



GSS/SSS DECEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER
Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections
American Statistical Association

GSS web site: <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/>
SSS web site: <http://www.amstat.org/sections/ssoc/>

GSS Publications Officer: Sonya L. Vartivarian
(VartivarianS@gao.gov)

SSS Publications Officer: Joanna M. Turner
(turn0053@umn.edu)

Newsletter Editor: Natalya Verbitsky-Savitz
(NVSavitz@Mathematica-MPR.com)

IN THIS ISSUE:

GOVERNMENT STATISTICS SECTION 2011 OUTGOING CHAIR'S MESSAGE NEW!	2
PLANNING FOR JSM 2012: CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO CHAIR CONTRIBUTED SESSIONS AND TO SUBMIT CONTRIBUTED SESSION ABSTRACTS.....	3
JSM 2012 STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION.....	5
NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR THE 2013 WAKSBERG AWARD.....	6
NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR JEANNE E. GRIFFITH MENTORING AWARD NEW!	6
ANNOUNCEMENTS:	
FEDERAL COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY (FCSM) RESEARCH CONFERENCE.....	9
CALL FOR PAPERS: Data Mining In Official Statistics Workshop NEW!	9

UPCOMING DEADLINES AND EVENTS:

December

- 1 JSM 2012 abstract submission opened
- 15 Deadline for JSM 2012 student paper competition

January

- 10 Abstracts are due for Data Mining in Official Statistics Workshop
- 10-12 Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) research conference
- 11 JSM 2012 deadline for submitting topic-contributed session proposals

February

- 1 JSM 2012 last day to submit an abstract (11:59 pm EST)
- 28 Nominations are due for 2013 Waksberg award

April

- 2 Nominations are due for Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award

GOVERNMENT STATISTICS SECTION 2011 OUTGOING CHAIR'S MESSAGE NEW!

Submitted by Steven Paben, 2011 Chair, Government Statistics Section

It is amazing how quickly a year can pass. It was my honor to serve as the Chair of the Government Statistics Section (GSS). I foremost want to thank my colleagues on the executive committee and Rick Peterson of the ASA office for making my job easy. The accomplishments of the GSS over the past year are due mostly to them.

The highlight of the year was the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) in Miami Beach. The GSS had an excellent program at JSM 2011 due in large part to Iris Shimizu and Daniell Toth. We had four invited sessions, 12 topic contributed sessions, five contributed sessions, and two roundtable discussions. One of the topic contributed sessions featured the five winners of the student paper competition jointly sponsored with the Social Statistics and Survey Research Methods sections. GSS also had one poster session during which we also held a successful poster competition won by Emily O'Malley Olsen and Sherry Everett Jones from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP).

GSS also sponsors or co-sponsors many other awards. This includes the Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award which encourages the mentoring of junior government staff with respect to statistics. The 2011 winner was Jenise Swall. We are a co-sponsor for the Roger Herriot Award and Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship won respectively by Michael Messner and Rebecca Medway. The Pat Doyle Award is given in recognition of outstanding service to the GSS. This year's winner was our newsletter editor, Natalya Verbitsky-Savitz. I highly encourage members of the GSS to submit names as potential recipients for these awards. Details about each award can be found on the GSS website <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/>.

GSS is a permanent sponsor for the International Conference on Establishment Surveys (ICES). This highly successful event takes place about every five years or so and explores the current state of survey methodology for businesses, farms, and institutions. The next conference (ICES IV) takes place in Montreal from June 11-14, 2012. We are also one of the sponsors for the International Conference on Survey Methods for Hard to Reach Populations being held in New Orleans from October 31-November 3, 2012. The fact that the finances of the section remain in good health allows us to take on these sponsorships as services to our members.

Our membership declined slightly again over the past year. This was typical of most sections of the ASA. Hopefully, it is just a result of the downturn in the economy and not part of a longer trend. I ask all current GSS members to continue to encourage other statisticians to join the Section. You are also welcome to submit articles for our monthly newsletter by contacting Natalya at NVsavitz@Mathematica-MPR.com or ideas for articles for AMSTAT GSS Section News by contacting Sonya Vartivarian at SLVartiv@umich.edu.

Again, thanks to the Executive Committee for their contributions in 2011. A special thanks to the members of the committee who are rotating off this year:

- Iris Shimizu, Program Chair, for organizing excellent sessions at JSM 2010 and 2011
- Carol House, one of our two COPAFS representatives

Also, a warm welcome to our newly elected committee members during the 2011 elections:

- Lisa Blumerman, Chair-Elect 2012
- Eric Rancourt, Program Chair-Elect 2012

I would like to close by asking you to think about volunteering for the section. The activities of the section are only as good as the effort volunteers put into the section. I found this experience to be quite rewarding. It allowed me to network and make connections with other statisticians with an interest in government statistics that I probably never would have met otherwise. Plus, it allowed me to get involved with interesting issues that will help move our profession forward.

~~~~~

### **PLANNING FOR JSM 2012: CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO CHAIR CONTRIBUTED SESSIONS AND TO SUBMIT CONTRIBUTED SESSION ABSTRACTS**

*Submitted by Elizabeth Stuart, SSS 2012 Program Chair, and Daniell Toth, GSS 2012 Program Chair*

#### **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO CHAIR CONTRIBUTED SESSIONS**

If you are going to attend the 2012 Joint Statistical Meetings in San Diego (July 28 - August 2, 2012), you are invited to volunteer as a contributed session chair for SSS or GSS-sponsored sessions. To volunteer, please contact Elizabeth Stuart (SSS 2012 Program Chair, [estuart@jhsph.edu](mailto:estuart@jhsph.edu)) or Daniell Toth (GSS 2012 Program Chair, [toth.daniell@bls.gov](mailto:toth.daniell@bls.gov)).

#### **CALL TO SUBMIT CONTRIBUTED SESSION ABSTRACTS**

The 2012 SSS and GSS program chairs encourage you to organize a contributed session and submit an abstract for the 2012 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). The theme of JSM 2012 will be "Statistics: Growing to Serve a Data-Dependent Society." You can find a link to the JSM website here: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2012/index.cfm>.

There are two types of contributed sessions: regular and topic-contributed. Before you submit an abstract to ASA for a topic-contributed session, please contact Elizabeth Stuart (SSS 2012 Program Chair) or Daniell Toth (GSS 2012 Program Chair) at the email addresses above. They will keep track of the sessions SSS or GSS may either sponsor or co-sponsor. More information on the program is here: <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2012/program.cfm>.

An important change this year is that registration for JSM will be required at the time you submit a contributed abstract (regular or topic-contributed).

#### **TOPIC-CONTRIBUTED PAPER SESSIONS**

These sessions consist of a collection of contributed talks and discussions (if desired) that share a common topic. The sessions are 110 minutes in length. There must be five presentations (including discussants) of 20 minutes each, with 10 minutes at the end for floor discussion and concluding remarks by the session chair. There are three (3) format options for a topic-contributed paper session:

1. Five (5) papers

2. Four (4) papers and one (1) discussant
3. Three (3) papers and two (2) discussants

All speakers in a topic-contributed paper session **MUST** submit an abstract to the ASA office by February 1, 2012. On the abstract form, speakers should indicate that they are speaking in a topic-contributed session and give the name of the session organizer.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** In the past, a few Sections have organized some topic-contributed sessions after the February 1st deadline using Regular Contributed submissions. This will **NOT** be permitted for 2012. The deadline for submitting topic-contributed session proposals is **January 11, 2012**. The period between October and December 2011 is the ideal time to organize such sessions.

#### **TOPIC-CONTRIBUTED PANEL SESSIONS**

These sessions are 110 minutes in length. The traditional panel discussion format is used, wherein a minimum of three and a maximum of five panelists provide commentary on a particular topic. Panels each require **ONE ABSTRACT** submitted by the organizer and received by February 1, 2012. As with any topic-contributed session, the topic-contributed panel organizer must coordinate efforts through the appropriate JSM Program Committee member.

#### **TOPIC-CONTRIBUTED POSTER SESSIONS**

Starting with JSM 2003, contributed poster sessions may include topic-contributed poster clusters. A topic-contributed poster cluster will contain approximately three to six posters on a given topic, with roughly the same degree of intellectual cohesion as as expected of a topic-contributed paper session. Either application, methodological, or theoretical themes may define the topics for a given cluster. Examples include:

- Analysis of Phase III Clinical Trials
- Seasonal Adjustment of Economic Time Series
- Analysis of Point Source Pollution Data
- CUSUM Charts
- Sequential Analysis
- Application of MCMC Methods to the Analysis of Complex Survey Data
- Calibration and Related Inverse Problems
- Empirical Processes

Topic-contributed poster clusters can provide a nice format in which several colleagues can present different perspectives on a statistical controversy, or can present side-by-side analyses of an especially challenging dataset. The posters within a cluster will be presented at the same time. Organization and submission of a topic-contributed poster cluster will follow the same pattern and timeline as used for a topic-contributed paper session.

~~~~~

JSM 2012 STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION

Submitted by Eric Rancourt (GSS 2012 Program Chair-elect), Deborah Griffin (SSS 2012 Program Chair-elect), and Frauke Kreuter (SRMS 2012 Program Chair-elect)

The Government Statistics, Social Statistics, and Survey Research Methods sections are pleased to announce a competition for student and post-graduate papers. Winning papers will be presented by the authors at the Joint Statistical Meetings in San Diego, CA the week of July 28 - August 2, 2012. Approximately five awards will be granted. A subsidy of \$800 will be provided to each winner to cover JSM 2012 expenses.

To be eligible to participate you must be a current undergraduate or graduate student at any level, or a 2011 graduate who presents research conducted as a student. Faculty members are urged to encourage students to apply for these awards.

Papers entered in this competition must involve either a new statistical methodology, or a creative application of statistical analysis to a problem, issue, or policy question pertinent to the subject area of one of the sponsoring sections. The research does not have to be complete, but competitors must be able to submit an abstract prospectus that describes the planned research and nature of the intended innovation(s).

To apply, please send the materials requested below to:

- Eric Rancourt, (GSS 2012 Program Chair Elect, Eric.Rancourt@statcan.gc.ca),
- Deborah Griffin (SSS 2012 Program Chair Elect, Deborah.H.Griffin@census.gov), and
- Frauke Kreuter (SRMS 2012 Program Chair Elect, Frauke.Kreuter@iab.de).

The application must include:

1. A cover letter with the applicant's name, current affiliation and status, and contact information (address, telephone, e-mail);
2. An abstract (300 words maximum);
3. A draft paper (if available); otherwise, a 3-page research prospectus; and
4. A letter from his/her adviser that certifies the applicant's status (e.g., current student or new graduate who completed the degree within the past year), and describes plans to complete the research.

All materials must be received by **5 PM EST, December 15, 2011**. Winners will be notified by mid-January 2012. Students may submit papers to no more than two (2) sections and may accept only one (1) section's award. Students must inform both sections applied to when he or she wins and accepts an award, thereby removing the student from the award competition for the second section.

More than 12 sections of ASA sponsor Student Paper Competition/Travel Awards to assist students with travel expenses to attend JSM. Beginning this year, the submission dates have been uniformly standardized. The submission deadline for all section competitions is December 15. ASA has created a portal page where students can see which sections sponsor Student Paper Competitions and links to the guidelines for each:

<http://www.amstat.org/sections/studentpaperawards.cfm>

~~~~~

**NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR THE 2013 WAKSBERG AWARD**

*Submitted by Mary Thompson, Chair, 2013 Waksberg Awards Committee*

The journal *Survey Methodology* has established an annual invited paper series in honor of Joe Waksberg to recognize his contributions to survey methodology. Each year a prominent survey statistician is chosen to write a paper that reviews the development and current state of an important topic in the field of survey methodology. The paper reflects the mixture of theory and practice that characterized Joe Waksberg's work.

The recipient of the Waksberg Award will receive an honorarium and give the 2013 Waksberg Invited Address at the Statistics Canada Symposium to be held in the autumn of 2013. The paper will be published in a future issue of *Survey Methodology*.

The author of the 2013 Waksberg paper will be selected by a four-person committee appointed by *Survey Methodology* and the American Statistical Association. Nomination of individuals to be considered as authors or suggestions for topics should be sent **before February 28, 2012** to the chair of the committee, Mary Thompson (methomps@uwaterloo.ca).

The last six Waksberg Award honorees and their invited papers are:

- 2007 Carl-Erik Särndal, "The Calibration Approach in Survey Theory and Practice." *Survey Methodology*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 99-119.
- 2008 Mary Thompson, "International surveys: Motives and Methodologies." *Survey Methodology*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 131-141.
- 2009 Graham Kalton, "Methods for Oversampling Rare Subpopulations in Social Surveys." *Survey Methodology*, vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 125-141.
- 2010 Ivan Fellegi, "The organisation of statistical methodology and methodological research in national statistical offices." *Survey Methodology*, vol. 36, no. 2., pp. 123-130.
- 2011 Danny Pfeffermann. "Modelling of complex survey data: Why is it a problem? How can we approach it?"
- 2012 Lars Lyberg, Manuscript topic under consideration

For a full list, please see October 2011 GSS/SSS newsletter.

~~~~~

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR JEANNE E. GRIFFITH MENTORING AWARD NEW!

Submitted by Clyde Tucker, 2012 Chair, Griffith Award Selection Committee

It's time to start thinking about nominating an outstanding supervisor, technical director, team coordinator, or other member of a governmental statistical staff who encourages mentoring of junior staff in the Federal, State, or Local statistical system for the 2012 Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award. **Nominations must be submitted no later than April 2, 2012.**



Jeanne Griffith

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award was established to honor Dr. Griffith who died in August 2001 after working for more than 25 years in the Federal statistical system. Throughout her career, and especially in her latter senior management positions at the National Center for Education Statistics and the National Science Foundation, one of Jeanne's highest priorities was to mentor and encourage younger staff at all levels to learn, to grow, and to recognize and seize career opportunities as they came along.

The winning mentor(s) will be selected for his or her efforts in supporting the work and developing the careers of junior staff. Examples of typical mentoring activities include:

- Advising junior staff to help them create career opportunities, networking skills, and contacts for growth and development;
- Counseling junior staff and providing resources to help develop their technical writing, analysis, presentation and organizational skills and knowledge;
- Encouraging junior staff growth and career development through attendance and oral presentations at meetings with higher level officials, staffs of other agencies, professional associations, training courses, and conferences;
- Motivating junior staff and building self confidence through feedback on their efforts, being a listener when that is needed, and creating a caring and supportive environment;
- Serving as a role model for junior staff through professional expertise, information and insights, balancing collegial and personal roles, and including everyone across rank, race, ethnicity, and seniority.

The previous recipients of the Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award are: Rich Allen (National Agriculture Statistical Service), 2003; Beth Kilss (Internal Revenue Service), 2004; Renee Miller (Energy Information Administration), 2005; Martin O'Connell (U.S. Census Bureau), 2006; Stephanie Shipp (National Institute of Standards and Technology – at the time of the award), 2007; Rosemary D. Marcuss (Bureau of Economic Analysis), 2008; Kevin Cecco (Internal Revenue Service), Lillian S. Lin (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), 2009; Deborah H. Griffin (U.S. Bureau of the Census), 2010; and Jenise L. Swall (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency), 2011.

Nominations should be prepared in the form of a letter or memorandum for the Award Selection Committee:

- The letter or memorandum should summarize the nominee's actions that support and encourage junior staff in the Federal, State, or Local statistical community in developing their careers.
- **Nominations may be accompanied by up to six supporting letters. These should be attached to, and submitted with, the nomination.**
- The Award Selection Committee finds that descriptions of what nominees actually do are the strongest demonstration of candidate mentoring. Here are some examples: the mentor

is a source of advice...counsels with long-term goals in mind...thought I was well qualified even though I had some doubts...encourages staff to seek out positions that will increase their visibility and stretch their professional capabilities. These are more explicit and unique to the mentor than generic statements such as: the mentor is a coach...a teacher.

- Photo copies and email copies of support letters are acceptable.

Nominations for 2012 will be accepted beginning in **January 2012**. The last date for submission of nominations is **April 2, 2012**, and the Award Committee will make its determination of the award winner by **April 30, 2012**. The award will consist of a \$1,000 honorarium (to be split if there is more than one awardee), a citation, and a plaque, which will be presented at a ceremony arranged by the co-sponsors in **June 2012**.

The nomination package must be mailed or emailed **no later than April 2, 2012**, to:

The Jeanne E. Griffith Mentoring Award Committee
c/o The American Statistical Association
732 N. Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1943
rick@amstat.org

Sponsors of the Award: The Government Statistics Section (GSS) of the American Statistical Association manages the award. GSS would like to thank our co-sponsors:

- National Opinion Research Center (NORC),
- Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS),
- American Institutes for Research (AIR),
- American Educational Research Association (AERA), and
- Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP).

Please contact Stephanie Shipp (sshipp@ida.org), if you would like to contribute to the award.

For more information about the nominating process for the 2012 award, please go to: <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/JEGform12.doc> or <http://www.amstat.org/sections/sgovt/JEGform12.pdf>. If you have questions about the award, please contact **Rick Peterson** at rick@amstat.org or (703) 684-1221, and **Clyde Tucker** at nctucker@cox.net or 703-989-1334.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**FEDERAL COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY (FCSM)
RESEARCH CONFERENCE**

Dates: January 10-12, 2012

Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center
801 Mount Vernon Place, NW
Washington, DC 20001

The advance program for the upcoming FCSM Research Conference is set and registration is now open. The conference will consist of a plenary session with keynote speaker, Dr. Don Dillman from Washington State University, 36 paper sessions, and two technical demonstration sessions. The conference provides a forum for experts from around the world to discuss and exchange current statistical research and methodological issues. To register and to view the advance program, please visit the FCSM Web site: www.fcsm.gov/events

~~~~~

**CALL FOR PAPERS: Data Mining In Official Statistics Workshop    NEW!**

Anna Klimova (University of Washington, Seattle) and Tamas Rudas (Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest, Hungary) are organizing a workshop on Data Mining in Official Statistics, which will be part of the SIAM Data Mining Conference to be held in Anaheim, CA, April 26-28, 2012. There will be oral and poster presentations and a round-table discussion. The workshop is not a mini-conference, so in addition to results, methods, applications, also presentations concerning problems, ideas, even controversial issues are welcome. Detailed abstracts should be submitted by **January 10, 2012**.

For more information, please visit the workshop website at [www.stat.washington.edu/people/klimova/indexW.html](http://www.stat.washington.edu/people/klimova/indexW.html) and contact the organizers at [klimova@u.washington.edu](mailto:klimova@u.washington.edu) (Anna Klimova) or at [rudas@tarki.hu](mailto:rudas@tarki.hu) (Tamas Rudas) as soon as possible to discuss your contribution.

~~~~~

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.

OFFICERS AND CONTACTS

Steven P. Paben

Chair, 2011

Paben.Steven@BLS.gov

Kennon Copeland

Council of Sections Representative, 2010-2012

Copeland-Kennon@norc.org

Brian A. Harris-Kojetin

Chair-elect, 2011

Brian_A._Harris-Kojetin@omb.eop.gov

Robert Lussier

COPAFS Representative, 2011-2012

RobertMLussier@videotron.ca

John S. Dixon

Past Chair, 2011

Dixon.John@BLS.gov

Carol C. House

COPAFS Representative, 2010-2011

HousCa@gmail.com

Iris M. Shimizu

Program Chair, 2011

IShimizu@cdc.gov

Sonya Vartivarian

Publications Officer, 2007-2012

VartivarianS@gao.gov

Daniell S. Toth

Program Chair-elect, 2011

Toth.Daniell@bls.gov

Natalya Verbitsky-Savitz

Newsletter Editor, 2009-2011

NVSavitz@Mathematica-MPR.com

Kevin Cecco

Secretary/Treasurer, 2011-2012

kevin.cecco@irs.gov

Bill Wong

Assistant Editor, *Amstat Online*

bjwg@yahoo.com

Rick Peterson

Staff Liaison

Rick@amstat.org

Tai Phan

GSSLIST Coordinator

Tai.Phan@ed.gov

2010 GSS CORPORATE SPONSORS

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor
Division of Science Resources Statistics (SRS), National Science Foundation (NSF)
National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Statistics of Income Division, Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
U.S. Census Bureau
U.S. Social Security Administration

2011 GSS CORPORATE SPONSORS

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), U.S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor
National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (formerly SRS), NSF

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.

OFFICERS AND CONTACTS

John Thompson

Chair, 2011

Thompson-John@norc.org

Kirsten K. West

Secretary/Treasurer, 2010-2011

Kirsten.K.West@census.gov

Joseph Salvo

Chair-elect, 2011

JSalvo@planning.nyc.gov

Robert Santos

Council of Sections Representative, 2010-2012

RSantos@urban.org

Sharon M. Stern

Past Chair, 2011

Sharon.M.Stern@census.gov

Joanna M. Turner

Publications Officer, 2011-2012

turn0053@umn.edu

Nancy Clusen

Program Chair, 2011

NClusen@Mathematica-MPR.com

Rick Peterson

Staff Liaison

Rick@amstat.org

Elizabeth Stuart

Program Chair-elect, 2011

estuart@jhsph.edu