

Spring 2025 Newsletter

Social Statistics Section



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Letter from the Chair

Elizabeth Tipton (2025 Chair)



Dear SSS members,
I want to begin by thanking each and every one of you for your service to society as a member of the social statistics community. As I know you are all aware, social statistics - including the collection of data in federal statistical agencies and the evaluation of social programs via federal grants and contracts - is under attack.

Now is the time for our community to step up, in whatever way possible, to defend the importance of nonpartisan data collection, reporting, program evaluation, and science. To that end, I want to alert you to a few resources to connect with:

- The ASA has a Science Policy and Advocacy arm, which includes writing statements and signing letters, as well as advocacy on the Hill (<https://www.amstat.org/policy-and-advocacy>)
- Steve Pierson, the Director of Science Policy at the ASA, is active on LinkedIn and is a good resource to follow ([linkedin.com/in/steve-pierson-00b855b](https://www.linkedin.com/in/steve-pierson-00b855b))
- The Council on Professional Association on Federal Statistics provides news updates and advocacy (<https://copafs.org/copafs-news/>)

At this time more than ever, we need to work together. If you have ideas for how SSS can work to support the role of statistics and science in society, please reach out to me at tipton@northwestern.edu.

Thanks,
Beth, SSS Chair (2025)

Upcoming Deadlines and Events

2025 Joint Statistical Meetings Deadlines (Nashville, Tennessee):

May 1: Registration and housing open

May 31: Draft manuscript deadline

June 3: Early registration deadline

June 25: Housing deadline

August 2 – August 7: 2025 Joint Statistical Meetings

Other Deadlines:

- Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship:
May 1 2025
- Social Statistics Section Mid-Career
Award ([More information here!](#))
May 15 2025

From the 2025 JSM Program Chair

Maria Cuellar (2025
Program Chair)



Upcoming Sessions at the Joint Statistical Meetings: Social Statistics Section Highlights

The Social Statistics Section of the American Statistical Association is excited to present an outstanding lineup of sessions at this year's Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). Our program includes a diverse range of invited paper sessions, topic-contributed sessions, panel discussions, contributed papers, and roundtables that explore the intersection of statistics, policy, and societal impact. Along with JSM leadership, we are currently finalizing the program and ensuring there are no scheduling conflicts to provide attendees with the best possible experience. We invite all members to engage in these exciting discussions and contribute to the growing impact of statistics in shaping policy and justice.

Invited Paper Sessions

1. Creating Something from Nothing? Synthetic Data Analysis for Social Good and Policy Making
2. Revolutionizing Propensity Score Estimation with Machine Learning Techniques
3. When Many Models Are Equally Accurate: Exploring Interpretability and Uncertainty Quantification

Topic-Contributed Paper Sessions

1. Modern Statistical Methods and Applications that Enrich Society
2. Multi-faceted Approaches to Sensitivity Analysis for Observational Studies
3. Using AI and Machine Learning to Improve Data on Students' Educational Progress in the US and Worldwide

Topic-Contributed Panel Sessions

1. From Experiment to Insight: Shaping the Future of Justice Surveys

Contributed Papers

1. Quantifying Bias, Inequality, and Violence: Advances in Statistics and Justice
2. Statistics and Society: Measuring Inequality, Networks, and Historical Change

Roundtables

1. Getting Involved in Data for Social Good: Experiences and Opportunities
 2. A Statistician's Role as a Co-Investigator in Grant Writing
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SSS Member Highlight: Laura A. Hatfield

Senior Fellow, Statistics & Data Science
National Opinion Research Center (NORC)

In the Spring 2024 newsletter, the SSS began highlighting members in newsletters. Our third highlighted member is Laura Hatfield. We hope you will enjoy reading about her background, activities, and vision for the future of social statistics.

Can you describe your current role?

I am a Senior Fellow at NORC at the University of Chicago. NORC is an objective, nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization that delivers insights and analysis decision-makers trust. Our clients include federal, state, and local governments; foundations; and private institutions. I am in the Statistics and Data Science department, one of two Research Science departments within NORC (the other being Methodology and Quantitative Social Science).

Can you share one or two experiences that impacted your career direction?

Joining a health policy department was an important shift for me, after receiving conventional biostatistical training at the University of Minnesota. I could scarcely tell the difference between Medicare and Medicaid when I graduated, but now I'm deeply enmeshed in health policy and health services. That's one of the great things about being a statistician to me-- we get to learn about such a wide variety of substantive areas. It also opened the door to one of my main methodological areas now, which is causal inference. I wasn't trained in it at all, but hanging out with so many economists, I learned about all the developments in quasi-experimental designs and really dug in to that area.

What professional meetings / conferences do you regularly attend?

In a typical year, I attend the Joint Statistical Meetings, ENAR's annual meeting, the American Causal Inference Conference, and the International Conference on Health Policy Statistics (held every other year)

What area of social statistics do you believe warrants more study?

Since joining NORC, I've learned so much more about survey statistics and the incredible work it takes to assemble nationally representative panels and weight them appropriately. The folks here have so much expertise in this area, plus data integration and linkage. That's an especially exciting area for me, the combination of deep data with small samples (like surveys) and thin data with huge samples (like administrative data), trying to leverage the strengths of each.

GSS/SRMS/SSS Student Paper Competition Winners

The Social Statistics Section (SSS), Government Statistics Section (GSS), and Survey Research Methods Section (SRMS) are pleased to announce the five winning papers will be presented at JSM 2025. The 2025 award recipients were:

Huiding Chen, Vanderbilt University; "Synthetic Sampling Weights for Volunteer-Based National Biobanks: A Case Study with the All of Us Research Program"

Yuting Chen, University of Maryland; "Impact of existence and nonexistence of pivot on the coverage of empirical best linear prediction intervals for small areas"

Zhuochao Huang, University of Florida; "Causal inference and racial bias in policing: New estimands and the importance of mobility data"

Zhenhua Wang, University of Missouri; "Echo State Networks for Spatio-Temporal Area-Level Data"

Seth Adarkwah Yiadom, Ohio State University; "Formulating the Proxy Pattern-Mixture Model as a Selection Model to Assist with Sensitivity Analysis"

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Snigdha Das, Texas A&M University; "Scalably Efficient Inference in Complex Surveys through Targeted Resampling of Weights"

Daniel Vedensky, University of Missouri, "Bayesian Unit-level Models for Longitudinal Survey Data under Informative Sampling: An Analysis of Expected Job Loss Using the Household Pulse Survey"

Social Statistics Section Social Media

The Social Statistics Section is on social media!

Follow us on X/Twitter ([@amstat_sss](#)).

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

Social Statistics Section Executive Committee

Elizabeth Tipton: Chair

Dylan Small: Past-Chair

Ben Hansen: Chair-Elect

Tyler McCormick: Secretary / Treasurer

Maria Cuellar: Program Chair

Xiaojing Wang: Program Chair-Elect

Claire Kelling: Publications Officer

Ruoqi Yu: Council of Sections Representative

Moira Skelley: Staff Liaison

Please find more information about SSS [here](#).
