

**Survey Research Methods Section (SRMS)  
American Statistical Association (ASA)**

**Business Meeting  
Wednesday, August 14, 2002  
(Revised November 11, 2002)**

The SRMS business meeting started at about 6 PM, Wednesday August 14, 2002 at the JSM meetings in New York City, New York, and ended around 8 PM. There were about 85 members present at the meeting.

**Board members present**

Lars Lyberg, Chair  
Lynne Stokes, Chair-elect  
Dan Kasprzyk, Past Chair  
Leyla Mohadjer, Secretary  
Sarah Nusser, Treasurer  
Pat Cantwell, Program Chair  
Howard Hogan, Program Chair-elect  
Al Tupek, Publication Officer  
Bill Kalsbeek, Council of Sections Representative  
David Chapman, Continuing Education  
Anthony An, Amstat On-line Editor (webmaster)

**Agenda Items**

1. Overview of Section Activities (Lars Lyberg)
2. Service Award (Lars Lyberg)
3. Treasurer's Report (Sarah Nusser)
4. The Proceedings Archive (Al Tupek and Bill Kalsbeek)
5. 2002 Program (Pat Cantwell)
6. 2003 Program (Howard Hogan)
7. Council of Sections (Rachel Caspar and Bill Kalsbeek)
8. Continuing Education (David Chapman)
9. Publication Issues (Al Tupek)
10. Committee on ASA Fellows (Mary Mulry)
11. Student Awards (Pat Cantwell)
12. Any other Business

**1. Overview of Section Activities**

The SRMS chair, Lars Lyberg, welcomed all members to the business meeting. He started the meeting by providing an overview of the Section's activities, as follows.

**Project Funding** -- SRMS provided funding for a number of projects including the conference honoring Jon Rao, the International Conference on Improving Surveys (ICIS), the conference on

Questionnaire Development, Evaluation, and Testing Methods (QDET), the IASS book on landmark papers, and putting the SRMS proceedings from 1978 to 2000 online.

SRMS received many requests to fund various types of projects during the last year. As a result, the following criteria were developed to assist the officers in choosing among the many funding requests. To be eligible for funding, a project should satisfy at least two of the criteria:

Criterion 1: Project generates a product that provides tangible benefits to SRMS members. Examples of benefits are consolidation or expansion of the survey research literature, revenues, material, or discounts.

Criterion 2: Project provides substantive (positive) visibility for SRMS in the U.S. and abroad.

Criterion 3: Project promotes increased participation of survey professionals and/or provides encouragement for a non-survey professional to enter into the profession of survey research.

The Executive Board must approve all funding.

***SRMS Newsletter*** -- Copies of the SRMS newsletter (July 2002 edition) were available for those who had not received a copy or wanted extra copies. Lars thanked the newsletter editors, Tom Krenzke and Leslie Wallace, for their outstanding job.

***Outreach Committee*** -- Lars announced the establishment of a new committee on outreach. The committee members are Lars Lyberg, Leyla Mohadjer, Tom Krenzke, and Leslie Wallace. The purpose of the committee is to develop outreach programs to increase the membership of the Section. The membership rate has been flat for several years. The outreach committee will look into ways of bringing in new members. The work will include creating a welcome kit for new members.

***SRMS Financial State*** -- The SRMS financial situation is very good. The Section's balance is becoming more inline with the ASA guidelines as reported later by Sarah Nusser, the SRMS Treasurer (last year's balance was too high when compared to the ASA guidelines). Lars also mentioned that the sales of proceedings on CDs would be lower this year.

***SRMS Fellows*** -- Lars congratulated the SRMS new Fellows:

Nell Sedransk  
Michael L. Cohen  
Richard A. Kulka  
John L. Eltinge  
Carolee Bush  
Stephanie Slepicka Shipp  
Dalene K. Stangl

***Newly Elected SRMS Officers*** -- Lars welcomed the elected officers:

Sharon Lohr, Chair-Elect.  
Partha Lahiri, Program Chair-Elect  
Thomas Belin, Treasurer

Michael Cohen, Publication Officer  
Elizabeth Stasny, Representative to the COS

**Other Activities** – Lars reported that SRMS has been approached by WAPOR for discussing common goals and projects. SRMS plans to get together with WAPOR for this collaboration. Furthermore, The SRMS working group chaired by Jim Lepkowski will meet with the sponsors of BRFSS (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System) this fall. In addition, SRMS will become more involved with the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS) by setting up an SRMS session in the next IASS meetings in Berlin, Germany, in August of 2003.

## **2. Service Award**

Lars handed out the first SRMS service award. The recipient of the service award was Wendy Alvey. Wendy produced the newsletter for many years as well as being in charge of updating the SRMS flier for many years. Lars thanked her for all her outstanding efforts.

At this time, Lars invited the SRMS officers to provide updates of their activities for the past year. Summaries of the officer's reports are given below.

## **3. Treasurer's Report**

Sarah Nusser provided the treasurer's report. The \$127,000 balance from last year is brought down to about \$93,000 as of the meeting. SRMS supported a number of projects including the IASS Jubilee volume (landmark papers in survey statistics), as well as QDET. Furthermore, resources were allocated to put the SRMS proceedings online. By the end of the year we expect to have about \$75,000 to \$80,000 surplus. ASA guideline for the SRMS Section is to have about \$60,000 in balance. Sarah also reported that we had many funding requests last year. For the coming year, we only have one or two requests for funds so far.

One area of negative gain for SRMS is in the sale of the CDs of proceedings produced by ASA. Ron Fecso, the Council of Sections (COS) Chair, reported that one of the reasons CDs are not making money (when compared to the hard copy proceedings) is that all proceedings are sold on one CD (rather than paper copies that were separate for each Section). Thus, those who used to buy more than one Section's paper copy proceedings now need to only buy one CD. Another reason may be the lack of good advertising for the CDs.

## **4. The Proceedings Archive**

Al Tupek and Bill Kalsbeek reported on the progress of work on archiving the proceedings. Last year the Sections talked about the possibility of putting all the proceedings of the section on CDs or on the web. SRMS was the only Section that went ahead with this project. The SRMS board reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of putting all proceedings on CDs versus putting them on the web. After numerous discussions on this topic, the board finally decided to go with the option of having the proceedings online. SRMS contracted with OMNI Press to conduct this task. The work is in progress. We now have the 1978 proceedings online (it is not entirely searchable, since that would be too costly). We expect to have all proceedings online by early September 2002.

The proceedings will be available to every one on the web free of charge. Al invited the members to access the 1978 proceedings on the web at the end of the business meeting, using a laptop that was set up in the meeting room.

Bill talked about the issues related to the release of the proceedings that go beyond the year 2000. The issue is when to put these proceedings on the web. The main concern is not jeopardizing the ability of ASA to sell the CDs of the proceedings.

David Binder asked if SRMS had any plans to put the proceedings on CDs. He was concerned that some members may not have access to fast internet connections, and thus may not be able to take advantage of the proceedings on the web, and may prefer to have CDs. Al responded that with the current plan, members can put the proceedings on CDs. The board will discuss this issue (putting the proceedings on CDs) further in the near future.

Some members suggested limiting the accessibility of the proceedings by limiting the users to the ASA members or just the SRMS members (now it is available to any one who accesses the web site). Another idea was to charge users that access the proceedings too frequently. On the other hand, members noted that with the current overage of the revenues, SRMS may not want to use this product to make any money.

Fritz Scheuren mentioned that the Social Statistics Section (SOC) has put out a list of all papers from 1958 on their web publications. This list was loaded two week ago. Bill suggested that we add a link on the SRMS web site to get to the above site. Lars indicated that JOS is also online (this may be another good link to add to the SRMS site).

## **5. 2002 Program**

Pat Cantwell reported that SRMS had 5 invited sessions, 16 topic contributed sessions, and 23 regular contributed sessions. There were a total of 8 roundtable lunches. He thanked the organizers and the chairs of the sessions for all their efforts and hard work. He also thanked Nat Schenker and his two assistants for all their help in establishing the sessions. Finally, many thanks went to Tom Belin for organizing the poster sessions.

Pat reported that ASA added two late-breaking sessions to the JSM meetings, a session of confidentiality in the age of terrorism (session #186), and a session on statistical terminology, Census 2000, and the supreme court (session #292).

## **6. 2003 Program**

Howard Hogan provided an update of the next year's JSM program. He announced that the roundtable lunches need to be set by January 2003. Partha Lahiri will be in charge of organizing the lunches. Howard asked members to contact Partha if they have any proposals. Invited sessions are due the end of August 2002. SRMS has allocated 5 invited sessions. Howard reported that we now have very good submissions, some of those (not selected as invited sessions) will become special contributed sessions. He also asked the members if they had new ideas similar to this year's "invited technical exhibits." In this session, Kirk Wolter had an exhibit of the Florida ballots. Howard encouraged members to put proposals for topic contributed sessions. There are five papers in these sessions, each one being 20 minutes long. Michael Cohen will be in charge of recruiting volunteers to organize these sessions. For Poster sessions, Howard

talked about a new idea in which a group of sessions with related topics go into a topic contributed poster session with all of them being located together in the same spot.

## **7. Council of Sections**

Bill Kalsbeek provided an update of the Council of Section (COS) activities and issues. Issues discussed included discussion on how soon to put the proceedings of the future years online, and other SRMS issues brought up to the COS (included in the list given below). Bill asked members to provide him with their comments and questions for COS.

Bill provided a brief review of the COS meeting at JSM. He mentioned that COS meeting included discussions on:

- the continuing education,
- the ASA building,
- concerns about the flat rate of membership in the association,
- attempts to fill in the vacancies of staff positions at ASA in order to better serve the Sections,
- electronic publications,
- online voting,
- conflict of interest issues (there could be conflict in duties of officers versus their jobs),
- creating a Section on Transportation statistics, and
- updating personal information online (Sections should remind members to update their information (only ½ of the members now have updated information)).

Ron Fecso, the Chair of COS, asked SRMS members to bring up issues of their interest to their COS representatives.

## **8. Continuing Education**

Dave Chapman provided an update of the SRMS Continuing Education (CE) activities. This year, SRMS sponsored a full day course taught by Clyde Tucker on nonsampling errors, and another full day course taught by Sharon Lohr on design and analysis of sample surveys. Attendance at Clyde's class was low (8 attended), but Sharon's class' attendance was very high (32 attended). For the next year's JSM meetings, SRMS is planning a course on web surveys by Mick Couper. There are also a couple of other candidates. These classes will be announced as soon as they are firmed up.

Brenda said one of the ASA recommendations to improve the CE program is to establish courses with set curriculum that can be taught repeatedly. Another approach is to group courses in a way that attendants can establish a plan to take these courses in series. Having a set curriculum requires pre-established material (one approach is to have the first instructor prepare the material and then hand it over to the future instructors). ASA believes that this will be a good service to members. ASA has just started these discussions, and will talk to Sections about specialized courses.

## **9. Publication Issues**

Al Tupek thanked the SRMS newsletter editors, Tom Krenzke and Leslie Wallace, for the much improved and very useful newsletter. He also thanked Tony An for his outstanding job in maintaining the SRMS web site. Al reported the addition of a new set of links to university programs and survey research centers on the SRMS web site. The request had come from Bob Groves, who also provided the list.

Al reported that the SRMS ListServe includes mostly very good and useful communications, although there are times it gets too busy with emails not very useful to most members. Al mentioned the problem of the ListServe and the “out of office” messages that once in a while populate members’ emails. He will look into ways to block these messages to be posted on the ListServe.

#### **10. Committee on ASA Fellows**

Mary Mulry, the committee chair, reported on the Fellows committee’s work. There are five members in this committee: Paul Biemer, Don Dillman, Chris Skinner, Lynne Stokes, and Clyde Tucker. Basically, the committee reviews the members’ list to see if there are members who deserve to be nominated and were not nominated by any one, and try to find nominators for these members. At the conclusion of this work, SRMS Fellows Committee identifies fellow candidates and enlists specific individuals to develop the Fellow nomination material, which is then reviewed by the ASA Fellows Committee.

The current chair of the ASA Fellows Committee is Rich Allen. The ASA committee on Fellow has 9 members. This committee reviews nominations and determines the next year’s fellows.

Mary asked members to contact her if they think of any one who should be nominated.

#### **11. Student Awards**

Student awards are sponsored jointly by the SOC, the Government Statistics Section (GOVT), and the SRMS. Each year, SRMS gets together with GOVT and SOC to review the papers of the applicants and to choose the students receiving the awards. There are five awards annually, with two awards being sponsored by SRMS.

Pat reported that we had many good applicants this year. Pat congratulated the two SRMS sponsored students:

Sunghee Lee, University of Maryland  
Robert Clark, University of Wollongong in Australia

Also, he congratulated the other three sponsored students in GOVT and SOC Sections:

Bo Lu, University of Pennsylvania  
Kevin Heslin, UCLA  
Chen Quin Lam, Ohio State University

#### **12. Any Other Business**

The JASA invited paper, presented at JSM, will be in the September issue of the JASA.

Brenda Cox brought up an issue about the page charges. Currently, the page charges are all going to the associated Sections directly. The ASA proposal (this is to help out the Sections with no revenues) is to share the page charges among the Sections. For example, with the current plan, about \$1,500 goes directly to SRMS. With the proposed plan, SRMS will receive about \$900 (and the rest goes to other sections).

Brenda also announced that the JSM registration fees are going up next year by \$50 to pay for various cost (e.g., there has been an increased number of PowerPoint presentations increasing the cost of operating the sessions).

Some concerns and questions came up about registration and travel payments for nonmembers who are invited to the JSM meetings. The board replied that when a Section invites some one to the meetings (to chair a roundtable, or present an invited paper, etc.) then the Section could decide to pay some or all the expenses. If the invited person is not an ASA member, then ASA may be asked to wave the registration fee, or the Section pays for registration (some members noted that there is a one-day reduced registration fee). In SRMS, we have guidelines set up to handle requests for assistance with expenses. Basically, the Program Chair for the JSM session submits a request. The request must have the unanimous approval of the Program Chair, Section Chair, and the Treasurer.