The National Academies of
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Workshop on Improving the American Community Survey
Committee on National Statistics
Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education

Workshop on Improving the American Community Survey
September 26–27, 2018 ● Washington, DC

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Keck Center of the National Academies
500 Fifth Street NW
Room 100

DAY 1: Wednesday, September 26, 2018

9:00am	**A. Call to Order and Introduction to the Workshop**
5	WARREN BROWN, *Chair; Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research, Cornell University*
5	BRIAN HARRIS-KOJETIN, *Director, Committee on National Statistics*
5	JAMES TREAT, *Assistant Director for Decennial Census Programs, U.S. Census Bureau*
10	VICTORIA VELKOFF, *U.S. Census Bureau*

9:25am	**B. Broad Visions for Administrative Data Use in American Community Survey (ACS) Production**
	Moderator: MICHAEL DAVERN, *NORC at the University of Chicago*
20	Broad Roles for Administrative and Third-Party Data in the ACS, and Overview of Census Bureau Research
	JENNIFER ORTMAN, *U.S. Census Bureau*
15	Census Bureau Internal Evaluation of Alternative Data Sources (for Substitution/Replacement and Editing/Imputation Visions)
	NIKOLAS PHARRIS CIUREJ, *U.S. Census Bureau*
10	*Discussant:* LINDA JACOBSEN, *Population Reference Bureau*
20	*Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

10:30am	*Break*

10:40am	**C. Census Bureau Research and Practice on Administrative Records in the ACS**
	Moderator: SUSAN BROWER, *Minnesota State Demographic Center*
	Census Bureau Internal Use of Administrative Records to Generate Housing and Income Indicators, and Comparison With Survey Data
15	SANDRA CLARK, *U.S. Census Bureau [on housing]*
15	JONATHAN ROTHBAUM, *U.S. Census Bureau [on income]*
15	Planned Use of Administrative Records in the 2020 Census for Imputation of Characteristics, and Possible Extensions to the ACS
	ANDREW KELLER, *U.S. Census Bureau*
15	*Discussant:* JOHN CZAJKA, *Mathematica Policy Research*
20	*Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

12:00pm	*Lunch*

1:00pm	**D. Applications and Emerging Best Practices, for Substitution/Replacement and Editing/Imputation Purposes**
	Moderator: DONALD DILLMAN, *Department of Sociology and Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University*
20	Statistics Canada Experience and Protocols for Interface Between Census/Surveys and Administrative Data
	ERIC OLSON, *Statistics Canada*
20	Experience from Linking Survey Data, Administrative Data, and Social Media Extracts
	ERIN DALTON, *Office of Data Analysis, Research, and Evaluation, Department of Human Services, Allegheny County, PA*
20	Improving ACS Estimation with Multiple Surveys and Third Party Data
	SCOTT HOLAN, *University of Missouri and U.S Census Bureau*
15	*Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

2:15pm	*Break*

2:30pm	**E. Applications and Emerging Best Practices, for Blending and New Product Creation Purposes**
	Moderator: PATRICE MATHIEU, *Social Survey Methods Division, Statistics Canada*
20	Insights and Data Products from Linking Health Survey Data with Administrative Housing Data
	VERONICA HELMS, *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*
	LISA MIREL, *National Center for Health Statistics*
20	Lessons Learned from Construction and Use of the National Mortgage Database
	ROBERT AVERY, *Federal Housing Finance Agency*
20	Value Added from Linking Multiple Data Resources and Survey Data at the Regional Level
	MIKE CARNATHAN, *Atlanta Regional Commission*
20	Private Sector Experience with Data Linking and Blending
	SARAH BURGOYNE, *Claritas, Ithaca, NY*
15	*Discussant:* AMY O'HARA, *Massive Data Institute, McCourt School of Public Policy, Georgetown University*
20	*Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

4:25pm	**F. Day 1 Wrap-up, and The Way Forward**
	Moderator: WARREN BROWN, *Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research, Cornell University*
	Priorities for Near-Term ACS Research on Administrative Records Use
	VICTORIA VELKOFF, *U.S. Census Bureau*
	Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers

5:00pm	*Adjourn Day 1*

DAY 2: Thursday, September 27, 2018

9:00am   **G. Call to Order and Reintroduction to the Workshop**
         WARREN BROWN, *Chair; Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research, Cornell University*

9:15am   **H. Overview of Respondent Contact Strategies**
         Moderator: SHAWN BUCHOLTZ, *Housing and Demographic Analysis Division, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*

     25   Census Bureau's Current ACS Mail and Contact Strategy
         DOROTHY BARTH, *U.S. Census Bureau*

     20   Contrast: Statistics Canada's Wave Methodology Approach for Census/Survey Respondent Contacts
         PATRICE MATHIEU, *Statistics Canada*

     15   *Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

10:15am   **I. ACS Testing on Respondent Contact Strategies**
         Moderator: BETH JAROSZ, *Population Reference Bureau*

     20   Overview of ACS Tests to Boost Participation Through Improved Communication
         ELIZABETH POEHLER, *U.S. Census Bureau*

     10   *Discussant:* DOUGLAS WILLIAMS, *Westat*

     10   *Discussant:* JAMES WAGNER, *University of Michigan*

     10   *Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

11:00am   *Break*

11:15am   **J. Rethinking the Communication Process With Respondents: Toward a Strategic Framework**
         Moderator: MICHAEL DAVERN, *NORC at the University of Chicago*

     15   Introduction to Census Bureau's Strategic Framework
         BRODERICK OLIVER, *U.S. Census Bureau*

     15   Review of How Current ACS Mail Materials Mesh With Strategic Framework, and Next Steps
         JONATHAN SCHREINER, *U.S. Census Bureau*

     15   *Discussion:* Rethinking Communication Strategy and Respondent Reaction to Mail Materials
         MICHAEL SCHOBER, *Department of Psychology, New School for Social Research*

     15   *Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

12:15pm   *Lunch*

1:15pm   **K. Listening to ACS Respondents**
         Moderator: DONALD DILLMAN, *Department of Sociology and Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University*

     15   Assessing High-Burden ACS Questions
         DAVID RAGLIN, *U.S. Census Bureau*

     15   Lessons Learned from ACS Focus Group and Cognitive Testing Work
         JESSICA HOLZBERG, *U.S. Census Bureau*

20   Trends in Respondent Concerns and Assessing Burden
              RUTH CHAN, *U.S. Census Bureau [Respondent Advocate]*
              NICOLE SCANNIELLO, *U.S. Census Bureau [ACS Assistant Division Chief for*
                  Communications]
15   *Discussion:* Best Practices in Assessing Burden and Resolving Respondent Concerns
              SCOTT KEETER, *Pew Research Center*
15   *Discussion:* Best Practices in Structuring Respondent Communication Based on
          Respondent Feedback
              DARBY MILLER STEIGER, *Westat*
15   *Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers*

2:50pm   ***Break***

3:00pm   **L. Day 2 Wrap-up, and The Way Forward**
              Moderator: WARREN BROWN, *Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research,*
                  Cornell University
          Priorities for Near-Term ACS Research on Boosting Survey Participation Through
          Improved Communication
              VICTORIA VELKOFF, *U.S. Census Bureau*
          Floor Discussion/Questions and Answers

3:45pm   ***Planned Adjournment***

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

WARREN BROWN (*Chair*), Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research, Cornell University
SUSAN BROWER, Minnesota State Demographic Center
SHAWN BUCHOLTZ, Housing and Demographic Analysis Division, Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
MICHAEL DAVERN, NORC at the University of Chicago
DONALD DILLMAN, Department of Sociology and Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University
BETH JAROSZ, Population Reference Bureau
PATRICE MATHIEU, Social Survey Methods Division, Statistics Canada

DANIEL CORK, *Study Director*
ANTHONY MANN, *Senior Program Associate*
BRIAN HARRIS-KOJETIN, *Director, Committee on National Statistics*

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

The U.S. Census Bureau requested that the Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) convene this workshop to discuss recent methodological research conducted by the Census Bureau to improve the American Community Survey (ACS), which replaced the previous decennial census long-form sample. The workshop will address evaluating administrative data as a replacement for survey questions, which may also improve accuracy and/or reduce costs. It will also examine efforts to improve communication materials provided to respondents to encourage response as well as the follow-up procedures with respondents. The workshop is a successor to and extension of previous Workshop on Reducing Response Burden in the American Community Survey, held on March 8–9, 2016, and is intended to suggest best practices from analogous work by other agencies and the private sector to guide the next few years of ACS research and development.

COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL STATISTICS

The Committee on National Statistics was established in 1972 at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 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, a National Agricultural Statistics Service cooperative agreement, and several individual contracts.