Spring 2024 Newsletter

Social Statistics Section

ASA

Letter from the Chair

Dylan Small (2024 Chair)

Dear SSS members: Welcome to the first edition of the revived newsletter for our Section. Thanks to our Publications Officer Claire Kelling for bringing it back!

We'd like the newsletter to serve section members' interests, so if there is particular content you'd like to see, let us know! More generally, we are interested in your thoughts on what the Social Statistics Section (SSS) can do to best support its members. Please join us at the SSS Business Meeting and Mixer at JSM to discuss this and other topics, talk with old friends in the section and make new friends.

Upcoming Deadlines and Events

2024 Joint Statistical Meetings Deadlines (Portland, Oregon):

May 1: Registration and housing open
May 31: Draft manuscript deadline
June 3: Early registration deadline
July 1: Regular registration deadline (increased fees apply)
July 2- August 8: Late Registration (increased fees apply)
July 5: Housing deadline
August 3 – August 8: 2024 Joint Statistical Meetings, Oregon Convention Center

ASA Elections!

Vote from April 1-30 at https://www.electionsonline.com/vote/

Chair-Elect 2025
Ben Hansen, University of Michigan
Matt Williams, RTI International

Program Chair–Elect 2025
Cesar Montalvo, University of Virginia
Xiaojing Wang, University of Connecticut

Publications Officer 2025–2026
Claire Kelling, Carleton College
Joshua Snoke, RAND Corporation

Council of Sections Representative 2025–2027
Ruoqi Yu, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Eli Ben-Michael, Carnegie Mellon University

Letter from the Program Chair

Monika Hu (2024 Program Chair)

Maria Cuellar (2024 Program Chair Elect)

SSS has 4 invited sessions at JSM 2024. The invited session topics include the frontier of statistics and social sciences, statistical challenges in the analysis of police use of force, statistical inference on policy and behavior in complex and large-scale data, and machine learning and classification methods for complex surveys. SSS has also 6 topic-contributed sessions with topics including statistical data privacy, causal inference, and population size estimation, among other things. Last but not least, our 3 contributed sessions focus on methodology development in microsimulation, privacy, and networks, applications in justice, economics, and education, and new developments in health-related applications.

Here are the Social Statistics Section session titles, by category. We hope to see you at many of these sessions!

Invited paper sessions (4): The Frontier of Statistics and the Social Science: Celebrating 25 years of CS&SS; Synthesis of Ingram Olkin Forum on Statistical Challenges in the Analysis of Police Use of Force; Advances on Statistical Modeling to Better Infer Policy and Behavior in Complex and Large-scale Data; Machine Learning and Classification Methods for Complex Surveys

Topic-contributed sessions (6): GSS/SRMS/SSS Student Paper Competition; Statistical Data Privacy Solutions for Accessing Earnings Data in the Federal Statistical Agencies; Causal Inference on Panel Data Using Synthetic Control Methods and Related Tools: Bringing Theory to Practice; Recent Advances in Capture-Recapture Methods for Population Size Estimation; Data, Claims, and Analyses on "Invisible Women"; Redefining Correlation: Challenges and Innovations in Modern Data Era.

Contributed sessions (3): Methodology Developments in Microsimulation, Privacy, and Networks; Applications in Justice, Economics, and Education; New Developments in Health-related Applications.

Social Statistics Section Social Media

The Social Statistics Section is becoming more active on social media!

Follow us on X/Twitter (@amstat_sss).

If you have material you would like us to share, send us a message!

SSS Member Highlight: Guillermina Jasso

The SSS will begin highlighting members in upcoming newsletters. Our first highlighted member is Professor Guillermina Jasso. We hope you will enjoy reading about their background, activities, and vision for the future of social statistics.

What is your current role? I am Silver Professor of Arts and Science and Professor of Sociology at New York University. My daily work is research and teaching, together with the myriad activities involved in the growth of knowledge – peer review, editorial assignments, advisory panels, conference participation. By interest and training (MA, Notre Dame, Sociology and Anthropology; PhD, Johns Hopkins, Social Relations) my work has crossed disciplines. It was natural to find probability distributions a true friend, and rewarding when ASA invited me to represent statistics in the old Census Advisory Committee of Professional Associations (CACPA) advising the Census Bureau.

Can you share one or two experiences that impacted your career direction? There were three, all now part of my daily work: (1) learning the factorial survey (vignette) method from my thesis adviser Peter H. Rossi, who invented it; (2) discovering the justice evaluation function when a mathematical formula jumped out of a regression equation; (3) learning about immigration when the Commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service invited me to join his staff. The first led to such enhancements of FS as having respondents use the whole real-number line to represent their ratings (from S. S. Stevens) and estimating respondent-specific rating equations. The second led to basic theories with rigorously deduced testable implications for farflung topical domains and as well to probability distributions as a tool for representing simultaneously individual and society and the effects of alternative forms of income distributions. The third was like a postdoc in immigration and led to a vignette method to estimate a point system for the selection of immigrants; an approach for harmonizing Census and administrative-record estimates of the resident foreign born; and the New Immigrant Survey, a longitudinal study of new green-card recipient cohorts.

What area of social statistics do you believe warrants more study? I am tempted to say probability distributions, because probability distributions advance not only empirics but also theory and are invaluable for understanding inequality, fairness, polarization, and other sociobehavioral processes. But, as Vannevar Bush observed in the landmark 1945 report which led to creation of NSF, "Scientific progress on a broad front results from the free play of free intellects, working on subjects of their own choice, in the manner dictated by their curiosity for exploration of the unknown." Thus, to advance social statistics, I will echo Donna Strickland (2018 Nobel laureate in physics), "Do what you love."

Social Statistics Section Executive Committee

Dylan Small: Chair
Stephanie Eckman: Past-Chair
Elizabeth Tipton: Chair-Elect
Tyler McCormick: Secretary / Treasurer
Maria Cuellar: Program Chair-Elect
Claire Kelling: Publications Officer
Sharon Stern: Social Statistics Section Representative
Rick Peterson: Staff Liaison

Please find more information about SSS here.