



WSS NEWS

WASHINGTON
STATISTICAL
SOCIETY

March 2005

WSS Short Course

The WSS is offering a short course providing an introduction and appraisal of the recent developments in sample survey methods on April 20, 2005. Topics include: survey design and inferential issues, analysis of survey data with emphasis on graphing data and resampling methods, design and estimation in multiple frame surveys, and small area estimation. Registration is due by April 8, 2005. Further details are in the enclosed flyer.

WSS and Other Seminars (All events are open to any interested persons)		
March		
8	Tues.	Pre-election Polls and the 2004 General Election
10	Thur.	Analysis of Nonresponse in Telephone Surveys
16	Wed.	The Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) -An Overview
April		
27	Wed.	Evaluating Alternative Calibration Schemes for an Economic Survey With Large Nonresponse

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

Announcements

SIGSTAT Topics

March 9, 2005: PROC UCM - Unobserved Component Models (<http://www.sas.com>)

Unobserved Component Models are very general time series models that incorporate trends, seasonality, cycles, regression effects, and autoregressive effects. Trends and seasonality can be allowed to change randomly. UCMs can be considered as generalizations of ARIMA and smoothing models. The basics of UCMs will be covered as well as some examples. PROC UCM is new in SAS/ETS version 9. Charlie Hallahan will be the speaker.

April 20, 2005: PROC ROBUSTREG - Robust Regression Methods (<http://www.sas.com>)

The experimental ROBUSTREG procedure in SAS/STAT version 9 provides resistant (stable) results in the presence of outliers by limiting the influence of outliers. ROBUSTREG provides four robust methods: M estimation by Huber (1973), Least Trimmed Squares (LTS) estimation by Rousseeuw (1984), S estimation by Rousseeuw and Yohai (1984), and MM estimation by Yohai (1987). Charlie Hallahan will be the speaker.

May 11, 2005: PROC QLIM - Qualitative and Limited Dependent Variable Models (<http://www.sas.com>)

The QLIM (Qualitative and Limited dependent variable Model) procedure analyzes univariate and multivariate limited dependent variable models where dependent variables take discrete values or dependent variables are observed only in a limited range of values. This procedure includes logit, probit, tobit, and general simultaneous equations models. The simultaneous equations model can contain discrete choice and limited endogenous variables as well as continuous endogenous variables. Charlie Hallahan will be the speaker.

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 12:30 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 **S I G S T A T** website, <http://www.cpcug.org/user/sigstat/>.

Spring Statistical Symposium

The American Statistical Association and the University of Maryland Statistics Consortium will co-sponsor the Spring Statistical in College Park, Maryland, March 22-25, 2005. The symposium is a week-long series of short course offerings for professional statisticians and students of statistics. Among the courses to be offered are Practical Data Mining, Longitudinal and Incomplete Data, and Latent Class Analysis. For more information and a complete listing of courses, visit the Spring Statistical Symposium web site at: www.amstat.org/education/l2005.

Note from the WSS NEWS Editor

Items for publication in the May WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than March 15, 2005. Items for publication in the May WSS NEWS should be submitted as soon as possible. The May WSS NEWS will be sent to the printer and the electronic communication committee for dissemination on March 31. The editor will be in Germany during April. E-mail items to Michael Feil at michael.feil@usda.gov.

Program Announcement

- Title:** **Pre-election Polls and the 2004 General Election**
- Speakers:** Mark Schulman, Schulman, Ronca, and Bucuvalas
Frank Newport, The Gallup Organization
Scott Keeter, Pew Research Center
- Chair:** Clyde Tucker, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Date/Time:** Tuesday, March 8, 2005/ 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. (NOTE DIFFERENT TIME)
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Center Rooms 1 and 2. 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:** Washington Statistical Society and DC-AAPOR
- Abstract:** Many arguments over results from pre-election polls took place in the months leading up to the November election. Speculation about the effects of the conventions and the debates, not to mention the Swift Boat accusations and the CBS News story on Bush's military service, ran rampant. All of the polls drew criticism from one quarter or another. This seminar will feature three of the most prominent national pollsters in last year's election. They will discuss the performance of the polls and the controversies surrounding them, including the important role that state polls played in the presidential election.
- Note:** This will be a joint DC-AAPOR/WSS seminar that will be held later in the day than usual and a reception will follow.

Program Announcement

- Topic:** Analysis of Nonresponse in Telephone Surveys
- Speakers:** Randal ZuWallack, Ronaldo Iachan, Leslyn Hall, ORC Macro International Inc.
- Discussant:** John Dixon, BLS
- Chair:** Roberta Sangster, BLS
- Date/Time:** March 10, 2005 / 12:30-2:00 pm
- Location:** BLS Conference Center, Room 1. 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.
- Sponsors:** WSS Methodology Section, DC -AAPOR
- Abstract:** The measurement effects of survey nonresponse are especially difficult to address when little is known about nonrespondents. Nonresponse is often evaluated via comparisons to known demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic distributions, or through costly re-interviews with nonrespondents. Surveys with longitudinal components offer the opportunity to evaluate nonresponse at the individual level without the need for re-contacts. Previous survey responses exist for nonrespondents in the current survey cycle, which allows for analyzing the impact of attrition on the survey measures of interest. Often for cross-sectional surveys, geographic location is the only information that is known for nonrespondents. Nonresponse analysis is dependent on the availability of survey information for respondents and from independent sources. We examine two large-scale telephone surveys different in design and intent conducted for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Fair Market Rent program. The analyses are driven by the different sample designs and challenges such as the scarcity of response data beyond the subject of rent. The Regions surveys, which focus on yearly rent change, have a longitudinal component for analyzing differential attrition with respect to rent. Without the benefit of longitudinal data, nonresponse analysis for the Areas surveys, which focus on rent levels, requires a different approach based on census data extracted at the tract level.

Program Announcement

- Title:** The Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) -An Overview
- Speaker:** Robert L. Kellogg, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA
- Chair:** Mike Fleming
- Date/time:** Wednesday, March 16, 2005 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Room 10. 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:** The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) have joined together in collaboration with other Federal agencies and universities to initiate studies that will quantify the environmental benefits of conservation practices. A national assessment is being implemented to track environmental benefits over time at the national scale. In selected regions, watershed studies are being initiated to provide more in-depth assessments at a finer scale of resolution. This presentation will provide a brief overview of the CEAP effort and summarize the analytical approach being used to assess benefits of conservation practices on cropland. The approach is based on microsimulation modeling using a subset of the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) sample. The CEAP sample consists of 30,000 NRI sample points where additional information on farming practices and conservation practices have been collected from farmers by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Program Announcement

- Title:** Evaluating Alternative Calibration Schemes for an Economic Survey With Large Nonresponse
- Speakers:** Phillip S. Kott, USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service
- Chair:** Michael P. Cohen, Bureau of Transportation Statistics
- Date/Time:** Wednesday, April 27, 2005/12:30 to 2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Center Room 8. 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:** Methodology Section, WSS
- Abstract:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conducts an annual economic survey of farm operations called the Cost and Returns Report (CRR). This survey is fairly long and is based on a multiphase sample with several opportunities for nonresponse. As a result, CRR response rates are low by government standards. The USDA has historically “trued up” the estimated number of farms within a region and economic size class using more reliable benchmark aggregates determined from other sources.

The USDA used truncated linear calibration to reweight the 2002 CRR. This allowed the Department to employ greater number of benchmark aggregates than it the past. Delete-a-group (d-a-g) jackknives were used to measure the accuracy of 2002 CRR estimates. Furthermore, d.a.g jackknife methodology was employed to investigate,

- i*, the effects of replacing the (last phase of the) nonresponse adjustment with linear calibration,
- ii*, the effects of accounting for the area frame component of the CRR with linear calibration of the list frame sample only, and
- iii*, the effects of using a calibration routine based on a log function in place of a linear one. Both analyses find that there are characteristics that are correlated with each design feature.

Symposium

The 2nd Conference on Information and Entropy Econometrics: Theory, Method, and Applications in Honor of George Judge will be held on September 23-25, 2005 at the American University, Washington DC.

Conference Objectives: This conference will (i) study and explore Information-Theoretic (IT) solutions for linear and nonlinear estimation and inference problems, (ii) facilitate the exchange of research ideas in that field, (iii) promote collaboration among researchers from different disciplines, and (iv) highlight the major trends in Information and Entropy Econometrics.

The Second IEE Conference will concentrate on the most recent (theoretical and applied) research in linear and non-linear IT and entropic procedures (Bayesian and non-Bayesian), with emphasis on modeling and measuring information. In addition, the conference will deal with the interpretations and meaning of the solutions to IT estimation and inference (e.g., statistical meaning, complexity and efficiency as well as informational meaning). Both theory and innovative applied papers will be included. Conference topics include theory and methods and applications in various fields. The deadline for submitting a paper for presentation is April 30, 2005. The registration deadline is to be determined.

Program and Advisory Committee: Anil Bera, U. Illinois; Bertrand Clarke, UBC; Amos Golan, American U. (Chair); Alastair Hall, NCState; Yuichi Kitamura, Yale; Essie Maasoumi, SMU; Eric Renault, UNC at Chapel Hill; Ehsan Soofi, U. Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Michael Stutzer, U. Colorado-Boulder; Arnold Zellner, U. Chicago.

For additional and updated information about the conference, please look at the conference Web page at <http://www.american.edu/cas/econ/faculty/golan/conference2.htm> or contact Amos Golan at agolan@american.edu.

JPSM Short Course

“PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR NONRESPONSE BIAS STUDIES” is a one-day short course sponsored by the Joint Program in Survey Methodology on May 19, 2005 at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia. The instructors are Robert M. Groves (Research Professor, Joint Program in Survey Methodology and Director, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan) and J. Michael Brick (Director, Survey Methods Unit, Senior Statistician, Westat, and Research Professor, Joint Program in Survey Methodology, University of Maryland). The objective of this course is designed to help in addressing new OMB guidelines for conducting nonresponse bias studies when response rates in surveys are less than 80 percent or there is reason to suspect that estimates are biased even though the response rate is greater than 80 percent. Practical tools and examples are used to illustrate methods that can be used to conduct these studies. The advantages and disadvantages of these methods are presented, and the value of having multiple approaches is highlighted. The need to devise strategies for nonresponse and for its analysis in the planning stage, prior to completing the survey are emphasized.

JPSM group lunches and refreshments are included in the course fee. Registrants will be provided with a course pack containing detailed course notes.

The course will be held at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel, 1800 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia. The Sheraton Crystal City Hotel is located in the “Crystal City” business district of Arlington, with nearby access to the Crystal City Metro Stop. Located at the intersection of 18th and Eads Street the hotel is 1 mile from Ronald Reagan National Airport. For room reservations call the hotel at (703) 486-1111 or 1-800-862-ROOM. Information, directions, and times will be sent with your confirmation email.

Online registration is required. Confirmation of registration and instructions will be sent after the registration form has been processed. Registration is not firm until you receive a confirmation email. The email will include directions to the course. The automatic web receipt is not an acceptance letter. Payment by credit card is required. Post registration payment can be done online using the registrant's confirmation number or by calling (800) 937-9320. The registration deadline is **May 5, 2005**.

The registration fee for staff at sponsoring agencies and affiliates is **\$300**, **\$300** for full-time university students, and **\$400** for other participants. Payment by credit card is required. Post registration payment may be done online using the student's confirmation number or by calling (800) 937-9320. Payment is required by **May 5, 2005**. Please notify JPSM as soon as possible if you need to cancel your registration. Cancellation requests should be done online. You will be fully reimbursed if you cancel by **May 5, 2005**. Cancellation **May 6-11, 2005** will require a \$100 administrative fee, the remainder will be reimbursed. Cancellation on or after **May 12, 2005** is subject to the full fee amount.

INQUIRIES

Questions for this course should be directed to the JPSM Short Course, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 426 Thompson Street, Room 4050, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248, Phone: (800) 937-9320, Fax: (734) 764-8263, Email: jpsmshort@isr.umich.edu .

JPSM HOME PAGE: <http://www.jpsm.org> Click on “Short Courses”

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) 387-3032.

Position Sought

Masters level Statistician looking for a job. Experience covers survey sampling, logistic regression, Power Calculation, categorical analysis, SAS, SPSS, CHAID, WESVAR. Please contact : farzanadamin@yahoo.com, cell# 202 441 9661

Manager, Statistical Analysis

Location: McLean or Richmond, VA
 Salary: \$100-150k plus bonus (up to 50%) and options
 Full Relocation Provided

The Scoring Office is responsible for helping to ensure governance and quality of statistics enterprise-wide.

This position will be responsible for two kinds of work:

- * Statistical Practice Development: Develop understanding of the broad statistical needs in order to design, develop, and deploy systematic improvements across the organization. This work will require significant breadth and depth spanning statistics, business economics, strategy, and change management.
- * Project delivery: Identify specific changes required, define project scope, ability to execute projects and track progress. Must have the ability to manage individuals without direct managerial authority. Active champion of new ideas. Able to influence senior leaders.

Job Qualifications - Required:

- * Ph.D. in statistics, econometrics, operations

research, or other highly analytic field, would take MS but must be high level.

- * Accomplished user of classic statistical material (for example, linear models, logistic regression, hypothesis testing, sampling), sophisticated data management, risk management, experience in all types of regression, must be capable of creating non-standard statistical models.

- * Partial correlations, prediction stability, variance inflation, correlation sign reversal and core philosophical understanding of statistics.

- * SAS programmer, solid on data step and several of the statistical procedures, familiar with macros, SPlus or R very helpful.

- * Effective public speaker

- * Ability to fully understand business valuation and business strategies

- * Ability to create and lead complex projects

Preferred:

- * Extensive experience in leading change in complex business environments

- * Teaching

- * Writing

Minimum 5 years post Ph.D. in applied environments

Contact: Andrew Sobel, President, The Brixton Group, Inc., (T): 704-365-0766, asobel@brixton.net

(BIO)STATISTICIAN

Small, downtown, professional, yet outwardly informal biostatistical firm involved in medical research & consulting seeks a (bio)statistician; attention to detail, accuracy, initiative & excellent communication skills are essential. Must be able to juggle several complex projects simultaneously, including project coordination, data analysis, SAS programming, data management for medical studies & technical writing. MS in (bio)statistics or statistics required. Fax cover letter, resume, sample SAS programs and references to (202) 429-9268 or email to office@statcollab.com. Feel free to check our website www.statcollab.com Use Ref WSBS

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

A small, downtown, highly professional, yet outwardly informal, biostatistical firm involved in medical research/consulting. Many projects have impact on public health.

Position requires a BA/BS with background in science. Must be literate and numerate. Attention to detail, accuracy, initiative, and excellent communication skills are essential. Proficient in MS Word; statistical programs a plus.

Support management team in compiling study reports, writing minutes, correspondence, & documentation. Convert statistical output into finished reports using Microsoft Word's extended functions. May perform data audits. Opportunity for professional growth through introduction to project management and to SAS programming for analysis of data from clinical drug trials. Fax cover letter and resumé to (202) 429-9268 or email to office@statcollab.com. Feel free to check our website www.statcollab.com Use Ref WSBS

WESTAT

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 1,700 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. We are currently recruiting for the following statistical position:

Survey Sampling Statistician (Job Code WSS/DRM/5001)

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 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 resumé by one of the following methods to: **[Job Code is REQUIRED to apply]** Westat, Attn: Resumé System, 1650 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850-3195; Email: resume@westat.com ; FAX: (888) 201-1452. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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Employment		Quantitative Literacy		Amy Luo	202-327-6667
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