of Disclosure Avoidance Methods on Data About Small Groups - *Lynne Stokes, Southern Methodist University (TC)* – **CC-153B**

**12:30 pm** Estimating Incidence Risk for Two Complex Sample Surveys: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and Asthma Call-Back Survey - *Roundtable Discussion* – *Jenny Guarino, USDOT/BTS* – **CC-Ballroom West**

**2:00** Evaluating Quality of Official Statistics - *Scott S. Fricker, Bureau of Labor Statistics (I)* – **CC-206A**

**THURSDAY (August 7)**

**8:30 am** Innovative Uses of Response Rates for Survey Management - *Jenny Thompson, U.S. Census Bureau (I)* – **CC-206A**

**8:30** **GSS/ SSS Student Paper Competition – CC-203**

Estimating Causal Effects Using Stratification and Weighting Propensity Score Estimators with Complex Survey Data – *Robert Ashmead, Ohio State University*

Detecting Duplicate Homicide Records Using a Bayesian Partitioning Model – *Mauricio Sadinle, Carnegie Mellon University*

Testing for Phase Capacity in Surveys with Multiple Waves of Nonresponse Follow-Up – *Taylor Lewis, University of Maryland*

Likelihood-Based Inference with Missing Data Under Missing-at Random – *Shu Yang, Iowa State University*

**10:30** Applications of Text Analysis in the U.S. Government - *John Eltinge, Bureau of Labor Statistics (TC)* – **CC-206B**

**10:30** Human Rights Violations: How Do We Begin Counting the Dead? -  
*Megan Price, Human Rights Data Analysis Group (I) – CC-206A*

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**PROPOSED 2015 DATA COMPETITION** **NEW!**  
*Submitted by Wendy Martinez (GSS Chair-elect)*

The GSS Executive Board is considering issuing a Data Challenge for the JSM 2015 meetings. We will be discussing the challenge, timeline, and more when we have the board meeting at the JSM in Boston. The proposed data set for the challenge will be an expanded version of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 Planning Database. The updated database has not been released yet, but you can see previous versions at [http://www.census.gov/research/2012\\_planning\\_database/](http://www.census.gov/research/2012_planning_database/).

We hope to present the details at the section business meeting on August 5, so plan on coming to the section's gathering. It will take place from 5:30 to 7:00 pm in the Westin Alcott room. Stay tuned for more details about the competition in the next GSS/SSS newsletter!

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**COUNCIL OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ON FEDERAL STATISTICS: JUNE 2014 MEETING PRESENTATIONS** **NEW!**  
*Submitted by Nancy Bates (GSS Publications Officer)*

On Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, COPAFS held their quarterly meeting.

**Federal Administrative Data: Guidance, Abundance, and Access for Statistical Purposes** Federal administrative data – data collected in order to implement a federal program for individuals, households, or businesses – are used as records of federal programs that range from those providing a social safety net for families, to loan programs of the Small Business Association; from income and business tax data, to claims for disability insurance. These data are especially notable now due to recent Federal guidance to agencies, and the increasingly popular notion that administrative data may provide survey cost savings if substituted for all or some survey data. There are substantial challenges in attempting to use administrative data for research, but there is policy support to address them as well as clever administrative and technological fixes.

**On Valentine's Day 2014, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued "Guidance for Providing and Using Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes,"** Memorandum M-14-06 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2014/m-14-06.pdf>, to the heads of all Executive Departments and Agencies. As described by federal expert on statistical uses of administrative data, **Shelly Martinez of OMB's Office of Statistical and Science Policy**, the guidance seeks to increase the statistical use of federal administrative data by encouraging program administering agencies to provide appropriate access to their data for analysis, either independently or linked with survey or other administrative data. Analysis of administrative data facilitates things like survey

improvement, program evaluation and research on the interactions among programs. Challenges preventing wider use of this practice now include: legal interpretations of data access by entities outside of the program agency; differences in policies, procedures, and hardware across agencies; quality of administrative data and its fitness for statistical use; and lack of documentation of administrative data sets. Memorandum M-14-06 was issued to address such challenges. It provides leadership, data-specific interpretation of privacy law, model interagency agreements, tools, and other technical assistance to agencies. All agencies across the government are to report to OMB in June 2014, with a second report accompanying agency FY 16 budget submissions in fall 2014, on exactly what they are doing to make possible improved administrative data access by statistical agencies.

**Administrative data on nutrition assistance provides an example of social safety net program information.** USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) runs 15 nutrition assistance programs that serve 1 in 4 American families at an annual cost above \$105 billion. Programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), previously known as Food Stamps, child nutrition programs like the School Lunch Program, and special programs for pregnant women and young children, the elderly, and more. **Richard Lucas, Acting Deputy Administrator for Policy Support at FNS,** explained that certification data on program participants are held by the States, and FNS holds information on the redemption of SNAP benefits at authorized retailers. But, through various sampling and time specific censuses of States' certification data, FNS can analyze certification data to examine characteristics and circumstances of program participants, analyze transaction data to understand the actions of clients and program operators, and link and/or compare datasets to examine a range of program impacts and effectiveness metrics. For example, FNS worked with the Economic Research Service and Census Bureau to link SNAP program data for two States to American Community Survey data and derived new insights into the distribution of SNAP benefits among those with different demographic features. At present, one has to make arrangements with individual States to obtain access to data on program participants, a somewhat onerous and time-consuming task. Furthermore, important data elements may be lacking or poorly reported, and the use of these data must be consistent with collection authority. Lucas says that the costs and burdens are outweighed by what one can learn from using administrative data. His advice to agencies that might partner in this manner: Capture expectations, and set terms of use in a durable agreement that allows appropriate access by partnering institutions to confidential data.

**The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is a model for progressive thinking on administrative data access.** CMS has massive data sets on Medicare and Medicaid claims, health providers' costs for services, and other administrative data collected for operational purposes. But, **Andrew Shatto, Director of CMS's Data Development and Services Group,** said CMS is committed to providing data to the public while preserving privacy and confidentiality of those filing claims. He noted that the data are owned by the beneficiaries – not CMS – and that CMS must determine if the benefits to users outweigh the risks to beneficiaries. A CMS Data Navigator provides easy access to nearly 300 active data sources to provide aggregated data to the public. There is even a mobile device app that provides "Fast Facts" on the programs. Public Use Files drawn from 100% of Medicare claims data for 2008-2012 beneficiaries are

available for research on: geographic variation by aggregated demographic, spending, utilization and quality indicators; and the prevalence of chronic conditions and spending for aggregated groups of beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions. Medicare provider utilization and payment data are also available and do identify health care providers. Shatto points out that this aids consumer choice, though the data have limitations. Finally, a Chronic Condition Warehouse (CCW) houses CMS' research data and is designed to support external researchers and internal CMS research and analytic functions. Access to CMS data can be on encrypted files sent on hard drive (the expensive option), or through Virtual Research Data Centers (VRDC), where researchers perform their own analyses virtually from an independent workstation. The University of Minnesota-based Research Data Assistance Center provides researchers with expert assistance in the use of CMS data. User fees for VRDC access and/or for data linkage performed by CMS staff, are determined transparently by formula. Asked how CMS can provide such access, Shatto commented that it requires someone willing to take the responsibility for getting the data out. We would add that innovation is also clearly at work at CMS.

**Access to IRS tax data is limited by tax law, but the data are still valuable in research.** The IRS Statistics of Income Division (SOI) collects, organizes and adds value to data generated by the almost 250 forms and schedules used by IRS. As **Barry Johnson, Acting Director of IRS' SOI**, explained, the data can only be released in ways that guarantee protection of taxpayers' privacy. Statutory recipients of tax data use them for a range of topics and methods including tax policy evaluation, economic and demographic research, micro-simulation models, and revenue estimation. The SOI website contains all research results and reports, a Tax Stats Wizard, and extensive tabulations. A Statistical Information Services responds to about 1,200 telephone and e-mail inquiries per year. Microdata have been made available to researchers under a Joint Statistical Research Program that increases partnerships between SOI and external researchers, under highly regulated conditions. All potential projects go through a public disclosure review board and SOI prefers arrangements where non-IRS users have no direct access to their data, and IRS runs the analysis, providing just the finished results needed by the external researchers. But Johnson stressed that SOI is committed to a robust ongoing program of joint projects with outside researchers and hopes to announce a call for new proposals during the Summer of 2014. Successful past collaborations include a project with results that show that intergenerational income mobility varies among localities.

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**GSS/SSS MEMBERS SELECTED AS 2014 ASA FELLOWS    NEW!**  
*Submitted by Rick Peterson (ASA Staff Liaison)*

**Nancy A. Bates**, *U.S. Census Bureau*

**Frauke Kreuter**, *JPSM & IAB*

**Elizabeth A. Stuart**, *Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health*

**Pedro Luis Do Nascimento Silva**, *IBGE-ENCE*

**Sophia Rabe-Hesketh**, *University of California, Berkeley*

**Tyler John VanderWeele**, *Harvard School of Public Health*

**Melanie M. Wall**

**Tian Zheng**, *Columbia University*

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**WRAY JACKSON SMITH 2014 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNER**      **NEW!**

*Submitted by Linda Gage (Wray Jackson Smith Award Selection Committee)*

Mauricio Sadinle, a doctoral student at Carnegie Mellon University, is the winner of the 2014 Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship.

Mauricio graduated with a bachelor's degree in statistics from National University of Colombia at Bogota in 2009, and is currently a fourth year Ph.D. student in statistics at Carnegie Mellon University, under the supervision of Stephen E. Fienberg. His dissertation focuses on developing record linkage techniques for combining multiple data files in such a way that the uncertainty from the linkage stage can be carried through subsequent analyses of the linked files. Examples of such analyses include the estimation of population sizes using capture-recapture/multiple-systems estimation and regression analysis when the response and explanatory variables are in different files.

Mauricio's dissertation research will, in and of itself, affect government record linkage practice. As part of the NSF-Census Research Network (NCRN) he has been granted sworn status at the U.S. Census Bureau, thus enabling him to focus on several possible applications of his ideas to bureau problems and datasets. Most recently, Mauricio has turned his attention to how his methodology can be adapted to linkage of census, ACS, and coverage measurement survey data. He has formulated a new and truly innovative approach to de-duplication and record linkage using ideas adapted from network modeling.

Mauricio plans to use the Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship to support his work constructing hand-matched datasets for evaluating and assisting probabilistic record linkage methods.

Members of the 2014 Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Committee are: Linda Gage (Chair), Jennifer Park, and Joseph Salvo. Join us in congratulating Mauricio on his accomplishment.

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**JEANNE E. GRIFFITH AWARD WINNERS      NEW!**

*Submitted by Debbie Griffin (Chair, 2014 Jeanne E. Griffith Award Selection Committee)*

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring award recognizes individuals working in federal, state, and local government statistical agencies for their efforts in mentoring junior staff. Kenneth C. Schoendorf, National Center for Health Statistics, and J. Gregory Robinson, U.S. Census Bureau, share the 2014 award. On July 9, the award committee hosted a ceremony and reception to honor the recipients. Ken's and Gregg's families, friends, and colleagues joined friends of Jeanne Griffith, the award committee, and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP) at this event. This year's ceremony marked the 12<sup>th</sup> annual presentation of this award, and the sixth year that the American Statistical Association's Government Statistics Section has managed the award process.

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring award honors Dr. Griffith who died in 2001, after working for more than 25 years in the federal statistical system. The award acknowledges supervisors, technical directors, and other team members who make unique efforts to mentor and encourage younger staff at all levels to learn, grow, and to recognize and seize career opportunities. The award includes a plaque and a \$1000 honorarium.

J. Gregory Robinson is one of the preeminent demographers in the world and he shares his passion for his work on a daily basis with junior and senior staff. Gregg has a PhD and an M.A. in Demography from the University of Pennsylvania. He has a B.S. in Industrial Management from the University of Tennessee. Since 2002, Gregg has been a Special Assistant for Demographic Analysis at the U.S. Census Bureau.

Kenneth C. Schoendorf is chief of the Infant Child and Women's Health Statistics Branch in the Office of Analysis and Epidemiology at the NCHS. After graduating from MIT, Ken attended Tulane University where he received both his Medical Degree and a Masters in Public Health. After medical school, he was a pediatric resident at Boston City Hospital. During residency, he spent a year in Australia working at the Melbourne Children's Hospital, but returned to Boston City to become Chief Resident. In 1990, he joined the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) and came to the NCHS. After EIS, he stayed on at NCHS as a member of the US Public Health Service Corps and soon rose to his current position. In 2001, he was requested to serve on detail to the National Children's Study at the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development to help design the original plans for the study.

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**GSS ACTIVITIES      NEW!**

*Submitted by Jill Montaquila (GSS Chair)*

The Government Statistics Section is again putting forth an exciting program at JSM! To hear all about the Section's activities, please join us for the GSS Business Meeting, to be held Tuesday, August 5, 5:30 to 7:00 pm, in the Westin Alcott room.



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**PROPOSALS FOR JSM 2015 INVITED SESSIONS**      **NEW!**

*Submitted by Jill Montaquila (GSS Chair)*

Note that proposals for invited sessions for JSM 2015 are due by September 4, 2014. See <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2015/invitedsessions.cfm> for guidelines on preparing and submitting invited session proposals.

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**NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS**      **NEW!**

*Submitted by Nancy Bates (GSS Publications Officer)*

Congratulations to the newly elected GSS and SSS officers!

**GSS**

Chair-elect: *Michael Davern, NORC*

Program Chair-elect: *Morgan Earp*

Secretary/Treasurer: *Jennifer Park, NCHS*

Publications Officer: *Sylvia Dohrman, Westat*

**SSS**

Chair-elect: *Guillermina Jasso, New York University*

Program Chair-elect: *Craig Hill, RTI International*

Publications Officer: *Matt Jans, University of California, Los Angeles*

## 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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