



WSS NEWS

October 2008

WASHINGTON
STATISTICAL
SOCIETY

18th Annual Morris Hansen Lecture

Louis Kincannon, former director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, will give the 18th Annual Morris Hansen Lecture on Tuesday October 28 at 3:30 P.M. in the Jefferson Auditorium of the Department of Agriculture's South Building (Independence Avenue SW, between 12th and 14th Street).

The title of the lecture is: *The Federal Statistical System: Is It Stronger Now Than It Was Eight Years Ago?* Janet Norwood and Robert Parker will be the discussants.

The Hansen Lecture Series is sponsored by the Washington Statistical Society, Westat, and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

The USDA South Building (Independence Avenue SW) is between 12th and 14th Streets at the Smithsonian Metro Stop (Blue Line). Enter through Wing 5 or Wing 7 from Independence Ave. (The special assistance entrance is at 12th & Independence). A photo ID is required.

Please pre-register for this event to help facilitate access to the building. Pre-register on line at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/morrishansen/>.

Seminar Series: Administrative Data in Support of Policy Relevant Statistics

The Public Policy Program of the WSS, in partnership with the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology's Subcommittee on the Statistical Uses of Administrative Records, is pleased to announce the launch of a seminar series on "Administrative Data in Support of Policy Relevant Statistics." The series will run from Fall 2008 until Spring 2009, with approximately one seminar a month. The series will focus on federal statistical uses of state- and locally-held administrative records, often in concert with survey data, including for federal program evaluation and other policy relevant applications.

Confirmed seminars will cover Medicaid undercount issues, Earned Income Tax Credit impact on employment, improving recidivism research, and outcomes of students attending the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. Seminars in the planning stages include examining Food Stamp eligibility and participation, innovations with the Quarterly Census of Employment, and others.

The first seminar will be: "Administrative Data in Support of Policy Relevant Statistics: The Medicaid Undercount Project." It will be held on November 13, 2008, in Room 8 of the BLS Conference Center. The full session abstract is provided below. Please put the first seminar on your calendar and watch this space for updated information each month. Direct any questions to Shelly Wilkie Martinez (rmartinez@omb.eop.gov) or Michael Cohen (MCohen@nas.edu).

Administrative Announcements

WSS needs your help to assure your contact information is up-to-date

Chris Moriarity and Vince Massimini

WSS wants to do what we can to keep all WSS members informed, primarily by email. Vince sends out notices and the WSS monthly newsletter to WSS members via the WSS listserv. The WSS newsletter is available at the WSS website, <http://scs.gmu.edu/~wss>, shortly after newsletter editor Mike Feil finishes creating it.

WSS maintains a list of WSS member email addresses for the WSS listserv, independent of ASA. Many WSS members receive WSS email at a different address than the one on file with ASA. Thus, we do not change a member's email address in the WSS list unless we receive a request from the member, or there is a listserv delivery problem. Recently, there was a delivery problem with some email notices sent for the WSS election, even though we are not seeing delivery problems when WSS listserv messages are sent to most of those addresses. Thus, we can't be certain that an email address is valid just because it appears to be receiving WSS listserv messages.

If you change your email address with ASA, and you want WSS to also make this change, please tell us (Chris and Vince) - we don't do it automatically. If you are a WSS member, and you are not getting WSS listserv messages and you want to, please tell us. If you would like WSS to use a different email address for the WSS listserv than the one currently being used, please tell us, and we'll do an update.

Organizations periodically update spam and other filters that block messages from the WSS listserv. We generally have no way to know if the mail is being blocked. Typically, the WSS listserv sends out 8-10 messages per month (newsletter, meetings, employment opportunities, etc.). If you are not getting mail from the WSS listserv for a few weeks, please contact us to see if there is a difficulty. If there is a spam or other blocker problem at the organization, we will try to work with the member's IT folks to resolve the problem.

We obtain email addresses for new ASA/WSS members from ASA, so it's important that ASA has up-to-date contact information for you. If you're not sure if your contact information is current with ASA, you can check this online at the ASA website, using the "Members Only" function. If you didn't get an email notice recently from ASA about the ASA election, it's likely that ASA does not have a valid email address on file for you, and WSS probably doesn't either.

Thank you!
Chris (cdm7@cdc.gov) and Vince (svm@mitre.org)

Mailing Address Change

The mailing address for the Washington Statistical Society is now P.O. Box 2033, Washington, DC 20013 which is in the same building as BLS. The Suitland P.O. box mailing address will be retained for a limited time during the transition.

WSS and Other Seminars

(All events are open to any interested persons)

October

- 7 Tues. **Statistical Policy Issues Arising in Carrying Out the Requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003**
- 8 Wed. **An Introduction to Using GIS for Geostatistical Analysis**
- 15 Wed. **Greenhouse, White House, and Statistics: The use of statistics in environmental decision making**
- 22 Wed. **NORC Data Enclave**
- 23 Thurs. **The Increasing Difficulty of Obtaining Personal Interviews in the United States' Ever Changing Social Environment**
- 24 Fri. **Usability of Electronic Voting and Public Opinion about the New Technology**
- Annual Morris Hansen Lecture**
- 28 Tues. **The Federal Statistical System: Is It Stronger Now Than It Was Eight Years Ago?**

November

- 4 Tues. **Self-Service Business Intelligence for Statistical Agencies/Departments**
- 13 Tues. **Administrative Data in Support of Policy Relevant Statistics: The Medicaid Undercount Project**
- 20 Thurs. **Bayesian Multiscale Multiple Imputation with Implications to Data Confidentiality**

December

- 9 Mon. **Getting Started with ODS Statistical Graphics in SAS 9.2 & An Introduction to SAS Stat Studio**

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

Announcement

SIGSTAT Topics for Fall 2008

October 15, 2008: Survival Models in SAS: PROC PHREG Part 4
(<http://www.sas.com/apps/pubscat/bookdetails.jsp?pc=55233>)

Continuing the series of talks based on the book "Survival Analysis Using the SAS System: A Practical Guide" by Paul Allison begun in October 2007, we'll finish Chapter 5: Estimating Cox Regression Models with PROC PHREG.

Topics covered are:

1. Cox Models with Nonproportional Hazards
2. Interactions with Time as Time-Dependent Covariates
3. Nonproportionality via Stratification
4. Left Truncation and Late Entry into the Risk Set
5. Estimating Survivor Functions
6. Residuals and Influence Statistics
7. Testing Linear Hypotheses with the TEST Statement

November 19, 2008: Survival Models in SAS: PROC PHREG Part 5
(<http://www.sas.com/apps/pubscat/bookdetails.jsp?pc=55233>)

Continuing the series of talks based on the book "Survival Analysis Using the SAS System: A Practical Guide" by Paul Allison begun in October 2007, we'll cover Chapter 6: Competing Risks

Topics covered are:

1. Introduction
2. Type-specific hazards
3. Time in Power for Leaders of Countries: Example
4. Estimates and Tests without Covariates
5. Covariate Effects via Cox Models
6. Accelerated Failure Time Models
7. An Alternative Approach to Multiple Event Types

December 17, 2008: GeoDA
(<https://www.geoda.uiuc.edu/>)

GeoDa is the latest incarnation in a long line of software tools developed by Dr. Luc Anselin's Spatial Analysis Laboratory (SAL) in the Department of Geography at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. It is designed to implement techniques for exploratory spatial data analysis (ESDA) on lattice data (points and polygons). The free program provides a user friendly and graphical interface to methods of descriptive spatial data analysis, such as spatial autocorrelation statistics, as well as basic spatial regression functionality. The latest version contains several new features such as a cartogram, a refined map movie, parallel coordinate plot, 3D visualization, conditional plots (and maps) and spatial regression.

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, 1800 M St, NW from 12:00 to 1:00. 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, <http://www.cpcug.org/user/sigstat/>.

Note from the WSS NEWS Editor

Items for publication in the November issue of the WSS NEWS will be accepted until October 10, 2008. E-mail items to Michael Feil at michael.feil@usda.gov.

Program Announcement

- Title:** **Statistical Policy Issues Arising in Carrying Out the Requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003**
- Speaker:** Allen Beck, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice
- Discussant:** Hermann Habermann, former Director, U.N. Statistics Division and former Deputy Director, U.S. Census Bureau
- Chair:** Shelly Wilkie Martinez, Office of Statistical and Science Policy, U.S. Office of Management and Budget
- Date/Time:** Tuesday, October 7, 2008 / 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, you need to email your name, affiliation and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (note that there is an underscore after ‘wss’) by noon at least two days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message with this information. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsor:** WSS Section on Public Policy
- Abstract:** Our speaker will discuss how the Bureau of Justice Statistics has approached its responsibilities under the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. The act provides fairly detailed sampling specifications and requires BJS to publish prison- and jail-level data on the incidence of rape, and to identify the three “best” and “worst” of each. Given the sensitive nature of the content, the developmental nature of the data collections, and the administrative and enforcement purposes to which the data will be put, BJS has had to step carefully to maintain its position as the Justice Department’s principal *statistical* agency. Our discussant will assess the unfolding BJS experience as a case study of agency practice against professional practice and ethical criteria embodied in frameworks such as the United Nation’s *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics* and in *Principles and Practices of a Statistical Agency*, a seminal publication of the Committee on National Statistics.

Program Announcement

- Title:** **An Introduction to Using GIS for Geostatistical Analysis**
- Presenter:** Dr. Kathleen Hancock
Director for the Center for Geospatial Information Technology
Associate Professor in the Via Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
at Virginia Tech.
- Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 8, 2008 / 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Training Center – Room 10. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsor:** Interagency Council on Statistical Policy – Innovation Subgroup
- Abstract:** When any spatially distributed phenomenon is measured, the observations display some form of spatial pattern, whether physical, environmental, or demographic. Traditional sampling methods, and resulting models, require that these phenomena be measured such that they were spatially independent to avoid spatial correlations. With geostatistics, these autocorrelations can be modeled, allowing sampling to be less restrictive and changing the emphasis from estimation of averages to mapping of spatially-distributed populations.
- This presentation will provide an overview of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) methods to explore spatially distributed information and to describe, model, and predict values from geospatially-referenced sample data.

Program Announcement

- Title:** **Greenhouse, White House, and Statistics: The use of statistics in environmental decision making**
- Speaker:** Barry D. Nussbaum, Chief Statistician, US Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC
- Chair:** Mel Kollander
- Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 15, 2008 / 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar list attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsor:** WSS Agriculture and Natural Resources Section
- Abstract:** In many applications, statistics and the statistician play an enormous role in the initiation, analysis, and implementation of policy and decisions. Yet, frequently after elaborate analyses, it is only a concise summary of the analysis that reaches the decision makers desk. Using a number of examples, the author describes how frequently it is a relatively simple description of statistical analyses, when presented truly effectively (and often humorously), that can have a large impact on major decisions. The author also demonstrates the growing need to review the quality of large acquired data bases. This presentation includes several real examples from relatively simple surveys, analyses, and reviews with applications in regulation development, court cases, and policy making. One of the examples even landed on the desk of the President of the United States.
- e-mail:** Nussbaum.Barry@epamail.epa.gov

Program Announcement

- Title:** NORC Data Enclave
- Speaker:** Chet Bowie and Tim Mulcahy, National Opinion Research Center at The University of Chicago
- Chair:** Jeri M. Mulrow, Mathematical Statistician, National Science Foundation
- Date/Time:** Wednesday, October 22, 2008 / 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsors:** ICSP Innovation Working Group
- Abstract:** Federal Statistical Agencies currently employ a variety of ways to share and disseminate information and data ranging from print publications to tabular output to integrated database systems. The goal is to provide useful data to a variety of audiences. Statistical agencies face a significant challenge in striking an appropriate balance between providing access to sensitive data and safeguarding confidentiality. Of particular interest to many data users is access to microdata files. Many exciting options are available for producing microdata that balance availability with protection. These options range from statistical methods to produce public use files, to analytic solutions sitting on top of the data, to restricted data access. This seminar is designed to showcase one new option.

The NORC Data Enclave began in July 2007. The enclave provides a secure environment within which authorized researchers can access sensitive microdata remotely from their offices or onsite at NORC. The enclave currently provides access to data produced by the Department of Commerce's National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) - Technology Innovation Program (TIP), the Kauffman Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service and National Agricultural Statistical Service.

This presentation will discuss the rationale behind the enclave's development, NORC's portfolio approach to protecting data in the enclave, the training and collaborative aspects of the enclave, and basic navigation within the enclave environment. The presentation also will include discussion on lessons learned, challenges, and the future direction of remote data access platforms.

Program Announcement

- Title:** **The Increasing Difficulty of Obtaining Personal Interviews in the United States' Ever Changing Social Environment**
- Speaker:** William Wayne Hatcher, Regional Director, Charlotte Region, Census Bureau
- Discussant:** Terry P. O'Connor, Head, Data Quality Research Section, National Agricultural Statistics Service/USDA
- Chair:** Marilyn Worthy, Energy Information Administration
- Date/Time:** Thursday, October 23, 2008 / 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center, Room 7. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsors:** WSS Data Collection Methods and DC-AAPOR
- Abstract:** Personal (face to face) interviewing provides many advantages to telephone or other modes of interviewing. However personal interviewing has become much more challenging the past decade. This presentation will address barriers to personal interviewing including the challenge of interviewing in an increasingly diverse society, difficulty in finding respondents at home, convincing respondents to make time in their busy schedule for an interview, locating respondents who move to different locations on longitudinal surveys, gaining access to locked buildings and gated communities, interviewing a polarized or disenfranchised population, techniques used to convince reluctant respondents to participate in a survey, and gaining trust and cooperation from uncooperative respondents.

Program Announcement

- Title:** Usability of Electronic Voting and Public Opinion about the New Technology
- Chair:** Brian Meekins, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Speaker:** Frederick Conrad and Michael Traugott, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
- Date/Time:** Friday, October 24, 2008 / 2:00 – 3:30pm
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Use the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsor:** Methodology Program, WSS
D.C. AAPOR
- Abstract:** In response to the contentious presidential election in 2000, most states have introduced some form of electronic voting. The new technology has almost certainly repaired the ambiguity inherent in analog voting systems that were made famous by phenomena like “hanging chads” in which one cannot be certain whether the voter intended to register a vote for a candidate or not. However, e-voting has generated considerable vitriol because of concerns about voting security (e.g., hacking) and to a lesser degree usability (inability to vote as intended). We present recent research that addresses the usability of current e-voting systems and the public’s confidence in the accuracy, privacy and anonymity of their votes. Our results come from (1) a laboratory study that measures the relationships between voting accuracy, micro-level voting actions and satisfaction in six different e-voting interfaces, (2) a natural experiment that compares rates of incomplete or spoiled ballots in two states before and after the introduction of e-voting using a new statistical method (ecological regression), and (3) two national surveys with an embedded vignette experiment that varies the description of e-voting and that allow us to examine the impact of voters’ scientific knowledge and attitudes toward science on their attitudes toward e-voting.

Program Announcement

Title: Self-Service Business Intelligence for Statistical Agencies/Departments

Speakers: Karen Cholak, Space-Time Research
Brian Garrett, Space-Time Research

Chair: Jeri M. Mulrow, Mathematical Statistician, National Science Foundation

Date/Time: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 / 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

Location: Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.

Sponsors: ICSP Innovation Working Group

Abstract: Federal, state and local statistical agencies are under increasing demands from their key stakeholders and the public at large. Timely, relevant and robust statistics are being recognized as fundamental to enabling policy formulation by government agencies and allowing industry and the community to make better informed decisions. At the same time, agencies must ensure the confidentiality of the data.

Some of the key business, policy, and management issues facing statistical agencies include:

- Enhancing the transparency of government information
- Transforming government through information sharing
- Providing better information services with fewer programmers and statisticians
- Providing appropriate access to a diverse range of information users
- Meeting the user's expectation for instant answers to questions
- Making more data available to the stakeholders
- Balancing increased demands of privacy protection for individuals versus increasing access to data
- Ensuring responsible statistical communication to users

This seminar is designed to address these issues.

Space-Time Research (STR) is the global leader in *Self-Service Business Intelligence*. Our solutions are EASIER, FASTER, and SAFER than traditional statistical analysis. End-users interactively analyze and visualize data in a drag-and-drop environment. By optimizing detailed-level data, or microdata, our solution supports a "Query-Answer-Query" approach to data exploration. Confidentiality routines protect the privacy of the data; integration with mapping technology supports visualization options for geo-coded data.

Our customers are the most advanced government agencies for statistics, education, transportation, health, and justice. Customers include the U.S. Census Bureau, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics New Zealand, Office for National Statistics in the United Kingdom, and the Russian Federal Statistics Office, among others.

Program Announcement

- Title:** **Administrative Data in Support of Policy Relevant Statistics: The Medicaid Undercount Project**
- Speaker:** Dr. Michael Davern, Assistant Professor and Research Director, State Health Access Data Assistance Center, University of Minnesota
- Discussant:** Linda Bilheimer, Associate Director for Analysis and Epidemiology, National Center for Health Statistics
- Chair:** Shelly Wilkie Martinez, Office of Statistical and Science Policy, U.S. Office of Management and Budget
- Date/Time:** Tuesday, November 13, 2008 / 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, you need to email your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (note that there is an underscore after 'wss') by noon at least two days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message with this information. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsor:** WSS Section on Public Policy

Abstract: The seminar will focus on efforts to understand why survey estimates of the number of people enrolled in Medicaid are well below administrative data enrollment counts. A crude comparison between the Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS) and the Medicaid Statistical Information System (MSIS) shows the survey estimate to be 43% smaller than the administrative data estimate. The causes of this large discrepancy are varied and many of them can have a profound impact on our understanding of health access policy. This project categorized the identified causes of the "undercount" into universe alignment issues and survey response error. After adjusting for universe alignment issues (which include adjustments for people counted in MSIS that will not be counted in the CPS such as institutional group quarters and people enrolled in more than one state during the reference year), the gap between the survey estimate and administrative data narrows to 31%. The remaining cause of discrepancy is survey reporting error with 17% of the linked cases reporting being uninsured in the CPS. The extent of the reporting error, at first glance, places the error clearly in the domain of survey measurement for counting many people as being uninsured all of last year when they were enrolled in Medicaid for at least a day.

The large reduction in the number of uninsured has far reaching implications on those who use the survey data to evaluate federal and state programs, model program eligibility and forecast the costs of program alterations. However, the reporting error is not unique to one survey instrument as other subsequent linkage projects show large numbers of linked cases answering other surveys as though they are uninsured (although the CPS has the highest level examined so far). Furthermore, the reporting error varies greatly by state. States exercise substantial control over the operation of the Medicaid program. Thus, what at first appears to be "survey error" may partially be the result of Medicaid program operations as large numbers of people do not know they (or their dependents) have health insurance coverage. The study, therefore, has implications for not only improving survey instrument design (as some instruments are clearly better than others at reducing the error), but is also suggestive that some states may need to improve communication with enrollees regarding their enrollment in Medicaid.

Program Announcement

- Title:** Bayesian Multiscale Multiple Imputation with Implications to Data Confidentiality
- Speaker:** Dr. Scott Holan, University of Missouri-Columbia
- Discussant:** Stephen Cohen, National Science Foundation
- Chair:** Jeri M. Mulrow, Mathematical Statistician, National Science Foundation
- Date/Time:** Thursday, November 20, 2008 / 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center. To be placed on the seminar attendance list at the Bureau of Labor Statistics you need to e-mail your name, affiliation, and seminar name to wss_seminar@bls.gov (underscore after 'wss') by noon at least 2 days in advance of the seminar or call 202-691-7524 and leave a message. Bring a photo ID to the seminar. BLS is located at 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE. Take the Red Line to Union Station.
- Sponsors:** ICSP Innovation Working Group
- Abstract:** Federal Statistical Agencies currently employ a variety of ways to share and disseminate information and data ranging from print publications to tabular output to integrated database systems. The goal is to provide useful data to a variety of audiences. Statistical agencies face a significant challenge in striking an appropriate balance between providing access to sensitive data and safeguarding confidentiality. This seminar is designed to showcase a new option.

Many scientific, sociological and economic applications present data that are collected on multiple scales of resolution. Frequently, such data sets experience missing observations in a manner that they can be accurately imputed using the method we propose known as Bayesian multiscale multiple imputation. Although our method is of independent interest one immediate implication of such methodology is the potential affect on confidential databases where the mechanism of protection is through cell suppression. In order to demonstrate the proposed methodology and to access the effectiveness of disclosure practices in longitudinal databases, we conduct a large scale empirical study using the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). During the course of our empirical investigation it is determined that we can predict several suppressed cells to within 1% accuracy, thus causing potential concerns for data confidentiality.

Program Announcement

SAS - New Extensions

The Statistical Computing Section of WSS is jointly sponsoring with the DC SAS User Group, DCSUG, two presentations by Bob Rodriguez of SAS Institute. The talks, listed below, discuss statistical graphics and a new product, SAS Stat Studio. The talks will be held on Tuesday, December 9, 2008, from 9:15 to 11:45 in the BLS Conference Center. Further details for this presentation can be found at www.dc-sug.org (from Oct 1 onwards). On that website, DCSUG is currently promoting their September 9 morning & September 24 evening meetings.

All those who plan to attend must be on WSS or DCSUG entry list or have a BLS ID.

Getting Started with ODS Statistical Graphics in SAS 9.2 **Robert N. Rodriguez, SAS Institute**

SAS 9.1 introduced an experimental extension to the output Delivery System (ODS), which enabled over two dozen SAS/STAT and SAS/ETS procedures to create statistical graphics as automatically as they create tables. This extension, referred to as "ODS Graphics" for short, requires minimal additional syntax, and it provides commonly needed displays for data analysis and statistical modeling, including scatter plots, histograms, and box-and-whisker plots. Many ODS features, such as styles and destination statements, apply equally to tables and graphs.

With the production release of ODS Graphics in SAS 9.2, over sixty statistical procedures have been enabled to use this new functionality. New SAS/GRAPH procedures, as well as existing SAS/QC procedures, also take advantage of this functionality. Additional ODS styles for statistical work are available. You can use a new point-and-click graphics editor to make changes to graphs, such as modifying titles and annotating points. This talk explains the basics of using ODS Graphics to create and manage graphs for data exploration and statistical analysis.

An Introduction to SAS Stat Studio **Robert N. Rodriguez, SAS Institute**

SAS Stat Studio 3.1 is new statistical software in SAS 9.2 that is designed to meet the needs of innovative problem solvers who are familiar with SAS/STAT or SAS/IML but need more versatility to create customized analyses. Stat Studio provides a rich programming environment that blends the flexibility of the IML matrix language with the ability to call SAS procedures as functions and create customized dynamic graphics.

With Stat Studio, you can build on your familiarity with either SAS/STAT or SAS/IML to write programs that explore data, fit models, and use linked graphics to relate the results to the data. You can move seamlessly between programming and interactive analysis. If your programs use methods that are computationally intensive, you can run them simultaneously in multiple workspaces. This talk demonstrates how Stat Studio facilitates techniques that would otherwise be difficult with traditional SAS programming.

Biographical Sketch

Bob Rodriguez joined SAS in 1983 and is currently a senior director in SAS R&D with responsibility for the development of statistical software, including SAS/STAT and SAS/QC. He received his Ph.D. in statistics from the University of North Carolina in 1977, and was a staff research scientist at General Motors Research Laboratories from 1977 until 1983. Bob is active in the American Statistical Association, where he currently serves as vice president.

Announcement

107th Meeting of the Committee on National Statistics

The National Academies, NAS building, 2100 C St., NW, Washington, DC

Friday, October 31, 2008 Open Session – Public Seminar and Reception

- 2:00 p.m. Light refreshments for Seminar Guests – NAS Great Hall Seminar—Auditorium
 2:25 p.m. Welcome—Bill Eddy, CNSTAT Chair and Carnegie Mellon University
 2:30 p.m. Developments at the OMB Statistical and Science Policy Office—Katherine K. Wallman, Chief Statistician
 2:40 p.m. Featured Topic: Immigration Flows: What Do We Know? How Can We Learn More?
 Chair: Douglas Massey, CNSTAT, NAS, and Princeton University
 Panel: Michael Hofer, Director, Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security
 Alexa Kennedy-Puthoff, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau
 Jeffrey Passel, Pew Hispanic Center
 3:50 p.m. Floor discussion
 4:00 p.m. Reception – Great Hall
 5:00 p.m. Adjourn

Abstract: The history of the United States is built on waves of immigration from the first settlements to the present day, each wave raising issues of what it means to be an American. In recent years, increased immigration—particularly by people who enter or stay in the country illegally—has produced heated debate and divided views on appropriate policies.

It has not always been possible to provide sufficient light, from high-quality statistics, to inform public debate. Douglas Massey will chair and lead off a panel of experts on what we know about immigration flows and how we can learn more. Doug will set the stage by providing historical context on immigration flows. Mike Hofer will hit the highlights of what useful information the Office of Immigration Statistics provides and would like to provide; Alexa Kennedy-Puthoff will describe how the Census Bureau produces estimates of total immigration and their strengths and weaknesses; and Jeff Passel will describe the estimates that he produces using OIS and Census Bureau data and what improvements, as a data user, he believes are necessary and feasible. Doug will conclude with an overview of his work with the New Immigrant Survey, the Mexican Migration Project, the Latin American Migration Project, and the New Immigrant Destinations survey.

Note: All venues are handicapped-accessible. There is limited first-come, first-served parking in the visitors' lot on 21st St. The nearest Metro station is Foggy Bottom at 23rd and I Sts., NW (Blue and Orange Lines).

Please RSVP by October 28 to Bridget Edmonds at 202-334-3096 or cnstat@nas.edu.

Announcement

Federal Committee On Statistical Methodology Statistical Policy Seminar

Beyond 2010: Confronting the Challenges

November 18-19, 2008

The Ninth in a Series of Seminars Hosted by COPAFS
(The Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics)

Participants will include statisticians, economists, and managers, as well as other professionals in the broader statistical community who share an interest in keeping current on issues related to federal data.

Support Provided by: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality * Bureau of Economic Analysis * Bureau of Justice Statistics * Bureau of Labor Statistics * Bureau of Transportation Statistics * Energy Information Administration * Environmental Protection Agency * National Agricultural Statistics Service * National Center for Education Statistics * National Center for Health Statistics * Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics of the Social Security Administration * Statistics of Income Division of the Internal Revenue Service * U.S. Census Bureau * Science Resources Statistics/National Science Foundation

Topics:

- * Statistical Uses of Administrative Records in Federal Agencies
- * Case Studies in the Statistical Uses of Administrative Records
- * Cell Phones: The New Frontier in RDD surveys
- * New Perspectives and Practices on Non-Response Bias Analyses
- * Current Issues in Privacy and the Safekeeping of Personally Identifiable Information
- * Survey Respondent Incentives
- * Current Trends in Access to Restricted-Use Data
- * Development and Management of Human and Institutional Capital in Statistical Organizations
- * 2010 Census Experiments
- * Issues of Data Capacity and Statistical Quality to Support Modeling and Micro-simulation Efforts
- * Making Survey Processes More Robust in Response to Funding Reductions
- * Using Paradata to Improve the Management of Survey Costs

Keynote Address: Hermann Habermann, Consultant

Location and Seminar Cost:

L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024

Cost: \$195.00 per person

For Further Information, Contact the COPAFS Office at:

Phone: 703-836-0404

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September 25, 2008

Introduction to the Federal Statistical System

Katharine G. Abraham and Robert M. Groves

October 23-24, 2008

Introduction to Survey Management

Michael F. Weeks

November 17-18, 2008

Creating and Updating Price Indexes: Theory and Practice

Dennis J. Fixler and Richard L. Valliant

February 19, 2009

Practical Tools for Nonresponse Bias Studies

Robert M. Groves and J. Michael Brick

February 23-24, 2009

Introduction to Survey Estimation

David Morganstein and Richard L. Valliant

March 10-11, 2009

The Psychology of Survey Responses

Roger Tourangeau

March 25-26, 2009

Introduction to Survey Sampling

Colm O'Muircheartaigh and James M. Lepkowski

April 6-7, 2009

Guidelines for Writing Questions for Standardized Measurement

Nora Cate Schaeffer

May 11-12, 2009

Methods for Testing Survey Questions

Pamela Campanelli

Additional 2009 courses

Web Survey Design

Mick Couper

Bayesian Inference in Surveys

Roderick Little and Trivellore E. Raghunathan

Analysis and Presentation of Economic Data

Katharine G. Abraham and Deborah P. Klein

(Tentative) Introduction to Item Response Theory (IRT) Modeling and Applications

Bryce B. Reeve

www.jpsm.org/shortcourses

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@insightpolicyresearch.com or (703) 373-6645.

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Application Procedures: Applicants must send a Curriculum Vitae and three letters of reference; a letter to include a synopsis of their role in collaborative medical research that has led to medical scientific presentation or publication and a statement of career purpose indicating their career goals and how this position can help you achieve those goals; and applicants for Assistant Research Professor positions must send an Official Transcript of graduate coursework leading to the doctoral

degree to: Sarah Fowler, Research Professor and Director, The George Washington University Biostatistics Center, 6110 Executive Blvd., Suite 750, Rockville, MD 20852.

[HTTP://WWW.BSC.GWU.EDU](http://www.bsc.gwu.edu)

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Survey Sampling Statistician

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Westat is an employee-owned corporation headquartered in the suburbs of Washington, DC (Rockville, Maryland). We provide statistical consulting and survey research to the agencies of the U.S. Government and to a broad range of business and institutional clients. With a strong technical and managerial staff and a long record of quality research, Westat has become one of the leading survey research and statistical consulting organizations in the United States.

Our company was founded in 1961 by three statisticians. The current staff of more than 1,800 includes over 60 statisticians, as well as research, technical, and administrative staff. In addition, our professional staff is supported by data collection and processing personnel situated locally and in field sites around the country. The work atmosphere is open, progressive, and highly conducive to professional growth.

Our statistical efforts continue to expand in areas such as the environment, energy, health, education, and human resources. Westat statisticians are actively involved in teaching graduate-level courses in statistical methods and survey methodology in collaborative arrangements with area colleges and universities.

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Survey Sampling Statistician (Job Code WSS/DRM/7001)

Three or more years of relevant experience in sample design and selection, frames development, weighting, imputation, and variance estimation. Must have a master's or doctoral degree in statistics and have excellent writing skills. Coursework in sample survey design is highly desirable.

Westat offers excellent growth opportunities and an outstanding benefits package including life and health insurance, an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), a 401(k) plan, flexible spending accounts, professional development, and tuition assistance. For immediate consideration, please send your cover letter, indicating the Westat Job Code, and resume by one of the following methods to:

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**Morris Hansen
Memorial Lecture Series**

Morris Howard Hansen has been described as the most influential statistician in the development of survey methodology in the twentieth century. Early in his Census Bureau career he put together a staff to define the principal problems in the conduct of surveys, investigate these problems, and develop statistical methods to address them. Morris and his staff then widely distributed the results of their efforts, thus influencing statistical agencies all over the world. Generations of statistical students have learned from and been influenced by *Sample Survey Methods and Theory, Volumes I and II* by Hansen, Hurwitz, and Madow, which are commonly referred to by the authors' names instead of the title, and Hansen's other publications.

Morris was also known as a procedures innovator and was a leader in adapting electronic tools, such as computers and mark-reading sensors, to statistics. After his outstanding Census Bureau career, Morris joined Westat which was at the time a fairly small statistical research company. Morris again assembled a strong staff and expanded Westat's scope to take on large Federal government statistical problems.

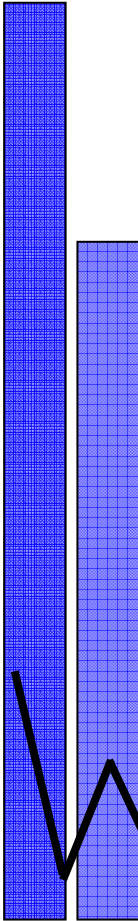
Morris also made outstanding contributions to professional organizations, serving as the President of both the American Statistical Association and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics and as the first president of the International Association of Survey Statisticians. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1976 and was an important member of many Academy committees and panels.

There have been many tributes to Morris since his death in 1990, such as memorial issues of both the *Journal of Official Statistics* and *Survey Methodology*. Westat issued a grant to the Washington Statistical Society to honor Morris with an annual lecture series. The series has been so successful in attracting top quality presentations on a wide variety of topics—in keeping with Morris' broad interests—that Westat has added to the original grant.

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18th ANNUAL MORRIS HANSEN LECTURE



**The Federal Statistical System:
Is It Stronger Now Than It Was
Eight Years Ago?**

Charles Louis Kincannon
Former Director
U.S. Bureau of the Census

Tuesday, October 28, 2008
3:30 p.m.–6:30 p.m.

Jefferson Auditorium
USDA South Building
Independence Ave. (between 12th and 14th Streets)
Smithsonian Metro Station (Blue/Orange Lines)
For expedited entry to USDA, pre-register at
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/morrishansen/>



Charles Louis Kincannon was nominated as Director of the Census Bureau by President Bush and confirmed by the Senate in 2002. He retired in January 2008, and is the longest serving director since the Eisenhower Administration. He began his career as a statistician at the U.S. Census Bureau in 1963 after graduating from the University of Texas at Austin. Kincannon held various posts at Census and also at OMB. He was Deputy Director at Census from 1982 to 1992. In 1992, he was appointed as the first chief statistician in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris to coordinate the organization's statistical programs, as well as advise the OECD secretary general on statistical policy.

He currently serves on the board of directors of Capitol Hill Village, a nonprofit membership organization that helps neighbors stay in their homes as they grow older.

Lecture Abstract The Federal Statistical System proposed to spend almost \$6 billion in 2008 and employ almost 25,000 staff. The statistics produced by the system shape decisions in government at all levels, but also guide business investment and planning, scientific research, and myriad other activities public and private in our country. This paper examines the system that produces the statistics that so affect our lives. It will argue that examination of certain basic aspects of the statistical system define its strength:

- Selection and appointment of leadership,
- autonomy in appointment and development of staff,
- organizational placement of statistical agencies, and
- system-wide leadership, coordination, and maintenance of the fundamental activities that ensure the statistics produced describe the world we live in today.

Finally, and with well advised caution, the paper examines yet again the organization of the system. Almost any organizational structure is to some degree dysfunctional. The question is whether the degree of dysfunction in the current system is sufficient to warrant change and whether there are practical and feasible improvements worth considering.

Program

Jefferson Auditorium
U.S. Department of Agriculture
South Building

Tuesday, October 28, 2008
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Opening Remarks

Norman M. Bradburn
Chair, Hansen Lecture Committee

Chair

Tommy Wright
U.S. Bureau of the Census

Keynote Speaker

Charles Louis Kincannon
Director, U.S. Bureau of the Census (retired)

Discussants

Janet Norwood
Commissioner, Bureau of Labor Statistics (retired)

Robert Parker
Chief Statistician, GAO (retired)

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Keith Rust
Rick Valiant
Tommy Wright

Reception

Patio, Department of Agriculture
Jamie L. Whitten Building
(Across Independence Avenue)
5:30–6:30 p.m.