Best Wishes from CNSTAT to All for the Holiday Season and the New Year

NOTE:

(1) There is still time to comment on a Federal Register notice of October 31, 2014, which described the Census Bureau’s review of content for the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Bureau’s proposal to drop questions on field of bachelor’s degree, marital history, and business or medical office on property from the survey. The FR notice requests public comments, due December 30, 2014, to be sent to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, at jjessup@doc.gov. Comments need not be limited to the questions that are proposed to be dropped but may be on other aspects of the ACS.

(2) The 24th Annual Hansen Lecture will be held Tuesday, January 20th, 2015, from 3:30–5:30 pm at the Jefferson Auditorium, USDA South Building. The speaker will be Danny Pfeffermann, director of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel. The title of the lecture is “Methodological Issues and Challenges in the Production of Official Statistics.” See “Event and Other News” below for more information.

PEOPLE News

We congratulate Jeffrey Sedgwick on his appointment as executive director of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) to be effective January 1, 2015. JRSA is the national nonprofit organization of state criminal justice Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) directors, as well as other researchers and practitioners throughout government, academia, and the justice community who are dedicated to the use of research and analysis to make informed policy and program decisions. Jeff is currently a member of the CNSTAT and Committee on Law and Justice Panel on Modernizing the Nation’s Crime Statistics (he stepped down as chair of the panel consequent to his appointment to head JRSA—Janet Lauritsen from the University of Missouri–St. Louis has taken over as chair). He is co-founder and managing partner of Keswick Advisors, a statistical analysis and policy evaluation consulting firm in Richmond, Virginia. He was confirmed by the Senate as director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in April 2006, and in January 2008, he was named acting Assistant Attorney General (AAG) for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in addition to the BJS directorship. He was formally nominated in April 2008 as AAG for OJP and confirmed to the post in October 2008; he served in that capacity until the change in presidential administrations in January 2009. He previously served at BJS as deputy director for data analysis from January 1984 to January 1985. He is professor emeritus of political science at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he began working in 1978, specializing in aspects of American government including public finance,
criminal justice policy, and the role of the American presidency. He has a B.A. in political science from Kenyon College, an M.A. in public administration and public policy from the University of Virginia (UVA), and a Ph.D. in government and public affairs, also from UVA.

We congratulate William Q. Meeker, Jr., distinguished professor of liberal arts and sciences and professor of statistics, Iowa State University, and Stephanie Shipp, deputy director and research professor, Social and Decision Laboratory, Virginia Bioinformatics Institute at Virginia Tech, on their recent election as fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Both have served on CNSTAT panels or workshop steering committees.

**CNSTAT Staff News—**
We welcome Jordyn White, who joins the CNSTAT staff on December 22, 2014, as a program officer. She will work with Dan Cork on one or more projects and also with staff of the Board on Testing and Assessment on a joint BOTA-CNSTAT project to evaluate the achievement levels for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Jordyn comes to CNSTAT from having worked for 5 years in various positions with the American Community Survey staff at the U.S. Census Bureau. She has a B.A. in psychology from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.A. in criminal justice from St. Joseph’s University. She is co-founder and general manager of the nonprofit, semi-professional Washington Prodigy Women’s Full Contact Football League.

**EVENT & OTHER News**


**REPORT News**

Reliability Growth: Enhancing Defense System Reliability, the final report of the CNSTAT Panel on the Theory and Application of Reliability Growth Modeling to Defense Systems, was released in prepublication form on November 12, 2014. It is available in PDF; printed copies will be available shortly. The panel was chaired by Arthur Fries, Institute for Defense Analyses, for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics.

**The Report in Brief—**

A high percentage of defense systems fail to meet their reliability requirements. Those systems are not only less likely to successfully carry out their intended missions, but they also could endanger the lives of the operators. Moreover, reliability failures discovered after deployment can result in costly and strategic delays and the need for expensive redesign, which often limits the tactical
situations in which the system can be used. Finally, systems that fail to meet their reliability requirements are much more likely to need additional scheduled and unscheduled maintenance and to need more spare parts and possibly replacement systems, all of which can substantially increase the life-cycle costs of a system. Beginning in 2008, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) undertook a concerted effort to raise the priority of reliability through greater use of design for reliability techniques, reliability growth testing, and formal reliability growth modeling, by both the contractors and DOD units. To this end, handbooks, guidances, and formal memoranda were revised or newly issued to reduce the frequency of reliability deficiencies for defense systems in operational testing and the effects of those deficiencies. Reliability Growth evaluates these recent changes and, more generally, assesses how current DOD principles and practices could be modified to increase the likelihood that defense systems will satisfy their reliability requirements. The report examines changes to the reliability requirements for proposed systems; defines modern design and testing for reliability; discusses the contractor's role in reliability testing; and summarizes the current state of formal reliability growth modeling.

Data and Research to Improve the U.S. Food Availability System and Estimates of Food Loss: A Workshop Summary, was released in prepublication form, September 26, 2014. It is available in PDF; printed copies will be available shortly. The workshop was requested by the Economic Research Service/USDA and was chaired by Mary Muth (RTI International).

The Report in Brief—

The ERS/USDA Food Availability Data System includes several distinct but related series on food and nutrient availability for consumption. The data serve as popular proxies for actual consumption at the national level for over 200 commodities (e.g., fresh spinach, beef, and eggs). The core Food Availability (FA) data series provides estimates of the amount of food available, per capita, for human consumption in the United States with data back to 1909 for many commodities. The Loss-Adjusted Food Availability (LAFA) data series is derived from the FA data series by adjusting for food spoilage, plate waste, and other losses to more closely approximate actual intake. This past fiscal year, as part of its initiative to systematically review all of its major data series, ERS decided to review the FADS data system. Data and Research to Improve the U.S. Food Availability System and Estimates of Food Loss is the summary of a workshop convened by CNSTAT and the IOM Food and Nutrition Board to advance knowledge and understanding of the measurement and technical aspects of the data supporting the LAFA data series so that these data series and subsequent food availability and food loss estimates can be maintained and improved. The workshop considered such issues as the effects of termination of selected Census Bureau and USDA data series on estimates for affected food groups and commodities; the potential for using other data sources, such as scanner data, to improve estimates of food availability; and possible ways to improve the data on food loss at the farm and retail levels and at restaurants. This report considers knowledge gaps, data sources that may be available or could be generated to fill gaps, what can be learned from other countries and international organizations, ways to ensure consistency of treatment of commodities across series, and the most promising opportunities for new data for the various food availability series.

Reminder: PDF versions of CNSTAT and NAS reports are available for free download at The National Academies Press website, http://www.nap.edu. NOTE: The download site asks for your e-mail and a password. If you don’t have an NAP account and don’t want to have one, then provide your e-mail and click “I don’t have an account;” on the next page click “accept NAP policies” and “log in as guest”.

Reminder: Slides from previous CNSTAT public seminars are available on the CNSTAT public seminars and symposia page; slides from several major workshops, are available on the presentations page on the CNSTAT website. Presentations from the July 31-August 1, 2014, CNSTAT International Conference on Census Methods are available here.
CNSTAT holds three regular meetings each year, with its spring and fall meeting dates following a set formula; our May meetings are always the Thursday–Friday preceding Mother’s Day and our October meetings are always the second-to-last Thursday–Friday of the month. Here are the next three meetings:

**CNSTAT’s 126th meeting** will be held **February 6–7, 2015**, at the Beckman Center of the National Academies in Irvine, CA. It will be a retreat meeting; there will be no agency head luncheon or public seminar.

**CNSTAT’s 127th meeting** will be held **May 7–8, 2015**, in the NAS main building at 2101 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, DC. On the 8th, there will be a special program organized by the NSF-Census Research Network (NCRN). More details will be available in the next newsletter, but essentially, there will be four mini-workshops open to the public (space permitting) from 10-noon on statistical topics on which various NCRN nodes have been working; followed by a luncheon of CNSTAT members and staff with statistical agency heads (box lunches will be available for workshop attendees); followed by a public seminar on the NCRN, beginning with light refreshments at 1:30 pm and ending with a reception at 4:30 pm. For more information about the NCRN and what the various nodes have been up to, see [http://www.ncrn.info/](http://www.ncrn.info/).

**CNSTAT’s 128th meeting** will be held **October 22–23, 2015**, in the NAS main building at 2101 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, DC. On the 23rd, the meeting will feature a luncheon with statistical agency heads, followed by a public seminar, beginning with light refreshments at 2 pm and ending with a reception at 4:30 pm.

**Active PANELS & WORKSHOPS**

[Listed by sponsor agency, beginning with federal departments. Unless otherwise noted, meetings are in Washington, DC, and include open sessions. For further information, contact the person listed as the study director or project assistant (e-mail addresses follow the formula of first initial plus last name as oneword@nas.edu). Also see the CNSTAT web site under “Our Work.”]

**Department of Agriculture**

**Panel on Methods for Integrating Multiple Data Sources to Improve Crop Estimates**
Sponsor: National Agricultural Statistics Service  
Duration: September 2014–September 2017  
Study director: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant: Mary Ann Kasper  
Chair: TBD  
Report planned: Final report  
Upcoming meetings: TBD

**Workshop on Data and Research to Improve the Food Availability Data System and Estimates of Food Loss** (joint with the Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine)
Sponsor: Economic Research Service  
Duration: October 2013–March 2015
Study director: Ann Yaktine (IOM); senior program officer: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant: Anthony Mann
Chair: Mary K. Muth (RTI International Food and Nutrition Policy Research Program)
Report planned: Workshop summary, *Data and Research to Improve the U.S. Food Availability System and Estimates of Food Loss: A Workshop Summary*, released in prepublication form, September 26, 2014; it is available in [PDF](#); printed copies will be available shortly
Meeting: Workshop held April 8-9, 2014

**Workshop on Model-Based Methods for Producing Estimates of Livestock with Appropriate Measures of Uncertainty**
Sponsor: National Agricultural Statistics Service
Duration: September 2014–September 2015
Study director: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant: Mary Ann Kasper
Chair: TBD
Report planned: Workshop summary
Upcoming meetings: TBD

**Workshop on Rationalizing Rural Area Classifications for ERS/USDA**
Sponsor: Economic Research Service
Duration: September 2014–September 2015
Study director: Nancy Kirkendall; co-study director: Gooloo Wunderlich; project assistant: Mary Ann Kasper
Chair: TBD
Report planned: Workshop summary
Upcoming meetings: TBD

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**Department of Commerce**

**Panel on Addressing Priority Technical Issues for the Next Decade of the American Community Survey**
Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: October 2011–February 2015
Study director: Krisztina Marton; senior program officer: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant, Michael Siri
Chair: Alan Zaslavsky (Harvard Medical School)
Report planned: Final report has cleared review and is being prepared for transmittal and release
Meetings: Last (eighth) meeting held May 28, 2014, in Washington, DC

**Panel to Review the 2010 Census**
Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: May 2009–March 2015
Study director: Daniel Cork; project assistant: Anthony Mann
Chair: Thomas Cook (Decision Analytics International)
Report planned: Final report is being drafted
Meetings: Twentieth and last meeting held August 21-22, 2014, in Washington, DC
Panel to Review and Evaluate the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation Content and Design
Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: September 2013–November 2016
Study director: Carol House; project assistant, Agnes Gaskin
Chair: John Czajka, Mathematica Policy Research
Report planned: Final report
Upcoming meetings: Third meeting held November 20-21, 2014, in Washington, DC; fourth meeting TBD

Standing Committee on Reengineering the 2020 Census
Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: September 2014–September 2019
Study director: Daniel Cork; project assistant: Anthony Mann
Chair-nominee: Thomas Cook (Decision Analytics International)
Report planned: Standing committees do not issue reports; they meet for discussion; they also stand up workshops or consensus panels; this committee will stand up workshops on central topics for 2020 census planning; it will also stand up a consensus panel on reengineering the Census Bureau’s Economic Census and economic surveys
Upcoming meetings: TBD

Department of Defense
Panel on the Theory and Application of Reliability Growth Modeling to Defense Systems
Sponsor: Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics
Duration: September 2009–December 2014
Study director: Michael Cohen; project assistant: Michael Siri
Chair: Arthur Fries (Institute for Defense Analyses)
Report: Final report, *Reliability Growth: Enhancing Defense System Reliability*, released in prepublication form, November 12, 2014; it is available in PDF; printed copies will be available shortly.
Meetings: Fifth and final meeting held July 8–9, 2013, in Washington, DC

Department of Education
Committee on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Achievement Levels Evaluation (joint with the DBASSE Board on Testing and Assessment, which has the lead)
Sponsor: National Center for Education Statistics
Duration: September 2014–March 2016
Study director: Judith Koenig (BOTA); program officer: Jordyn White (CNSTAT); project assistant: Kelly Arrington (BOTA)
Chair: Christopher Edley, Jr. (University of California, Berkeley)
Report planned: Final report
Upcoming meetings: First meeting scheduled for February 19-20, 2015, in Washington, DC
Department of Health and Human Services

Standing Committee on Integrating New Behavioral Health Measures into SAMHSA’s Data Collection Programs (joint with the DBASSE Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences and the IOM Board on Health Sciences Policy)
Sponsors: Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Duration: August 2014–July 2016
Study director: Krisztina Marton; senior program officer, Jeanne Rivard (BBCSS); senior program officer: Adrienne Stith Butler (IOM); project assistant, Michael Siri
Chair: James Jackson (University of Michigan)
Reports: Standing committees do not issue reports; they meet for discussion; they also stand up workshops or consensus panels; this committee will stand up workshops on the topics of serious emotional disturbance in children, trauma and recovery, and specific mental illness diagnoses with any functional impairment
Upcoming meetings: First meeting scheduled for January 29-30, 2015, in Washington, DC

Department of Homeland Security

Committee on Affordability of National Flood Insurance Program Premiums (joint with the Water Science and Technology Board, which has the lead, and the Board on Mathematical Sciences and Their Applications)
Sponsor: Federal Emergency Management Agency
Duration: September 2013–September 2015
Study director: Jeffrey Jacobs (WSTB); CNSTAT director: Constance Citro; BMSA director: Scott Weidman
Chair: Leonard Shabman (Resources for the Future)
Reports planned: First report is being drafted; second report
Upcoming meetings: Fifth meeting scheduled for April 2015 (specific date/place TBD)

Department of Justice

Panel on Modernizing the Nation’s Crime Statistics (joint with the Committee on Law and Justice)
Sponsor: Bureau of Justice Statistics and Federal Bureau of Investigation
Duration: September 2013–March 2016
Study director: Daniel Cork; project assistant, Michael Siri
Chair: Janet Lauritsen (University of Missouri–St. Louis)
Reports planned: Interim report is being drafted; final report
Upcoming meetings: Seventh meeting scheduled for February 18-19, 2015, in Washington, DC

Department of Transportation

Panel on Research Methodologies and Statistical Approaches to Understanding Driver Fatigue Factors in Motor Carrier Safety and Driver Health (joint with the Board on Human-Systems Integration and Transportation Research Board)
Sponsor: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Duration: September 2013–September 2015
Study director: Michael Cohen; senior program officer: Richard Pain; associate program officer: Esha Sinha; Board on Human-Systems Integration director: Barbara Wanchisen; TRB Studies and Special Programs Division director: Stephen Godwin; project assistant: Agnes Gaskin
Co-chairs: Hal Stern (University of California, Irvine); Matthew Rizzo (University of Nebraska Medical Center)
Report planned: Final report is being drafted
Upcoming meetings: Fourth meeting scheduled for January 26-27, 2015, in Washington, DC

National Science Foundation

Forum on Open Science
NOTE: This project was recently transferred to the jurisdiction of CNSTAT.
Sponsor: National Science Foundation
Duration: October 2013–October 2015
Study director: Hermann Habermann; project assistant: Michael Siri
Chair: David Ward (University of Wisconsin–Madison)
Reports planned: Forums do not issue reports; they meet for discussion among a wide range of stakeholders; they can also stand up workshops or consensus panels
Upcoming meetings: Fourth meeting scheduled for March 27, 2015, in Washington, DC

Workshop on Measuring Research and Development Expenditures in the U.S. Nonprofit Sector: Conceptual and Design Issues
Sponsor: National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics
Duration: September 2013–April 2015
Study director: Carol House; associate program officer: Esha Sinha; project assistant: Agnes Gaskin
Chair: Lester Salamon (Johns Hopkins University)
Report planned: Workshop summary has cleared review and is being prepared for release
Meeting: Workshop held June 30-July 1, 2014, in Washington, DC

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Panel on the Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration
Sponsor: The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Duration: May 2013–October 2015
Study director: Christopher Mackie; associate program officer: Esha Sinha; project assistant: Anthony Mann
Chair: Francine Blau (Cornell University)
Report planned: Final report
Upcoming meetings: Fifth meeting scheduled for January 8-9, 2015, in Washington, DC
The Committee on National Statistics was established in 1972 at the National Academies to improve the statistical methods and information on which public policy decisions are based. The committee carries out studies, workshops, and other activities to foster better measures and fuller understanding of the economy, the environment, public health, crime, education, immigration, poverty, welfare, and other public policy issues. It also evaluates ongoing statistical programs and tracks the statistical policy and coordinating activities of the federal government, serving a unique role at the intersection of statistics and public policy. The committee’s work is supported by a consortium of federal agencies through a National Science Foundation grant.