Murray Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy

ANNUAL REPORT

2005

Washington University in St. Louis
LETTER FROM THE CHANCELLOR

The Murray Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy is continuing its important work at Washington University. The Center is in its thirty-first year of contributing to our understanding of major challenges of the nation and the world.

Sponsoring some of the most important public affairs programs in the region, it reaches a wide audience of individuals in business, government, academia, and the national media. Its programs and reports include major conferences, multi-year programs of research and public outreach, public policy meetings, newsletters, regulatory reports and updates, a media outreach program, a wide range of faculty research and workshops, and an online library that incorporates streaming videos of Center events.

The Weidenbaum Center Forum hosted several key programs in 2005, including major conferences on public education finance challenges, excise tax reform, and culture wars. It also continued its regulatory efforts with the release of its annual regulatory report and its monthly regulatory updates.

The Center also supported a variety of research projects of the faculties of economics, political science, and related fields. Major studies from this support are now being published. In addition, its National Foundation summer institute program, Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models, again brought top faculty and graduate students from across the nation to study theoretical and measurement issues involving political science and economics. Nearly 100 scholars have been trained at the Institute over the last three years.

The Center, a vital asset of Washington University, draws together many in our community to better understand public policy issues. I thank all involved in its programs and support.

Mark S. Wrighton
Chancellor
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is my pleasure to report another very successful year of research and public affairs programs at the Weidenbaum Center. We continued to pursue a vigorous program that addressed major public policy issues through research, reports, public debates, lectures, scholarly conferences, and major forums.

The Center’s outreach programs highlight the importance of public education. Among other things, our 2005 forums addressed reforms on taxation and education finance. Our speaker programs focused on important issues such as election reform, judicial nomination, the future of health care, and biotech in St. Louis. Transcripts of these programs are available to the general public through the Center’s website.

The Center continues to enhance research and support grantsmanship for economists, political scientists, and other faculty at Washington University. The Center provides small grants as seed funding for faculty-initiated research projects; supports efforts to locate outside-funding sources; submits proposals and administers awards; works with faculty on major programs that combine research and public affairs events; and sponsors scholarly workshops and conferences. Two major initiatives continue to be our Program on Citizenship, Civil Society, and Democratic Values, which I co-direct with Professor James Gibson, and a new Program on Multinational Enterprises and the Global Political Economy, led by Professor Nathan Jensen. We are working on developing similar programs over the next few years.

We are also committed to the creation of new scholarly expertise by providing Ph.D. student fellowships and support for dissertation research. In addition, our NSF-supported EITM (Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models) Summer Institute continues to give graduate students and junior faculty from around the country a rare opportunity to attend training seminars by leading experts on the methodological challenges posed by models of the strategic aspects of politics. In 2005, the Center received additional funding from NSF enabling this project to continue through 2010.

Many people contribute to the Center’s success. The encouragement and support of Chancellor Mark Wrighton, Executive Vice Chancellor Edward Macias, and Washington University’s Board of Trustees, makes directing the Center so rewarding. Interacting and collaborating with Murray Weidenbaum is an everyday source of joy and inspiration for me. The fundraising efforts of the Center’s volunteer group, chaired by James Schiele, enrich the Center by enabling us to expand our activities and programs. The Center staff is superb. Finally, I want to thank everyone that has provided financial support for our efforts. We look forward to a great year in 2006.

Steven S. Smith
Director
In 2005, Center Honorary Chairman Murray Weidenbaum wrote and published on a wide range of topics. He also spoke and lectured at a variety of venues. In addition, he served as a panelist at several major conferences and on the boards of a number of organizations.

**Publications**


**Lectures & Speaking Engagements**

Throughout the year, Dr. Weidenbaum spoke before a number of organizations and lectured throughout the University. Talks included a lecture before the St. Louis Women’s Club on “Using Economics in Public Policy,” a talk to the St. Louis World Affairs Council on “Economic Effects of Globalization,” and a discussion before the Society of American Business Editors and Writers on “Issues in Corporate Governance.” He chaired a session at the Weidenbaum Center Forum on Excise Taxation and served as a panelist on economic and budget policies at the forum “Israel and the Next Decade.”

At the Center’s Brown Bag Lunch Series, he spoke to faculty and students on “The Military Role in the U.S. Economy.” This talk was also given to the Global Strategy Institute in Washington, D.C. Further, he was an active participant and speaker on outsourcing and corporate governance at the Center’s annual media retreat.

Dr. Weidenbaum gave a number of university lectures at the Olin School of Business, the Center for the Application of Information Technology, and the School of Law.

**Civic Leadership**

Late in the year, Weidenbaum was appointed to a new policy review panel charged with developing an agenda for reforming the St. Louis fiscal situation (sponsored by the Regional Chamber and Growth Association, East-West Gateway, and Focus St. Louis). The panel’s report is expected in 2006.
With the judicial filibuster as one of the primary public debates in 2005, Steven Smith was in high demand. Dr. Smith, Director of the Weidenbaum Center and Kate M. Gregg Professor of Social Sciences at Washington University, is one of the country’s foremost experts on parliamentary procedure and rulemaking in the United States Congress. He is the author of five books on congressional politics, including Politics or Principle? Filibustering in the United States Senate, which he co-authored with Sarah A. Binder, a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. On May 11, Smith was featured on a CSPAN program about the history of filibusters. In addition to providing analysis of issues surrounding the judicial filibuster, Dr. Smith continued research and book projects on presidential-parliamentary relations in Russia, the development of party leadership in the United States Senate, and party influence on congressional voting. An article on party influence on congressional voting, co-authored with Eric D. Lawrence and Forrest Maltzman, is to appear in

**DIRECTOR**

**STEVEN SMITH**

Legislative Studies Quarterly in early 2006. Other recent publications focus on the development of Senate parties since World War II, bias in congressional conference committees, and theories of party influence. Dr. Smith also completed the fourth edition of his textbook, The American Congress, for use in upper division undergraduate courses on legislative privileged, like I am, to be a part of an institution that Robert Brookings shaped. Your responsibility is to master your field and find the ways you can put that expertise to the service of your country and the world.”

Dr. Smith also played an active role outside the university. He was nominated to a three-year term on the Board of Directors of the Dirksen Congres-

Dr. Steven Smith (center) advising students.

... and congressional politics.

In August, Smith gave the keynote address at Washington University’s Freshman Convocation. He encouraged students to use their college years to find ways to provide public service and civic leadership. He said, “The challenges of our time require that we bring to bear the knowledge and creativity found in every field of endeavor. I cannot tell you how you might serve, but you have an obligation to do so. Through your hard work—and the hard work of your parents—you are...
Paul Rothstein, Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at Washington University, continued to serve as the Center’s Associate Director in 2005. Dr. Rothstein had a three-fold purpose in his efforts to enhance the Center’s activities. He assisted with planning efforts for several of the Center’s forum programs, helped evaluate and manage the Center’s small grant initiative, and played an educational role in the Center’s media retreat.

Rothstein published several papers including “Group Welfare and the Formation of a Common Labor Market: Some Global Results,” and “A Model and Test of the Political Economy of Urban Mass Transportation.” He presented some of his work at the biennial conference of the Society for the Advancement of Economic Theory in Vigo, Spain.

Dr. Rothstein also chaired the Development and External Affairs Committee for the Department of Economics, was a member of the Faculty Recruiting Committee for the Department of Economics, and served as a member of the Executive Committee for the Center for the New Institutional Social Sciences.

Weidenbaum Center Student Support

Through the Center, select undergraduate scholars have the opportunity to work with university faculty on research projects concerning the economy, government, and public policy.

The Center also supports graduate students as Weidenbaum Center Fellows. Fellows work with university faculty on research projects that give them valuable research, writing and publication experience and publication opportunities.

Recent student and faculty participants include Bakhodir Ergashev (Economist David Felix), Barry Cynamon (Economist Steven Fazzari), Martin Battle and Edward Engelhardt (Political Scientist Lee Epstein), Xin Xu (Political Scientist Andrew Mertha), Jacob Gerber (Political Scientists Andrew Mertha and Guillermo Rosas), Michael Plotzke (Economist Donald Nichols), Tara Sinclair (Economist James Morley), Raul Andrade (Political Scientist Itai Sened), Jessica Flanigan (Political Scientist James Gibson), and Adam Leong (Political Scientists Lester Spence and Steven Smith).

In addition, Michael Lynch, a political science graduate student, worked with the Center’s director, Steven Smith, organizing and executing the Center’s NSF sponsored EITM (Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models) summer program.
The 27th edition of the Weidenbaum Center’s annual analysis of regulatory budgets and staffing found that spending by federal regulatory agencies continued to rise at a faster pace than other nondiscretionary spending. The report, *Upward Trend in Regulation Continues: An Analysis of the U.S. Budget for Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006*, was written by Melinda Warren of the Weidenbaum Center and Susan Dudley of the Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

The regulators’ budget for the 68 regulatory agencies is estimated to be $41.4 billion in 2006, up from $39.5 billion in 2005. In the report, agencies are broken down into two categories — social and economic. Social regulations include regulatory activities that address issues related to health, safety, and the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Food and Drug Administration, and National Transportation Safety Board are examples of agencies that administer social regulations. Their activities are generally limited to a specific issue, but they also have the power to regulate across industry boundaries.

Economic regulations tend to be industry-specific. The Securities and Exchange Commission, Federal Communications Commission, and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are examples of agencies that fall into this category. They regulate a broad base of activities in particular industries using economic controls such as price ceilings or floors, quantity restrictions, and service parameters.

Regulatory spending among the different departments and agencies reflected concerns about homeland security. The Department of Homeland Security was budgeted to receive an additional $1.1 billion in regulatory funding last year — double of what it was in 2001. The budget included large increases in outlays at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ($250 million), the Food and Drug Administration ($191 million), and the Patent and Trademark Office ($351 million).

Staffing at these agencies was also tracked. Staffing was expected to reach an all-time high of 242,376 in 2006, a 38.4 percent increase since 2000. The Department of Homeland Security led the federal growth spurt with the largest regulatory staff (122,324 employees) while the EPA came in second (17,440 staff).

Between 2000 and the estimates for 2006, the budget grew by $16 billion, a 46 percent real dollar increase.
In its fifth year, the Weidenbaum Center Forum continues to make a major impact on public policy education. Six major forums on topics of national and international importance were held in 2005. Below are short descriptions of each of the Center’s 2005 forums.

Death of Common Sense

Philip K. Howard, prominent NYC civic leader, lawyer, and former adviser to both the Republican and Democratic parties on reform initiatives, spoke at a Weidenbaum Center Forum in February 2005.

His talk, “Death of Common Sense: How Law is Suffocating America,” focused on the impact of legal fear on our schools, health care system, and society. According to Howard, “law is supposed to set the boundaries of legal action so that people know where they stand. Law should make us feel comfortable doing what’s reasonable, and nervous doing what’s wrong. Today, Americans are nervous doing almost anything.”

Culture Wars

Political polarization has become the topic of much discussion in recent years. Media reports portray the United States as deeply divided “red” and “blue” states. The Weidenbaum Center hosted an evening forum entitled “Polarization, Tolerance, and the State of American Public Opinion,” focusing on this important and timely issue in March 2005.

Morris Fiorina, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Wendt Family Professor of Political Science at Stanford University,
keynoted the event. His groundbreaking new book, *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*, maintains that most Americans stand in the middle of the political landscape, preferring centrist candidates to the extreme partisans who often emerge from the primary process. It is the political parties and the media who have ignored this fact and distorted public perceptions.

James L. Gibson, the Sidney W. Souers Professor of Government at Washington University, discussed points raised by Dr. Fiorina. While he acknowledged that politics may have changed with the decline in trust in the opponent’s willingness to play by the rules of the game, he believes that Americans may not be just deeply divided but are seriously and profoundly divided.

**Israel: The Next Decade**

In May 2005, the Weidenbaum Center cosponsored a three-day event on the next decade in Israel with Washington University’s Center for New Institutional Social Sciences and the Interdisciplinary Center-Israel. Top Israeli scholars and their American counterparts discussed a wide range of issues, including labor, fiscal consolidation, and electoral and education reforms. Speakers included Dan Ben David from Tel Aviv University, Uriel Reichman of the Interdisciplinary Center-Israel, Shimshon Shoshani, Director General of “Birthright” Israel, and Rafi Melnick of the Interdisciplinary Center-Israel. Panelists were primarily Washington University professors from the Departments of Economics, Education, and Political Science as well as the School of Business. This conference highlighted Israeli problems which are much like those in the United States — immigration, education, economic growth, and taxation issues.

**Taxing Temptation: Excise Taxes and Health**

Excise taxes are increasingly urged as a tool for shaping dietary choices and promoting health. On September 23, 2005, the Weidenbaum Center presented a conference to address this emerging issue. The conference brought together experts from economics, industry, law, and medicine to consider how excise taxes are used, how industries respond, and how individuals may respond.

The conference featured top academic researchers. In his keynote address, University of Michigan economist James Hines discussed the theory, history, and politics of excise taxes in the United States. In discussing taxes on commodities such as gasoline, alcohol, tobacco, and firearms, he noted that
such “sin” taxes have the potential to assist consumers by discouraging the taxed activity, thereby helping to save people from the consequences of their possible actions.

Leadoff speaker for the first panel, “Implications for Industry,” Jim Adams, University of Michigan, discussed the determinants to market structure in the American and European beer industries. Excise taxes and social regulation seem to have small effects on consumption but moderate and perhaps unintended consequences on industry structure. To round out this panel, Harvard Emeritus economist F. Michael Scherer and Robert Weinberg of Robert Weinberg & Associates both pursued the theme of unintended consequences.

Stanford University Law Professor Jeff Strnad was the leadoff speaker for the second panel, “Individual Welfare and Social Policy.” He concluded that medical research shows a clear connection between diet and illnesses that are major sources of mortality and morbidity. This fact, however, does not in itself define a role for government in shaping dietary choices.

John Dunham of John Dunham Associates offered a range of criticisms of any attempt to use food taxes to achieve better health outcomes. Ultimately, he argued that one should view being overweight as a personal choice and not a public health issue. Washington University Medical School Professor Walton Sumner returned to the theme of unintended consequences. He concluded that public policy makers must pay careful attention to the very complicated motivations for overeating or policies are likely to be ineffective.

Challenges to Public Education Financing Facing Missouri and the Nation

The Weidenbaum Center and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis cohosted a one-day symposium on public education financing on November 4, 2005. Participants included nationally recognized scholars in the areas of school finance and accountability as well as several Missouri superintendents and Missouri state legislators.

This non-technical symposium included sessions on public education funding formulas and the relationship between funding and student achieve-
Considerable discussion of these issues took a Missouri focus as members of the symposium discussed the state’s current public education financing debate.

Duke University economist Thomas Nechyba led off the conference with his talk on alternative education finance strategies and formulas. He focused on two broad categories of state financing strategies: traditional strategies based on providing state aid to local public school districts and more recent strategies based on providing aid directly to parents. Ross Rubenstein of Syracuse University was the discussant for this panel.

Mike Podgurksy of the University of Missouri-Columbia addressed the current system and education reform plans for education finance in Missouri. The level and distribution of spending for public K-12 education remains a contentious policy matter in Missouri due to increasing expectations for school performance and widespread litigation.

The issue of improving student achievement and accountability was tackled by Stanford University professor Eric Hanushek. His findings showed that, overall, the adoption of accountability policies produces higher academic gains than having no policy. Steven Rivkin of Amherst College commented on this paper.

School superintendents from four Missouri school districts discussed the differences in education finance in urban and rural areas. Four Missouri state legislators and a representative from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education then debated financing education in the state.

Alan Greenspan and My Term at the Fed

Laurence H. Meyer, a long-time St. Louis-based economic forecaster and member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (Fed) spoke at a November forum. His talk “Alan Greenspan and My Term at the Fed” provided a rare inside look at the workings of the Fed, detailing actual discussions from FOMC meetings, where highly anticipated changes to the Federal Funds Rate are debated.

Dr. Meyer served as a Governor at the Federal Reserve Board, one of the most powerful financial institutions in the world, from June 1996 through January 2002. Led by then Chairman Alan Greenspan, the Fed determines monetary policy for the United States, shaping the direction of the economy primarily through the control of interest rates. Dr. Meyer was a Professor of Economics and a former Chairman of the Economics Department at Washington University, where he taught for 27 years before joining the Fed.
Eliot Society Public Policy Luncheons

The Center’s Eliot Society Public Policy Luncheons brought together major Weidenbaum Center donors (Eliot Society level and above) and faculty experts in an open exchange of current public policy ideas. While topics change from month to month, they typically deal with issues such as the deficit, social security, health care policy, the economy, taxes, government spending, international affairs/international trade, and terrorism/national security.

Weidenbaum Center Annual Dinner

The Center holds an annual dinner that brings in experts in economics and political science to discuss major issues in public affairs. In 2005, Fred Barnes, Executive Editor of The Weekly Standard, spoke on “The New Political Era in Washington.” With over 20 years of experience reporting on Washington politics, his analysis and predictions are considered to be among the most on-target in Washington.
Public Policy Speaker Series

**Staffing the Bush Presidency. Kathryn Dunn Tenpas,**
Weidenbaum Center Visiting Fellow and a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, gave a candid talk on staffing in the Bush Presidency.

**Election Reform. Steve Ansolabehere,** Professor of Political Science at MIT, spoke on election reform. He discussed the technological and social science aspects as well as the experiences of the 2000 and 2004 elections. Dr. Ansolabehere is an expert on American politics, studying elections, democracy, and the mass media.

**The Future of Health Care. William Peck,** former Executive Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs and now Director of Washington University’s Center for Health Policy, gave a talk on the future of health care. His talk was based on his expertise in health care policy, health care costs, disparities in access to care, and workforce issues.

**The Politics of Judicial Nominations. Sarah Binder,** Associate Professor of Political Science at George Washington University, spoke on the politics of judicial nominations. She gave a nonpartisan analysis of recent developments, along with a historical context. Dr. Binder discussed the tactics in battles over judges, explored potential causes of conflict over who sits on the federal bench, and concluded by examining potential consequences for the Senate, the public, and the bench itself from the conflict in the selection of judges.

**The Supreme Court Nomination and Partisanship in Congress. Jill Zuckman,** National Correspondent for the Chicago Times, spoke on partisanship in Congress and Supreme Court nominations. She gave both a historical and current day view of how partisanship is thriving in Washington and across the country. She discussed what role government is going to play in society on issues such as Medicare coverage of prescription drugs, federal expenditures, and Supreme Court confirmations. Ms. Zuckman concluded by saying that partisanship is not always a bad thing as it provides an unintended check and balance on power in government.

**The Use and Abuse of Statistics. Donald Cox,** Professor of Economics at Boston University, spoke on the use and abuse of statistics, cautioning the audience to never take statistics at face value. Statistics are often manipulated and misused. Dr. Cox gave a variety of examples of grave misuse in the compilation and use of statistics.

**Biotechnology and Missouri.** The challenges of building the biotechnology industry in St. Louis was the subject of a talk by **William Danforth,** Chancellor Emeritus of Washington University.
University. Dr. Danforth chairs the Coalition on Plant and Life Sciences, an organization created by the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association and other civic partners.

He touched on some of the key ingredients needed to create a positive environment for biotechnology research and commercialization to thrive. He recalled the challenges in making St. Louis a hub for plant science, including luring venture capital and creating government incentives.

Dr. Danforth pointed out major disadvantages of efforts in Missouri to criminalize a branch of medical research called Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer (SCNT). If these efforts are successful, Dr. Danforth stressed that they would dramatically affect medical care and research in Missouri — criminalizing research and patient care related to SCNT. Scientists in Missouri would not be allowed to pursue research in this area and physicians and hospitals would not be able to take advantage of treatments that come out of worldwide SCNT research. Dr. Danforth concluded by saying the Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures is seeking signatures for a referendum on stem cells in November 2006. He said the referendum would ask for a level playing field. Missouri would be governed by federal rules regarding stem cells rather than enacting more restrictive legislation.

Dr. Roberts pointed out that this reality is not optional. However, we want to manipulate and change outcomes without consequences (such as drive incomes upward, gasoline prices downward, blame some retailers for the fact that its employees’ wages are below the national average, and blame other countries for our trade deficit). Dr. Roberts concludes that this worldview, which flies in the face of reality and ignores the inherent complexity of the real world, is the bread-and-butter of journalism and the breeding ground for unintended consequences.

Role of Economic Education in Public Policy. Russ Roberts, Director of the Center’s Media Retreat and Professor of Economics at George Mason University, spoke on markets, a phenomena that are the product of human action but not of human design. These markets (decentralized non-organized interactions between buyers and sellers) have an orderliness to them even though they are not organized by any individual or group. That predictability affects lives in ways that are rarely appreciated, such as the orderliness of prices and the resulting lack of shortages.

For more information about the Weidenbaum Center Public Policy Series, please contact the Center or see the Center’s website, http://wc.wustl.edu.
4th Annual Media Retreat

In July, the Center sponsored its fourth annual Media Retreat. The program was led by Mr. Richard J. Mahoney, the Center’s Distinguished Executive in Residence, and Dr. Russell Roberts, Director of the Weidenbaum Center’s Media Retreat.

The retreat brought writers, reporters, editors, and producers together with scholars and business leaders. The dynamics of policy intervention, the law of unintended consequences, how markets work, the role of statistics in policy choices, pros and cons of globalization, and lessons from the biotech revolution were among the topics discussed. Representatives came from WBUR, the Council on Foreign Relations, USA Today, National Public Radio, Greenwire, Chicago Tribune, Philadelphia Inquirer, Dallas Morning News, U.S. News & World Report, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Washington-Post.com, Congressional Quarterly, Cook Political Report, 60 Minutes, and CBS News.

The program gave participants: (1) new ways of grasping the complexities of public policy decision-making; (2) fresh insights on assumptions, the quality of regulations, statistical claims, unintended consequences, tradeoffs, and incentives; (3) a better understanding of the context within which public policy decisions are made and how this shapes the outcomes of these decisions; (4) ideas for how to go against the flow to get more insights and story coverage; and (5) improved understanding on examining the whole picture before preparing a story.

Speakers included Dr. Russell Roberts (Weidenbaum Center and George Mason University), Mr. Richard J. Mahoney and Dr. Murray Weidenbaum (Weidenbaum Center), Dr. Don Coursey (University of Chicago), and Dr. Donald Cox (Boston College).
In 2005, the Center:

- Awarded small seed grants to initiate faculty projects and encourage research.
- Provided assistance in seeking outside funding sources and submission preparation.
- Worked with faculty on major programs that combine research and public affairs events.
- Sponsored scholarly workshops, conferences, public affairs events, publications, and websites — all of which give researchers opportunities to reach larger audiences.

**Center Small Grant Faculty Support**

The Center’s small grants program assisted faculty in the Departments of Economics and Political Science in 2005. In total, fourteen small grants were awarded to faculty including the following:

Economist Ping Wang is working on a dynamic model of economic stratification in urban areas. This research brings together insights from a number of areas in economics in order to understand the connection between socioeconomic and geographic mobility. Differences in incomes across neighborhoods grew dramatically from 1960-2000 due to the growing differences in education levels, housing quality, crime, and other indicators of vitality. This project argues that these shifts emerge from the constraints faced by households and their choices over multiple generations. The education levels and location choices of parents influence the educational attainment and job choice of their children, and this in turn shapes their location choices. Formally modeling these dynamics will help to develop a better understanding of how public policies like education subsidies, differential property taxes, and school vouchers affect economic stratification and long-run growth.

Economist Donald Nichols is embarking on a major study of the effects of hospital closures in urban areas on the health outcomes for African-Americans. The primary data utilized for this study is individual-level data on admissions, treatments and discharge status from a national sample of Medicare patients, the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey.

At first glance it may seem that any hospital closure should have an adverse effect on the population it serves. Offsetting this, however, is the possibility that the hospitals that close lack the most advanced technology for use in caring for their patients. Thus, greater access problems and longer travel distances could be
Political scientist **Brian Crisp** is continuing his research on the causes and consequences of nationwide at-large legislative districts. For this project, he is bringing together data and institutional knowledge on countries as diverse as Colombia, the Philippines, Slovakia, and the Netherlands.

In most countries, representatives to the national legislature are elected by the people living in a particular geographic area. Their job, however, is to govern the nation as a whole. In the 1990s, a number of countries moved to a system in which all voters have an influence on the election of all legislators, so the entire nation is in effect one legislative district. This change allows legislators to canvas the entire country for support, and it allows voters to organize themselves across the nation on racial, ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic lines. Little is known about how much of these activities take place. Dr. Crisp is examining this issue, along with the question of whether the opportunity to organize in new ways explains the shift to nationwide districts, and whether enacted policies differ in response to the shift.

Political Scientist **Andrew Mertha**’s research focuses on the politics of hydropower in China. No issue brings together more powerful political and economic forces and requires more high stakes give-and-take in a developing country than dam building.

In 2003, a major project at Dujiangyan was halted after local protests. Yet in 2004, the government ignored the largest rural protests since the formation of the People’s Republic of China and proceeded with a project at Pubugou. With the Chinese media aggressively competing for readers, events like this are leading them to publish more exciting stories and perspectives that differ from the official policy line. The role of nongovernmental organizations
is also changing, and these groups are building links to the new media outlets. Dr. Mertha’s project examines the dynamic between these two groups and the central government, with the goal of understanding both how it is shaping hydropower policy and how it is reshaping the policymaking process in China.

Political Scientist William Lowry’s Center supported research focuses on changes in river management policies — primarily on changes at the level of the American states and in other nations of the world.

His research has thus far produced three publications. The first paper, “Policy Reversals and Changing Politics: State Governments and Dam Removals,” shows that the dam removal policies in the United States is similar to other policy adoptions with strong fiscal situations and active interest groups. It was published in State Politics & Policy Quarterly.

One of the leading survey researchers in the country, Political Scientist James Gibson, is conducting a variety of projects as part of the Center’s program on Citizenship, Civil Society, and Democratic Values. Tolerance is one of the crucial features for a successful democracy.

In the summer of 2005, he conducted the first installment of an annual survey on tolerance and freedom. By linking responses to detailed demographic information about the respondents, he was able to explore the full range of socio-economic and other factors associated with tolerance. His initial findings have shown remarkably high levels of tolerance, but the ultimate goal of the annual survey is to understand the dynamics behind changes in levels of tolerance over time.

Professor Andrew Mertha, describes the remarkable similarities in decisions to not build dams on major rivers in three very different nations. This paper is soon to be published in Comparative Politics.

The third project examines whether major policy changes result from “potential focusing projects” that overreach on traditional goals and priorities. This paper, “Potential Focusing Projects and Policy Change,” is forthcoming in Policy Studies Journal.

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Other Supported Projects

Nathan Jensen used highly restricted data to study the ways in which political risk influences the operations of multinational companies.

Itai Sened developed and analyzed a dataset on 190 countries over 35 years on the relationship between income inequality and economic growth.

Norman Schofield, in a comparative empirical analysis, studied legislative voting behavior, party discipline, and the dimensions of policy in the U.S. Senate and European Parliament.

Sunita Parikh analyzed the effects of political change on decisions by the Supreme Court of India from 1937-1963.

Guillermo Rosas examined whether expert committees that are empowered to unilaterally shape policy outcomes require partisan checks-and-balances to produce professional and impartial outcomes.

James Morley developed new methods for analyzing macroeconomic data, to apply to whether growth rates of countries are converging over time.

CONGRESS & HISTORY

In 2005 the Center hosted the political science workshop, “Congress and History.” This event brought together political scientists from Washington University as well as universities from across the country for roundtable discussions about their work. Broad topics included: congressional elections and representation, the nature of Senate procedural development, congressional party development, historians and Congress, and early 19th century congressional politics.
Grants at Work

The following list of publications are the products of research that the Weidenbaum Center helped sponsor and support.

Lee Epstein
Advice and Consent: The Politics of Judicial Appointments, with Jeffrey Segal (Oxford University Press, 2005)

James Gibson
“Why Do People Accept Public Policies They Oppose? Testing Legitimacy Theory with a Survey-Based Experiment,” Political Research Quarterly (June 2005)

Andrew Mertha

Andrew Martin

William Lowry

China’s Anti-Counterfeiting Enforcement Regime,” in Engaging the Law in China: State, Society and Possibilities for Justice (Stanford University Press, 2005)

“Shifting Legal Goalposts: Chinese Bureaucracies, Foreign Actors and the Evolution of

James Morley


Charles Moul
A Concise Handbook of Movie Industry Economics (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Norman Schofield and Itai Sened


Nathan Jenson
EITM 2005 Summer Institute on the Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM)

The Center’s fourth EITM Summer Institute was held in June of 2005. Twenty-five graduate students and junior faculty attended from institutions such as UCLA, Emory University, Harvard University, University of Maryland, and Columbia University as well as other countries such as Germany and England.

The three-week program consisted of training seminars focused on the methodological challenges posed by mathematical models of the strategic aspects of politics. Seminars were led by nationally recognized faculty from Washington University, University of Rochester, Rice University, University of Washington, Stanford University, and Princeton University. Special guest scholars also lectured in many of the seminars.

2005 Seminars

Issues in Testing Positive Theories of Judicial Politics. This course trained students how to substantively and technically develop realistic formal models and conduct empirical assessments about judicial politics through the use of publicly available databases.

Theoretical and Methodological Foundations. The foundations seminar presented important varieties of models that can be used to generate testable implications about politics. The seminar provided tools with which students can develop their own statistical methods to test predictions derived from formal theories of politics.

Quantal Response Models. Much of the political science literature suffers from a disconnect between theory and the statistical techniques used to test or analyze theory. This module examined methods for explicitly linking theory and statistical analysis, especially in a strategic context.

Experimental Tests of Theoretical Models. This seminar addressed the links between theory and experiment, experimental design, pilot experiments, experimental technique, data gathering, and data analysis. Students participated both as subjects and as observers and were required to design their own experiment.

The Operationalization of Spatial Models. Spatial models of voting by the mass public and voting by elites in institutional settings have spawned a tremendous amount of theoretical development. In this course, cutting-edge methodological tools were taught to allow students to use the spatial model in their own research and in other statistical models of behavior.
Center Support

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The Center is grateful to the volunteers who have worked so hard over the years to help it reach its annual financial needs. Special recognition goes to James E. Schiele who chairs both the Center’s Eliot Society Volunteer Committee (individual giving) and the Center’s Corporate Volunteer Committee.

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The College of Arts and Sciences is in the final plans for the new building which will house the Weidenbaum Center, the Departments of Economics and Political Science, parts of the School of Law, and several other departments. Ground breaking should begin in fall 2006. The building, which will be on the west end of campus paralleling Brookings Hall, should be completed in the summer of 2008.