



WASHINGTON
STATISTICAL
SOCIETY

WSS NEWS

September 1995

***** Congratulations! *****

The balloting results are in and the following people were elected to the Board of Directors of the Washington Statistical Society (WSS):

President-Elect (1995-96)

Phillip S. Kott, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Methodology Program Chair (1995-96)

Julia L. Bienias, Bureau of the Census

Representatives-At-Large (1995-97)

Carolee Bush, Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Phillip Ross, Environmental Protection Agency

Secretary (1995-98)

Elizabeth Sweet, Bureau of the Census

WSS Seminars

(All events are open to any interested persons)

September		
14	Thur.	Cost-Benefit Analysis Methodological Issues
19	Tues.	WesVarPC: A Windows-Based Program for Computing Sampling Errors for Data from Complex Samples
27	Wed.	Variances of X-11 Seasonal Adjustments That Account for Sampling Error and Forecast Extension
28	Thur.	Confidence Intervals for Sub-Domain Parameters When the Sub-Domain Sample Size Is Random

Announcements

1995 Julius Shiskin Award Given to Fritz Scheuren

The Washington Statistical Society and the National Association of Business Economists announced today that the 1995 Julius Shiskin Award has been awarded to Fritz Scheuren of George Washington University.

In granting the 1995 award, the committee said that Fritz Scheuren has broken new ground in the construction of micro economic files, as well as the statistical uses of administrative data for economic research.

Until recently, he served as Director of the Statistics of Income Division of the Internal Revenue Service, where he instituted a large array of complex improvements while opening the process to peer review and to the review of IRS data users. The chair of the Julius Shiskin Committee, Dr. Martin Fleming stated "The Statistics of Income Division, which Fritz oversaw for over a dozen years, has done a tremendous job of providing complex microdata on the U.S. tax system to other government agencies and to researchers around the world. Much of the valuable research in the done in the past decade would not have been possible without the efforts of Fritz Scheuren." Dr. Fleming further stated that "We can be proud that the United States produces what is without question the finest database of its kind in the world, thanks being due in large part to Fritz's dedication, talents, and abilities."

In addition to his superb efforts at Statistics of Income, he has served as President of the Washington Statistical Society and as Chair of the American Statistical Society Section of Survey Research Methods, where he extended his dynamism to the profession at large. Dr. Scheuren also teaches at George Washington University and the USDA Graduate School. He has published in a number of areas of statistics. His influence on other researchers both within and outside government is broad and deep.

The Julius Shiskin Award was established by the family of the late Julius Shiskin and is administered by the Washington Statistical Society and the National Association of Business Economists. The committee said that the award was intended to honor original and important contributions in the development of economic statistics and in their use in interpreting economic events. Mr. Shiskin's government career as an economic statistician spanned more than 30 years during which time he worked at the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the Office of Management and Budget and culminated at the U.S. Department of Labor as the Commissioner of Labor Statistics.

In recent years the award has also been received by Richard D. Allen of the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Joel Popkin of Joel Popkin and Company; Barbara Bailar of the American Statistical Association and formerly the Associate Director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census; and Carol C. Carson, Director of the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Kullback Memorial Research Conference

During May 24-25, 1996, the George Washington University will sponsor the Kullback Memorial Research Conference. The conference will celebrate the work of Solomon Kullback, particularly his contributions to cryptography and information theory.

Recent applications of Kullback-Leibler information measures (Bayesian and frequentist) will be featured, including applications of information-theoretic methodology for model discrimination and in the analysis of multidimensional discrete data in contingency tables.

For more information, contact the Department of Statistics, The George Washington University, Fungler Hall, Washington, D.C. (202) 994-6350, Fax: (202) 994-6917.

Program Abstracts

Topic: Cost-Benefit Analysis Methodological Issues

Speakers: William Wisenbaker, M.B.A., U.S. Department of Energy, Remi Langum, M.A., U.S. Department of Energy, and John Selman, M.P.A., U.S. Department of Energy

Chair: Gerald Kassalow, M.A., U.S. Department of Energy

Date/Time: Thursday, September 14, 1995, 9:00 to 11:30 AM

Location: Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC, Room GH-019

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Abstract: Speakers will provide an understanding of the methodological issues surrounding the use of cost-benefit analysis. The seminar will highlight significant issues associated with a number of bills in Congress that have proposed several new cost-benefit analysis requirements to be followed by regulatory agencies. Topics that will be covered include decision frameworks to aid in organizing information and guiding cost-benefit analysis. The discussion will cover market regulation, no-risk, cost-risk, and cost-benefit frameworks. In addition, a critical element of cost-benefit analysis is the ability to quantify the benefits of goods and services. Subsequently, the discussion will include common methods for quantifying both market and non-market goods. Since the inception of cost-benefit analysis, a number of quantification techniques have evolved in accomplishing this goal. These include the travel cost method, hedonic pricing, contingent valuation, and benefits transfer. Seminar participants will have the opportunity to solve realistic environmental and non-environmental cost-benefit problems.

Topic: WesVarPC: A Windows-Based Program for Computing Sampling Errors for Data from Complex Samples

Speakers: David Morganstein, Westat, Inc. and Mike Brick, Westat, Inc.

Chair: James Gentle, George Mason University

Date/Time: Tuesday, September 19, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 PM

Location: BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990

Sponsor: Statistical Computing Section

Abstract: This talk discusses and demonstrates a recently developed PC-based computer program for estimating the sampling errors of statistics derived from complex survey data. Care must be taken when interpreting estimates made from survey data collected with a sample design involving stratification, clustering or unequal selection probabilities. The estimators of sampling errors computed in most statistical packages, such as SAS or SPSS, assume simple random sampling of the analysis units. Since this assumption is inappropriate for data collected using complex sample designs, special purpose computer programs are needed. WesVarPC can be used to compute estimators of sampling errors for such data. It uses an approximation based on replication. The advantages of the replication method include the easy application to a wide variety of sample designs and to most estimators. By appropriately creating replicate weights for the survey, replication methods reflect common weight adjustments accounting for non-response, assure that estimates match statistics known from other sources and improve defects in the sample design such as undercoverage.

WesVarPC, help files and documentation containing examples are distributed freely by Westat, Inc. to any interested researcher. To obtain more information send e-mail to: WESVAR@WESTAT.COM.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

- Topic:** Variances of X-11 Seasonal Adjustments That Account for Sampling Error and Forecast Extension
- Speaker:** William R. Bell, Bureau of the Census
- Discussant:** Stuart Scott, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Chair:** Charlie Hallahan, Economic Research Service
- Day/Time:** Wednesday, September 27, 1995; 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM
- Location:** BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC (Red Line -- Union Station). Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street.
- Sponsor:** Economics Section
- Abstract:** We develop an approach to estimating variances for X-11 seasonal adjustments that recognizes the effects of sampling error and revisions (the latter result from forecast errors). We assume that both the true underlying series and the sampling errors follow known time series models. In practice these models are estimated using the time series data and estimates of the variances and lagged covariances of the sampling errors. The model is used to extend the series with forecasts and backcasts, allowing use of the symmetric X-11 filter. In our approach seasonal adjustment error in the central values of a sufficiently long series results only from the effect of the X-11 filtering on the sampling errors (assuming an additive or log-additive decomposition and using a linear approximation to X-11). This agrees with an approach suggested by Wolter and Monsour (1981). However, towards either end of the series, our approach also recognizes the contribution to seasonal adjustment error from forecast and backcast errors. We present empirical results for several time series, paying particular attention to the effects of nonstationarities in the sampling errors.

Note from the WSS Editors

Items for publication in the November 1995 WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than September 26, 1995. FAX items to:

Mike Feil or Alyson Muff
FAX: (301) 443-4045

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

- Topic:** Confidence Intervals for Sub-Domain Parameters When the Sub-Domain Sample Size Is Random
- Speaker:** Robert J. Casady, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Chair:** Sandra A. West, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Date/Time:** Thursday, September 28, 1995, 12:30-2:00 p.m.
- Location:** BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC (Red Line -- Union Station). Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street. Non BLS employees, please call Pam Douglas at (202) 606-7375 to add name to visitors' list.
- Sponsor:** Methodology Section

Abstract: Let A be a population sub-domain of interest and assume that the elements of A cannot be identified on the sampling frame and the number of elements in A is not known. Further assume that a sample of fixed size (say n) is selected from the entire frame and the resulting sub-domain sample size (say n_A) is random. The problem addressed is the construction of a confidence interval for a sub-domain parameter such as the sub-domain aggregate

$$T_A = \sum_{i \in A} x_i$$

The usual approach to this problem is to redefine x_i , by setting $x_i=0$ if $i \notin A$. Thus, the construction of a confidence interval for the sub-domain total is recast as the construction of a confidence interval for a population total which can be addressed (at least asymptotically in n) by normal theory. As an alternative, we condition on n_A and construct confidence intervals which have approximately nominal coverage under certain assumptions regarding the sub-domain population. We evaluate the new approach empirically using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupational Compensation Survey.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has become the custom for the incoming President to include a letter to the membership in the September newsletter. In keeping with that custom, let me begin by welcoming new members and thanking renewing members for their continuing support. As a chapter of the American Statistical Association with some 1,200 members, the WSS may be the largest local chapter of any professional society. Our size and the diversity of statistical experience and application of our members create the opportunity to provide many unique, free, or lowcost services. I'm pleased to work with the dedicated cadre of volunteers who help provide nearly 50 lunchtime seminars each year, special sessions like the Morris Hansen lecture, various short courses, social events, Quantitative Literacy assistance, and the Sishkin and Herriot awards. Thanks to the leadership of past President Sue Amhed, the Board members and Program Chairs, and with the support of the membership, we look forward to another "eventful" year.

To help in our efforts, please take a moment to review the list of administrative contacts found on the last page of this newsletter. In doing so, think about suggestions that you might make! Would a paper presented outside the Washington area or at your workplace make a good WSS seminar? Is someone coming into town that might appreciate the opportunity to present research or other information of interest to WSS members? Who should be considered for a WSS sponsored award? Is there a social event that you would like to propose or help organize?

Our Society reaches out beyond its membership. In the six years since we initiated the Quantitative Literacy Group, the range of activities has grown rapidly. Your assistance with QL's efforts, by speaking at a career day, judging science fair or statistical project competitions, or helping teachers learn statistical concepts, etc., would be a few hours a year that you would find enjoyable and appreciated. QL activities should help future adults understand more about statistics and the role of statisticians. I would be interested in your ideas on how WSS might enhance our profession's image by promoting an "adult" quantitative literacy activity.

This year the Board will further explore membership and service issues. While the WSS is large, there are many individuals engaged in statistical activities in the Washington area who are either not aware of WSS or otherwise uninvolved. Pass your newsletter on to a colleague, client, or friend who is not a member. Encourage them to explore the opportunities available through membership (still a bargain at \$14). And like everyone else in the metro area, the WSS Board is looking for ways to cut costs (postal costs to deliver the newsletter now exceed the membership fee). We are looking to increase our use of fax and e-mail. I encourage all members who can to take advantage of opportunities to obtain "paperless" WSS materials.

If you have ideas or suggestions concerning the topics I've mentioned or new areas for WSS to serve its membership, please call me or a program area contact. Or meet with us personally at a WSS event.

Ron Fecso
President, WSS

1994 - 1995 Annual Report

The 1994-95 program year of the WSS was once more a very active one. Highlights of the past year are summarized below:

- The Fourth Annual Morris Hansen Memorial Lecture was held at the Jefferson Auditorium of the South USDA building in November and featured Leslie Kish of the University of Michigan speaking on "Developing Samplers for Developing Countries".
- A special Presidential Invited Address was given by Victor Cohn, Research Fellow, ASA and former science editor for the Washington Post, and author of the book "News and Numbers". The event was cosponsored by NSF.
- The Short Course Committee sponsored three short courses: Applied Nonparametric Statistics, Modern Data Analysis, and Small Area Estimation.
- The Quantitative Literacy program continues to be very active. Many members participated in career days and made presentations at local area schools. Awards were presented to students at 5 regional science fairs.
- This year's Christmas Party was held at the Hyatt Regency-Capitol Hill and honored Barbara Bailar as she retired from the federal government to begin her new career at NORC.
- The annual dinner took place at Casablanca in Old Town Alexandria. This year's speaker was Katharine Abraham, Commissioner of BLS, who spoke on "Uses and Misuses of Statistics". The dinner also featured a modified version of Jeopardy with questions based on WSS history and past year's events.
- The methodology section continued its exemplary planning of a full program on topics of interest to the society.
- This year's Shiskin Award went to one of our own WSS members and past president: Fritz Scheuren.
- The WSS Presidents' Award was presented at the annual dinner to Theresa Hallquist and Hattie Ramseur for the outstanding work on the WSS newsletter and to Lee Abramson for his dedicated efforts to the coordination of science fair judging.
- This year's Curtis Jacobs Award winner was Maria Scheers-Masters from Mark Twain Middle School in Virginia.
- WSS joined with the Government Section and the Social Statistics Section of ASA to establish an award for Innovation in federal statistics in honor of Roger Herriot. The first award will be given at the 1995 ASA meeting.
- Thanks to contacts made by one of our Board members, Amrut Champaneri, the Gallup Organization has made a commitment to provide up to \$1000 per year for science fair awards for outstanding projects in statistics and/or mathematics.

Two subcommittees were set up at the beginning of the year to look into areas of concern to the society. The first was related to e-mail and electronic dissemination and the second to the Society's Finances. Michael Greene, a Board member and member of the electronic dissemination subcommittee, established a replacement for the WSS

calendar by faxing the calendar to about 100 groups of 5 or more members, thereby saving WSS about \$200 a month. The subcommittee is also working on plans for reducing mailing costs by having the newsletter sent by e-mail to some of its members. This is already being done for about 200 members. Other issues being examined include the setting up of a world wide web site for WSS and of a DC stats group which would be a bulletin board where people could post things about methodological problems, local seminars, software, etc.

The Finance Subcommittee, chaired by Ron Fecso examined two issues: the large up-front expenses associated with some WSS events, the delayed recovery of these expenses through user fees and the inability of membership dues to fully cover operating expenses outside of short courses. The committee recommended the use of a projected expenditures worksheet to keep the Board and treasurer informed of expenditure needs and to help make each event break even and that WSS continue efforts to distribute announcements and the newsletter via electronic mail and fax.

I would like to thank the entire 1994 WSS Board for the active role it played this year. It is the individual efforts of these people who volunteer their time which makes the Board effective. I would also like to thank Mike Cohen for being a great "past president", chairing a subcommittee, and being available to answer questions. I know that Ron Fecso already has ideas and plans for the coming year; I wish him well and look forward to continuing to work with WSS.

Sue Ahmed
Past President, WSS

Announcements Cont'd

Non-traditional Applications of Biostatistical Methods

The statistical challenges inherent in conducting substantive research often require the application of quantitative methods developed in other substantive fields. To further the development of such cross-fertilization, the WSS Methodology and Public Health and Biostatistics Programs invite the submission of proposals for presentations on the application of "traditional" biostatistical methods to nontraditional areas. The goal is to develop a series of talks on the integration of biostatistical methodology into research arenas not typically associated with biostatistics. Talks are being solicited for the 1995 academic year.

Please submit proposals to Julia Bienias, Bureau of the Census, SRD FOB 3000-4, Washington, DC 20233 (e-mail: jbienias@info.census.gov).

New Statistics of Income Methodology Report Now Available

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announces the availability of **Turning Administrative Systems Into Information Systems: 1994**, the latest edition of a set of IRS methodological reports produced by Statistics of Income (SOI). This report draws together selected papers on administrative record research presented at recent professional conferences. Most of the presentations in this volume were made at the 1994 Annual Meetings of the American Statistical Association, held in Toronto, Canada.

This year's compilation has been divided into nine major sections, each focusing on a somewhat different area of research: Overview of SOI; Some Results from the Use of Administrative Records; Reinventing the Population Census: Balancing Privacy and Efficiency; Issues in Sample Design and Estimation; Record Linkage; Nonresponse Trends

in Government Surveys; Innovations in Imputation Methodology; Quality Improvement Efforts; and Data Preparation Techniques.

The report is available free of charge. To obtain a copy write to:

Statistics of Income CP:R:S:P:P
Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 2608
Washington, DC 20013-2608

Mid-Atlantic Regional Probability & Statistics Day at The George Washington University

This year's Mid-Atlantic Probability and Statistics Day will be held Saturday, 21 October at the George Washington University in Washington DC. This informal meeting provides an opportunity for professionals in academia, government and industry to meet and discuss common interests. Graduate students are encouraged to come and participate. (The registration fee will be waived for graduate students.)

There will be two invited one hour talks. In addition to these invited talks, there will be contributed paper sessions for those wishing to make a presentation. If you want to make a presentation, please send a short (less than 50 words) abstract along with your name and affiliation to the address below by 1 October. (email submissions are preferred).

There will be a \$5 registration fee. For more information contact:

Reza Modarres
Department of Statistics
The George Washington University,
2201 G St., NW, Washington, DC 20052
voice: (202) 994-6359;
e-mail: Reza@gwvm.gwu.edu.

Announcements Cont'd

Call for Presentations: Data Editing Workshop and Exposition

On March 22, 1996, the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM), the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Joint Program in Survey Methodology, and the Washington Statistical Society will jointly sponsor a one day workshop and exposition on the subject of editing survey data. This event will provide an opportunity for those with an interest in the field to demonstrate software, present findings, and discuss experiences in an informal setting. Note that the date is the Friday following the Census Bureau's Annual Research Conference and CASIC Seminar. The location is the Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference and Training Center across from Union Station.

Data editing is defined broadly as any procedure designed and used for detecting erroneous or questionable survey data with the goal of correcting erroneous data or identifying potential estimation problems that may be handled by other means such as reweighting. The procedure may be applied during data collection, after collection but before summarization, or after summarization.

Presentations concerning new or previously undocumented software systems or editing approaches and methodologies are especially encouraged. Systems personnel, managers, subject matter specialists, and others who normally do not present at conferences or symposia are also encouraged to submit.

Proposals for presentations, including a brief description of the presentation, the presenter's name, affiliation, and phone number may be submitted any time before February 1, 1996. Early submissions are encouraged.

Submit abstracts to:

David Pierce
Federal Reserve Board, Stop 401
Washington, DC 20551.

Use e-mail if you wish: M1DAP00@frb.gov.

Questions may be directed to Mark Pierzchala at (703) 235-5218 (mpierzchala@ag.gov) or David Pierce at (202) 452-3895.

George Mason University Course Offerings for 1995-96 in the Federal Statistics Program

The Department of Applied and Engineering Statistics at George Mason University offers a graduate certificate program and a Masters degree program in Federal Statistics. All courses are offered in late afternoon or evening. The Fall 1995 certificate courses are STAT 654 Applied Statistics, Wednesday 4:30-7:10pm; STAT 663 Exploratory Data Analysis, Wednesday 7:20-10:00 pm; and STAT 670 Survey Sampling, Tuesday 4:30-7:10 pm. The Spring 1996 certificate courses are STAT 612 Use of Computer Statistical Packages, Monday 4:30-7:10 pm; STAT 654 Applied Statistics, Tuesday 7:20-10:00 pm; STAT 665 Categorical Data Analysis, Tuesday 4:30-7:10 pm; STAT 671 Survey Sampling II, Thursday 7:20-10:00 pm; and STAT 673 Methods for Longitudinal Data Analysis, Monday 7:20-10:00 pm.

Solid undergraduate courses in probability and statistics at the third year level provide sufficient background. STAT 670 is prerequisite to STAT 671 and 673. STAT 654 is prerequisite to STAT 665. For more information on these and other statistics courses and programs offered, call (703) 993-1680 or fax your request to (703) 993-1700.

Announcements Cont'd

International Conference on Survey and Statistical Computing: Call for Papers

The Second International Conference on Survey and Statistical Computing will be held September 11-13, 1996 at the Imperial College, London, U.K. The submission deadline is October 6, 1995. Hosted by the Association for Survey Computing to celebrate its Silver Jubilee, four parallel streams of contributed papers will cover the following aspects of computers in surveys: survey data, survey analysis, survey results, and survey software. Abstracts for contributed papers are sought on the following topics: case studies; computer aided interviewing (CAPI, CATI, etc.) and data capture technologies such as Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and Optical Mark Recognition (OMR); data interchange; data management and database design; data modelling techniques, statistical algorithms and data visualization; data quality, editing and imputation; meta-data and survey documentation; networking technology and its impact; sample and field control; secondary data; statistical languages; survey and questionnaire design; and survey systems.

Send a brief abstract (maximum 500 words) including title, relevant keywords and an indication of the parallel session into which the paper would best fit by October 6, 1995, to Diana Elder, ASC, PO Box 60, Chesham, Bucks HP5 3QH. Tel/fax: 01494 793033; int: +44 1494 793033. e-mail: asc@essex.ac.uk. Please include your full address with telephone and fax numbers and, if possible, email address.

If you wish to discuss any aspects of potential contributions, please feel free to contact Randy Banks (Chair of the Scientific Programme Committee) at the ASC address given in the previous paragraph.

An Introduction to Survey Sampling

The Joint Program in Survey Methodology is offering a short course, "An Introduction to Survey Sampling", on September 19-20, 1995 at the Residence Inn by Marriott, Bethesda, Maryland. The instructors are Colm O'Muircheartaigh, London School of Economics, and James Lepkowski, University of Michigan. This is a foundation course in sample survey methods and principles. The instructors will present in a non-technical manner, basic sampling techniques such as simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratification, cluster sampling, and probability proportional to size selection.

Registration is \$385 for nonstudents and \$235 for students. For billing, registration, or to be added to the JPSM mailing list, contact JPSM at 800-937-9320, fax 313-764-8263 or send e-Mail to jpsm@umich.edu.

Other courses which have been tentatively scheduled for the program year include Visualizing Data: The New Frontier of Data Analysis in October, 1995; Statistical Disclosure and Disclosure Limitation in November, 1995; Compensating for Missing Survey Data in December, 1995; Behavior Coding in January, 1996; Self-Administered/Mail Surveys in February, 1996; Cognitive & Communicative Aspects of Survey Measurement in March, 1996; Regression Models for Complex Survey Data in April, 1996; Variance Estimation for Sample Surveys in May, 1996; and Answering Autobiographical Questions in September, 1996. Contact the JPSM at the above number for further information.

All courses will be held in the Washington, D.C. area at a hotel or conference facility within walking distance of a Metro station.

Announcements Cont'd

What Is A Survey? Gets A New Look

Fifteen years ago the Section on Survey Research Methods and ASA joined forces to produce *What is a Survey?* -- a pamphlet on survey methods for the general public -- by Robert Ferber, Paul Sheatley, Anthony Turner, and Joseph Waksberg. Since then, the public's exposure to and familiarity with survey techniques has grown considerably and survey methods have changed immensely. So, we decided to take another look at the brochure and see what was needed to bring it up to date.

This year, at the Joint Statistical Meetings the Section will unveil the newly revised version of *What is a Survey?* -- updated by Waksberg and edited and coordinated by Fritz Scheuren, under the general direction of Seymour Sudman and Bill Kalsbeek. Special appreciation also goes to all of those in the statistical community who have helped review the material.

The new version has been divided into a series of pamphlets. As with the original, the audience is the general public. The overall goal of the series is to improve survey literacy among individuals who participate in surveys or use survey results. The series is designed to promote a better understanding of what is involved in carrying out sample surveys of human populations -- especially aspects that have to be taken into account in evaluating the results of surveys.

The first three pamphlets in the series are:

What is a Survey? which focuses on overall information about surveys -- why they are needed, what types of surveys there are, even what sorts of people work on surveys; confidentiality and integrity are included and information on how to learn more about surveys is provided. (Released August 1995)

How to Plan a Survey, which covers the major survey planning steps, including time- and cost-budgeting; the requirements of in-person household surveys are highlighted, but mail and telephone surveys are covered, as well. (To be released in early Fall 1995)

How to Collect Survey Data, which presents a more technical step-by-step approach to conducting a survey, primarily drawing on in-person household samples and particularly emphasizing operational issues, like quality control and data editing, as well as recent changes arising through the advent of survey automation. (To be released in early Fall 1995)

Two more pamphlets, *What are the Main Sources of Survey Error?* and *What About Surveys in the Media?* are also in preparation.

For more information or suggestions for potential future topics in the new *What is a Survey?* series, contact Fritz Scheuren at George Washington University (via e-mail : scheuren@aol.com).

SIGSTAT Meetings

SIGSTAT, the special interest group in statistics for the Capital PC User Group and Washington Operations Research and Management Science Council, will have its October meeting on the 11th from 12:30 to 1:30 in Waugh Auditorium, 1301 New York Ave, NW. The topic is The Internet for Statisticians, an update on what's happened since last year's meeting on the same topic. In particular, we'll be looking at the latest stat software available on the web, on-line stat journals, technical paper repositories and sites for government statistics. Various online search methods will be used to track down information. If you plan to attend, please contact Charlie Hallahan at hallahan.ers or call 219-1291 and leave your name.

Announcements Cont'd

SRMSNET is Here!

After many promises, SRM is very pleased to announce that you can now join the Section in cyberspace! Thanks to the efforts of Bob Groves and the Maryland/ Michigan/ Westat Joint Program in Survey Methodology, an important new mechanism has been created to help ASA's Section on Survey Research Methods members to stay in closer touch with what is happening in survey research. Called SRMSNET, it is a recently established electronic bulletin board, that will enable survey research methodologists and practitioners to share information of mutual interest.

Hopefully, SRMSNET will become an active vehicle for communications on such topics as: information on activities sponsored by the Section (i.e., conferences, meetings, short-courses, etc.); description of activities of interest to Section members but sponsored by other groups (e.g., AAPOR); research questions from subscribers seeking assistance or discussion from other subscribers; notification of job openings; and other items of general interest to Section members.

How do you sign on? Well, the level of anticipated interest, as well as the design of the list server running SRMSNET, make it necessary at the outset to limit subscribership to Section members. Any member wishing to subscribe should send an e-mail message to CS178@UMAIL.UMD.EDU, with "subscribe SRMS-LIST <username>" in the body of the message. (For example, Bob Groves would send "subscribe SRMS-LIST Bob Groves" to the above address.) Once subscribed, members will receive a confirmation message indicating that they are on the subscriber roster. After that, mail can be sent to the bulletin board by addressing e-mail messages to SRMSNET-LIST@UMAIL.UMD.EDU.

This is your vehicle -- we hope you will access it to

post useful information and seek out input from your colleagues. Remember, we're just getting started, so there may not be very much of interest right away. But check back in from time to time -- your participation can help make SRMSNET a real success!

New Faculty Appointment

The Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM), a collaborative effort among the University of Maryland at College Park, the University of Michigan, and Westat, Inc. is pleased to announce that Nancy A. Mathiowetz will join the faculty, beginning with the academic year, 1995-96. She will be leaving the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, where she served as Deputy Director, Division of Statistics and Research Methodology. As a member of the JPSM faculty, Mathiowetz will be teaching in the Master's program as well as pursuing research in the measurement and reduction of nonsampling error.

After August 19, she can be reached at JPSM, 1218 LeFrak Hall, College Park, MD 20742; (301) 314-7911; fax (301) 314-7912; e-mail nmathiow@survey.umd.edu.

WSS Telephone Bulletin Board Discontinued

During the 1994-95 program year, WSS experimented with a telephone bulletin board to announce upcoming events. This was intended as a kind of insurance policy for members who might not obtain their newsletter on time. It also had a public outreach dimension too.

There were never very many calls (under 40 per month); and, because of its expense, the service has been discontinued. Never fear. WSS is already experimenting with different Internet resources.

Employment Column

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 write or call: Bill Arends, USDA-NASS, Room 5801 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-2000, e-mail: warends@ag.gov, Voice: (202) 720-6812, Fax: (202) 690-1311.

Survey Research Positions

Project Coordinator: Technical and budget oversight of telephone and mail surveys. Works closely with clients on questionnaire design. Coordinates all project activities, including sample design, instrument development, data collection, and data file preparation.

Administrative Coordinator: Works with senior staff in multiple areas, including proposal development, design and implementation of automated procedures for quality control, cost tracking, and the integration of new technical and management methods into standard procedures.

Both positions require a minimum of 1 year experience on telephone and/or mail surveys and a B.S. or B.A. degree. Salary \$20,000 - \$25,000. Full paid University of Maryland benefits.

Send resume, a writing or questionnaire sample, and the names of three references to: Survey Research Center, 1103 Art-Sociology Building, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742. No calls.

Research Assistant

The Urban Institute, a nonprofit public policy organization, seeks applicants with a strong interest in public policy issues, and strong quantitative, writing, and interpersonal skills. Academic or work

experience with SAS and/or SPSS is highly desirable. Students pursuing degrees in Economics, Sociology, Public Policy, or other social science fields are preferred.

Send resume, cover letter, transcript, and the names of references to: The Urban Institute, Personnel Office-RA, 2100 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

Statistician

API, the petroleum industry's leading trade association, is seeking a Statistician for its Statistics department. Qualified candidates will possess a recent PH.D. or Master's degree in statistics with 2+ years of experience managing statistical projects. Strong knowledge of statistical software (preferably SAS) required. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills are essential.

The statistician will conduct long- and short-term projects requiring statistical analysis (e.g., modeling, survey design, sampling, and estimation), review statistical methodology in other studies of interest to the petroleum industry, and provide statistical assistance to API staff and committees.

API offers an outstanding salary and benefits package. Applicants should send resume with salary history to: Human Resources, American Petroleum Institute, 1220 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Director, Medical Center Biostatistics Unit

The Biostatistics Center of the Department of Statistics and of The George Washington University, jointly with the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, is recruiting an Associate to Full Research Professor of Statistics and Biostatistics to serve as the Director of a newly established Biostatistics Unit within the Medical Center of The George Washington University. The Director of the Medical Center

Employment Column

Biostatistics Unit will collaborate with Medical Center investigators in the development and conduct of medical research projects, including clinical trials, epidemiologic studies, health services research and basic sciences research. Medical Center collaborators include programs of research in emergency medicine, intensive care, cardiology, cancer, neurological surgery, and health care services and policy, among others. The Director will also participate as a senior faculty member in a new graduate program in Biostatistics and Epidemiology, which is jointly administered by the Department of Statistics and the Public Health Program of The George Washington University. Academic responsibilities will include teaching a doctoral graduate seminar annually and supervision of doctoral thesis research. Excellent communication and administrative skills are required. Experience in the management of a biostatistics unit and the conduct of a wide variety of medical research activities is also required. Review of applications began on August 21, 1995 and will continue until the position is filled. Interested inquiries should send a CV and three letters of reference to Dr. John M. Lachin, Professor of Statistics and Director, The Biostatistics Center, 6110 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Director of Biostatistics Unit

The Children's National Medical Center's Research Institute is recruiting a Biostatistician to serve as the Director of the Biostatistics Unit to support the activities of a growing research institute presently funded at \$17 million per year. The Children's National Medical Center serves as the Department of Pediatrics for the School of Medicine and Health Sciences of The George Washington University. The Director will be appointed to the rank of Associate Professor of Pediatrics with an adjunct appointment in The George Washington University Department of Statistics. The Director will collaborate with medical center investigators in the development and conduct of a wide variety of medical research projects, and will supervise the statistical staff in the support of

theses research activities. The Director will also participate as a member of the faculty in a new graduate program in Biostatistics and in Epidemiology, which is offered jointly by the Department of Statistics, the Biostatistics Center, and the Public Health Program of The George Washington University. Excellent communication and administrative skills are essential. Collaborative and consultative experience in the conduct of a variety of medical research activities is required. Please address inquiries to: The Search Committee, c/o Dr. John M. Lachin, Professor of Statistics and Director, The Biostatistics Center, 6110 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Sampling Statistician (Senior Study Director)

Temple University's Institute for Survey Research (Philadelphia location) seeks a sampling statistician to design, implement, and evaluate statistical sampling design of all sizes and complexities. Duties include directing and managing the operations and personnel of the sampling department; conducting statistical analysis of data; preparing proposals, reports, and budgets; solicitation of research funds; and the complete management of particular research projects.

Qualified candidates will have a doctorate in statistics or a relevant field such as public health or sociology. Requirements include at least 3 years hands-on work experience in survey sampling within a social science research organization or federal agency and familiarity with current practices and recent advances in sampling techniques, imputation, and variance estimation. Familiarity with government contracts and grants is preferred. Strong interpersonal skills are required. Supervisory experience is a plus. Candidates with an equivalent combination of relevant education and experience may be considered.

Resumes can be faxed to (215) 204-5921 or forwarded to Pamela A. Sherrako, Assistant Director, Employment, Temple University, 203 USB, 1601 N. Board St., Philadelphia, PA 19122.

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