



WSS NEWS

January 2003

WASHINGTON
STATISTICAL
SOCIETY

JUDGES FOR THE 2003 SCIENCE FAIRS

Volunteers are needed to represent the Washington Statistical Society next spring as judges in five regional science fairs in Northern Virginia, suburban Maryland and the District of Columbia. Since 1986, WSS has provided special awards at these fairs to students whose projects demonstrate excellence in data analysis or the application of statistical methods. Those who have participated in this activity have very much enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the students and to observe the widely diverse projects which are presented. The fairs are held on a Saturday morning in mid-March to mid-April. The only time required is that one Saturday morning, plus one weekday lunchtime meeting to discuss judging strategy.

If you would like to be a WSS science fair judge next spring, please e-mail Lee Abramson at <lxa@nrc.gov> by January 10, and include your work and home phone numbers, your fax number and your mailing address. If you judged last spring, there is no need to contact Lee unless your e-mail address or phone number has changed. If you have any questions, please call Lee at 301-415-6180.

JPSM CITATION PROGRAM

The citation program is built around the JPSM two-day short courses. The program is designed to provide the working professional, or student, with state of the art knowledge, current principles and practices of complex surveys and provide practical skills of day-to-day utility.

Completion of the citation involves taking a semester length JPSM credit-bearing course "Fundamentals in Survey Methodology" and eight JPSM short courses, of which four must be from the core courses. For information and application materials visit the website <http://www.jpsm.umd.edu/citation/Default.htm> or call 301-314-7911.

WSS and Other Seminars (All events are open to any interested persons)	
January 21 Tues.	Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) Prototype Disclosure Software for Tabular Data
February 19 Wed.	The NASS Question Repository System

Also available on the World Wide Web at the following URL: <http://www.science.gmu.edu/~wss>

Announcements

SIGSTAT Schedule: January 2003 to May 2003

January 15, 2003 - SuperSTAR

February 12, 2002 - PROCs MI & MIANALYZE in SAS/STAT

February 26, 2003 - "Live Graphs" [joint presentation with the DCSUG Desktop SIG]

Dave DesJardin, formerly of the Census Bureau, will use SAS JMP and Insight to show how to easily generate "live" graphs effectively displaying statistical data.

March 12, 2003 - R Graphics

April 9, 2003 - SAS/IML Workshop 2.0

May 14, 2003 - SAS 9.0

SIGSTAT is the Special Interest Group in Statistics for the CPCUG, the Capital PC User Group, and WINFORMS, the Washington Institute for Operations Research Service and Management Science.

All meetings are in Room S3031 (Food Safety and Nutrition Room), 1800 M St, NW from 12:30 to 1:30. Enter the South Tower & take the elevator to the 3rd floor to check in at the guard's desk.

First-time attendees should contact Charlie Hallahan, 202-694-5051, hallahan@ers.usda.gov, and leave their name. Directions to the building & many links of statistical interest can be found at the SIGSTAT website, www.cpcug.org/user/sigstat/.

Notice about Seminars at the Bureau of Labor Statistics

A new list of attendees of WSS seminars at the Bureau of Labor Statistics begins January 2, 2003 (the previous list will be discarded). If you plan to attend a seminar at BLS, you will need to do one of the following at least by noon 1 day ahead: (1) e-mail name, affiliation, and name of seminar to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') or (2) call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Finally, bring a photo ID. NOTE: Once on the list, you need not contact BLS for subsequent seminars through March 31, 2003.

Note from the WSS NEWS Editor

Items for publication in the March 2003 WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than January 28, 2003. E-mail items to Michael Feil at michael.feil@usda.gov.

EMPLOYMENT

SENIOR COMPUTER SCIENTIST/STATISTICIAN RESEARCH POSITION

Applications and nominations are invited for one senior research position in computer science or statistics at the U.S. Census Bureau in the Washington, D.C. area. The senior position of Principal Researcher involves research, consulting, and directing the work of less experienced researchers. It requires a Ph.D. in computer science, statistics, or a closely related field and a substantial record of original research in information retrieval, data analysis, data mining, data visualization, and graphical display of data, including publications. The 2002 salary range is \$78,265-\$119,682 depending on qualifications and experience.

The selected individual will serve as Principal Researcher and Technical Leader of the Computing Research Group of the Statistical Research Division and oversee multiple related projects led by other researchers. The individual will have knowledge of statistics, possess outstanding competence, and demonstrate ability to initiate and perform research and development activities in the areas listed above. Products of this position are research efforts and applications affecting data products from all of the Census Bureau's censuses and sample surveys. The researcher also provides consultation, training, and documentation of methods and software developed and so must have good communication and personal skills.

For further information or to start the application process, please contact Rob Creecy, Statistical Research Division, Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233-9100 or rob.creecy@census.gov, or call 301-457-4972. U.S. citizenship is required

Program Abstract

- Title:** Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) Prototype Disclosure Software for Tabular Data
- Speakers:** James P. Kelly, OptTek Systems Inc, Boulder, Colorado
J. Neil Russell, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Washington, DC
- Date/Time:** Tuesday, January 21, 2003, 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Postal Square Building (PSB), Conference Center, Conference Rooms 7&8, 2 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington DC. Please use the First Street entrance to the PSB. To gain entrance to BLS, please see Notice at the end of this announcement.
- Sponsor:** WSS Methodology Section
- Abstract:** The United States Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) is developing its confidentiality policy which is based on its legislative mandate (49 U.S.C. 111(i)) to protect individually identifiable information. Because the field of statistical disclosure limitation (SDL) research is still evolving, BTS wants to take advantage of the latest SDL research in updating its confidentiality policy and practices. To this end, BTS initiated a project to develop, demonstrate, and implement new, state-of-the-art SDL methods for complex, multi-dimensional (up to five) tables that contain a hierarchical structure.

After reviewing a wide variety of SDL methods described in the literature, the project team selected the Synthetic Data Substitution (SDS) method proposed by Dandekar and Cox (2002), which evaluated well for the BTS requirements. This method was subsequently enhanced to efficiently manipulate large tables. A modified version of this SDS method was implemented into prototype computer software for demonstration and testing. The explication of extremely efficient algorithms (capable of processing multi-dimensional tables with hundreds of thousands of entries) will be discussed, along with the software functionality and a demonstration of the prototype software using examples of agency tabular data.

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Program Abstract

Topic: The NASS Question Repository System

Speakers: Daniel G. Beckler, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2003, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Room 7

Sponsor: WSS Data Collection Methods Section

Abstract: USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts hundreds of surveys annually on the nation's farmers and agribusinesses. For most surveys multiple questionnaire versions are needed to address differences in agriculture between states. The questionnaires also need to be developed for multiple data collection modes: mail, telephone/CATI, and most recently the World Wide Web. In order to efficiently create the numerous questionnaires needed for all of the survey, state and mode combinations, NASS is developing a client-server based Question Repository System (QRS). The QRS includes a user interface to build properly formatted questions for the various modes; these questions are then stored in a database. The stored questions are then retrieved and used to build questionnaires, which may be saved, printed or ported to a Web server. This seminar discusses the capabilities and some technical details of the QRS.

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Joint Program on Survey Methodology two-day short courses

Title	Date	Registration Deadline
Web Survey Design	February 18-19, 2003	January 28, 2003
Introduction to Survey Estimation	March 11-12, 2003	February 18, 2003
Model-based Survey Sampling: Theory and Practice	April 28-29, 2003	April 7, 2003
Nonresponse in Household Interview Surveys	May 21-22, 2003	April 30, 2003

Additional Information

For information on JPSM short courses and programs, contact JPSM at 800-937-9320, (direct 734-763-2359); fax 734-764-8263; or e-mail jpsm@umich.edu.

JPSM Home Page: <http://www.jpsm.umd.edu/>
Click on "JPSM Short Courses" for online registration and course information.

Certificate and Citation Programs: <http://www.jpsm.umd.edu/citation/Default.htm>

Employment

As a service to local statisticians, *WSS News* provides notification of employment opportunities and description of those seeking employment here in the Washington, DC, area. Readers are encouraged to take advantage of this feature of the newsletter. The deadline for inserting notices is five (5) weeks before the publication date. Those interested should email or call Anne Peterson, at apeterson.ipr@verizon.net or (703) 979-1191.

U. S. CENSUS BUREAU

TIME SERIES RESEARCH POSITION

Applications and nominations are invited for one senior and one or more junior or intermediate research positions in time series analysis at the U.S. Census Bureau in the Washington D.C. area. The senior position of Principal Researcher is in the Statistical Research Division and involves research, consulting, and directing the work of less experienced researchers. It requires a Ph.D. in Statistics or a closely related field and a substantial record of original research in time series analysis including publications. The 2002 salary range is \$78,265-\$119,682 depending on qualifications and experience. The other positions require at least a Master's degree in Statistics or a closely related field, course work in time series analysis, significant statistical computing experience, and ability to conduct research. The 2002 salary range is \$46,469-\$73,269 depending on qualifications and experience.

The Census Bureau's methods and software for time series modeling and seasonal adjustment are used world-wide in government, industry, and academia. The available positions are on the staffs responsible for the further development, testing, training, and support of such methods and software for the Census Bureau's many economic surveys. Research topics of current interest include state space modeling with sampling error components; non-Gaussian modeling for signal extraction; statistical graphics and other diagnostics for seasonal adjustment; automatic selection methods for ARIMA models, regressors and outlier treatments; and issues involved with the seasonal adjustment of short time series. The researchers also provide consultation, training, and documentation of methods and software developed and so must have good communication and personal skills.

For further information or to start the application process, please contact David F. Findley, Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233-9100 or david.f.findley@census.gov, or call 301-457-4983. U.S. citizenship is required.

USABILITY RESEARCH POSITION

Applications and nominations are invited for one senior or intermediate research position in usability at the U.S. Census Bureau in the Washington D.C. area. The senior position of Principal Researcher involves research, consulting, and directing the work of less experienced researchers. It requires a Ph.D. in Psychology or a closely related field and a substantial record of original research in human-computer interaction including publications. The 2002 salary range is \$78,265-\$119,682 depending on qualifications and experience. An intermediate level position would require a Ph.D. in Psychology or a closely related field and significant consulting and research in the behavioral sciences. The 2002 salary range is \$55,694-\$86,095 depending on qualifications and experience.

The Census Bureau's Usability Laboratory maintains an active program of human-computer interaction research and service for Census Bureau applications. The Usability Laboratory sponsors and conducts research to discover good design principles and evaluation methods for human-computer interactions. We put the principles and methods into practice by constructing and evaluating user interfaces that maximize human capabilities and satisfaction. Recent service projects have focused on the design and evaluation of user interfaces to electronic questionnaires, knowledge databases, and data dissemination web sites at the Census Bureau. We assist projects in implementing the user-centered design process, including user profiling, task analysis, setting usability goals, creating design guidelines, quick testing of early prototypes, expert or heuristic reviews, usability testing, and post-release performance monitoring. Recent R&D efforts have addressed remote usability testing, guidelines and style guides, eye tracking, map-based interfaces to statistical data, navigating electronic questionnaires, error messages for electronic questionnaires, and response rates to surveys with web questionnaire options. The researcher must have good communication and personal skills.

For further information or to start the application process, please contact Kent Marquis, Human Factors and Usability Research Group, Statistical Research Division, Census Bureau, Washington, D C 20233-9100 or kent.hammond.marquis@census.gov, or call 301-457-4719. U.S. citizenship is required.

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