

Survey Research Methods Section

American Statistical Association

Minutes of the SRMS Business Meeting
Wednesday, 6 August 2008, Denver, Colorado
6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Mountain Time

1) Call to Order—Mary Mulry

Mary introduced the current officers. Tony An, Jonaki Bose, Bill Kalsbeek, Rod Little, David Marker, Emily McFarlane, Leyla Mohadjer, Nora Cate Schaeffer, and Elaine Zanutto were present. She then announced the newly elected officers: Howard Hogan, chair-elect; Michael Elliott, program chair-elect; Jean Opsomer, publication officer; Dawn Haines, treasurer; Rachel Harter, council of sections rep; and Michael Larsen, education officer. Howard, Michael Elliot and Rachel were present.

Mary also recognized the recipients of the eight Student Travel Awards. Three of the eight (Rebecca, Stephanie and Matt) were present. She also thanked the sponsors: Marketing Systems Group.

2) Treasurer's Report – Mary Mulry since Breda Munoz not attending

Mary reported that the balance as of July 31st was \$67,473.30 compared to \$69,836.70 last year. Mary described what was and was not included in these amounts.

3) Publications/Proceedings/Website –Tony An (Eric Rancourt not attending)

Tony requested that people let him know if they notice anything missing on the SRMS website or if they feel that additional information should be posted. He also mentioned that the 2007 proceedings were now available.

Tony was asked if he knew of any way to resolve a problem authors face with citing their work from JSM proceedings in journals such a Biometrika which won't accept citations without page numbers. Tony did not have any immediate solution but said he was happy to work with folks to come up with a solution. David Binder thanked Tony for his help on some other matter.

4) Continuing Education – Leyla Mohadjer

Leyla mentioned the success of the short course. It had 33 preregistrations and 8 onsite registrations. She mentioned a strong slate of proposals for next year:

- 1 day course on SDC using Argus Software
- 1 day course by Steve Feinberg
- ½ day course by Rick Valliant/Alan Dorfman
- ½ day course by Mike Brick on sampling and weighting issues in surveys including cell phones.

She mentioned we might have a 5th on multi-level models and asked for input on current or future CE courses.

5) 2008 JSM Program – David Marker/Elaine Zanutto

David said that there were 72 sessions that SRMS either sponsored or cosponsored. He mentioned the late-breaking session on election polls that was filled to capacity with over 300 people and that was covered by the local CBS affiliate.

The 2008 Best Poster Awards were announced. The judging process was described. There were 6 judges. Every poster was judged by at least two judges using pre-established criteria.

Out of 32 posters the two poster competition winners were:

- Application of Confirmatory Factor Analysis to Establish the Validity of a Practice-Analysis Survey —Heibatollah Baghi, George Mason University; Teresa Panniers, George Mason University; Mary Smolenski, American Nurses Credentialing Center
- State and County Small-Area Estimation Using the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System (BRFSS) —Van Parsons, National Center for Health Statistics; Nathaniel Schenker, National Center for Health Statistics (Nat present)

The three poster competition honorable mentions were:

- Bid Design and Its Influence on Stated Willingness To Pay and Participation in a Deposit Refund Program in a Survey of Nonrefillable Plastic Pesticide Users —Danna L. Moore, Washington State University
- The Use of Paradata for Evaluating Interviewer Training and Performance —William P. Mockovak, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Randall Powers, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Cluster Size in Multilevel Models: The Impact of Sparse Data Structures on Point and Interval Estimates in Two-Level Models —Bethany A. Bell-Ellison, University of South Florida; John M. Ferron, University of South Florida; Jeffrey D. Kromrey, University of South Florida (Bethany present)

Attendees were strongly urged to submit a poster next year and were reminded that there would be a prize and that they can include the corresponding paper in the proceedings.

6) 2009 JSM Program plans – Elaine Zanutto

Elaine reminded attendees that the process for submitting proposed invited sessions would be open until the end of the month (since extended to September 9th). She also asked that anyone with breakfast or lunch roundtable suggestions let Michael Elliot know.

7) Council of Sections – Mike Larsen/Nora Cate Schaeffer

Nora Cate asked for feedback from the SRMS membership on the following topics:

- a. Ideas on how to attract new ASA members
- b. New revenue sources for ASA (including possible meeting implementation for non-ASA groups)
- c. Ideas for Steve Pierson regarding marketing statistics to policy makers. Do members of SRMS have intriguing/demonstrable examples of this?
- d. Proposed two new sections: Statistical Learning and Data Mining/ Statistical Programming

There were no comments from the audience.

8) Waksberg Award – Leyla Mohadjer

Leyla provided information on behalf of Bob Groves, the current chair who couldn't attend. She explained the criteria for the Waksberg award and that Graham Kalton was this year's winner and will be presenting at the fall Statistics Canada Symposium. Suggestions for candidates for the next Waksberg award should be sent to Leyla by February 29th, 2009.

9) SRMS Fellow Committee – Clyde Tucker

Clyde recognized the nine new Fellows who are SRMS members.

10) Newsletter report – Emily McFarlane (Laura Flicker not attending)

Emily reported that the newsletter had been sent out a few weeks ago, but it was possible that not everyone may have received it. They were making sure that the ASA mailing list was the most current. She indicated, based on a question, that the electronic newsletter would probably lead to some cost savings. She was asked if this would mean that the newsletter would be more frequent. When Emily in turn asked the audience if they would like the newsletter more frequently, there was no response. Emily asked for any suggestions or announcements to be sent to her and also asked for volunteers to write articles on the eight topics of interest identified previously by Bill.

11) Report on initiative on future survey research workforce – Bill Kalsbeek

Bill mentioned that he had discussed the same issue at last year's meeting as well, and since then the initiative has picked up some support from the National Academy of Sciences and Kathy Wallman (OMB). The good news is that there is interest, but the bad news is that there is no funding. It is unclear where to go from here. Connie Citro at the Academy has developed two proposals—one on the survey research workforce in general and the other focusing on the federal workforce, and is sending the proposals around. A grand goal would be a NAS study, while a more modest hope is a workshop with commissioned papers. Bill would like ideas on how or where to obtain funding. Once we have more of a direction we will have a task force.

Audience suggestions included working with AAAS. There was a question regarding whether SRMS was going to provide the seed funding for this.

12) Report on initiative on increasing number of refereed papers – Rod Little

Rod presented information on this initiative. He mentioned that the goal was to see more survey research work published in good refereed journals. The task force consisting of Rod, Mary Mulry, Elaine Zanutto, Nat Schenker, Fritz Scheuren and Roger Tourangeau had their first meeting on 7th August 2008. Rod raised a few questions:

- a. Is there a need for more referred journals?
- b. Should SRMS be involved in this effort?
- c. Are there any rewards for government and industry researchers for whom this is not a first priority?
- d. Do current outlets meet our needs or should we be developing new outlets in connection with ASA or other venues?

- e. Should we be providing mentors on how to submit to refereed journals?
- f. Should we consider the issue of what impact the lack of referees has on the time it takes to get a paper published? Should SRMS be involved in developing a cadre of referees? It currently is very difficult to find people to referee survey methods papers in a timely way.

Some other topics emerging from the task force meeting: should there be a survey of SRMS members? Should there be a serious examination of other journals beyond JASA, JOS and Survey Methods? The idea of improving referee seems attractive: should there be a session at JSM on this? Topics could include developing a good paper for a refereed journal or how to referee a paper. If the membership considers this worthwhile, Rod is interested in keeping the momentum going.

David Binder suggested contacting editors of journals to get more methodologists on board to improve quality of feedback from referees for journals other than the big three. Phil Kott had a question on whether these other journals got enough people. Rod would like to see an internationally recognized survey research methods journal with a high impact rating. Clyde Tucker mentioned that psychology and sociology journals have very few articles on methods and it would be useful if they picked up more on this topic. Terri Gardeniere (spelling) encouraged the idea of creating a milieu of reviewers with expertise. Currently authors have to wait a very long time after papers are submitted. Rod agreed saying that as a culture we're not very good about being referees.

Rod closed by asking comments to be sent to him.

13) Other Business

ICES-IV: Howard Hogan described the ICES conferences as the premier conference on establishment surveys. He outlined the steps necessary to hold a conference—the need for seed money, and official sponsors who will cover 100 percent of the risk. ICES-III turned a profit. The intellectual contribution to survey methods was enormous. He mentioned that ICES has to have a permanent home and that there is interest in it being every 5 years instead of 7 years. He asked whether SRMS-GSS could provide a permanent home.

Bill commended Mary for her leadership of SRMS.

Overall there were about 90 attendees.