TAPS Focus of Workshop on Panel Survey Research

In its ongoing efforts to make The American Panel Survey (TAPS) one of the most effective and powerful survey formats in the nation, the Weidenbaum Center brought together 29 experts in the field of panel survey research and data collection in early November. Over two days and eight sessions, these experts shared their research, approaches, and applications to survey design and methodology.

Led by Center Director Steven Smith and TAPS Associate Director Betsy Sinclair, topics such as panel weighting, measurement error in online survey panels, retention strategies, and new technologies were explored. Further, new data collection efforts and technologies were presented. The workshop discussions and interaction among participants will enable experts to form new collaborations and share their groundbreaking research and insights in this growing field. For more information on this workshop and TAPS, visit http://taps.wustl.edu.

TAPS is a monthly online survey of a national probability sample from a panel of about 2,000 adults in the United States. Investigators from a variety of social science fields use the panel and most studies concern the economics and political attitudes and behavior of the American public.

The panel results in a minimum of 1,550 completed interviews per month. Surveys are conducted for the Weidenbaum Center by GFK Custom Research, a leading online survey research firm located in Palo Alto, California.
This newsletter provides insight into our upcoming programs and activities that continue to serve the Weidenbaum Center’s mission – to serve as a bridge between policymakers and scholars by supporting scholarly research, public affairs programs, and other activities at the intersection of government and business. We have an array of programs that address many topics through many different formats. Many of these programs are made available on our website via streaming video so that our out-of-town supporters can benefit from our programs as well. We welcome your insights on any of these programs. Further, should you have a keen interest in helping to fund a particular program, please let us know.

In this issue, we are also pleased to highlight University alumni, Emeritus faculty, and Center supporters. We are most grateful to be able to continue to support and enhance the student, faculty, and research programs in the Departments of Economics and Political Science, and to generate and coordinate cross-campus departmental lectures, conferences, and events. For info on these and other Center priorities, please see our Center annual reports at http://wc.wustl.edu/annual_reports

Steven Smith’s Senate Syndrome to Be Published in 2014

Center Director Steven Smith’s forthcoming book puts the present problems of the Senate – the “Senate Syndrome” as he calls them – into historical context by explaining how particular ideas and procedures were first framed and how they transformed with the times. He debunks a number of myths about the Senate, many perpetuated by senators themselves, and shows why understanding technicalities, such as the role of filibusters, matters in working towards any effective resolution to our polarized politics.

Calendar subject to change.

Please visit http://wc.wustl.edu for more information on Weidenbaum Center programs and activities.
Public Policy Breakfast Series - An informative presentation by local and national experts who summarize and share their insights on key current public policy issues. Details on upcoming programs follows.

January 21

Nathan Jensen, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and Director of the Program on Multinational Enterprises and the Global Economy at the Weidenbaum Center will speak on “The Politics of Using Financial Incentives to Attract Investment.” His lecture will cover topics such as what makes a country attractive to foreign investors, and to what extent do conditions of governance and politics matter? He will discuss his research drawn from both quantitative data and interviews with investment promotion agencies, investment location consultants, political risk insurers, and decision makers at multinational corporations. Professor Jensen teaches and conducts research on topics including international financial markets, multinational corporations/development, political risk in emerging markets, trade policy, international institutions, and civil conflict.

February 28*

Professor Stephen Legomsky, the John S. Lehmann University Professor at the School of Law, will speak on immigration issues. An authority on immigration, refugee, and citizenship law and policy, he recently served as Chief Counsel of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security. He served as a consultant to the transition teams of Presidents Clinton and Obama, to the first President Bush’s Commissioner of Immigration, to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, and to several foreign governments. His book Immigration and Refugee Law and Policy is the required text at 176 law schools since its inception.

March 17

Center Director Steven Smith will share his insights into “Washington Politics and the 2014 Elections.” With deadlock over key issues in Washington, the parties are jockeying for position in the 2014 midterm elections. Professor Smith will review the last session of the 113th Congress, evaluate the parties’ strategies, assess the state of the Obama presidency, and preview the 2014 elections.

April 16*

Andrew Mertha, Associate Professor of Government and Director of the China and Asia-Pacific Studies Program at Cornell University, will speak on topical issues surrounding China. Mertha specializes in Chinese and Cambodian politics, particularly on political institutions, the policy process, and the exercise of power. He has written three books on China, The Politics of Piracy: Intellectual Property in Contemporary China, China’s Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Changes, and Brothers in Arms: Chinese Aid to the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979 (2014). He has testified before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, briefed the Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

*Only open to Weidenbaum Center Eliot Society Members.
Corporate Leaders Series - Informative meetings and discussions of economic and political trends that affect the bottom line of businesses led by experts in economic policy, international relations, law, intellectual property rights, Congress and the U.S. Courts, political parties, regulation, public finance, taxation, as well as health, environment, and energy. The schedule of programs follows.

January 15

Scott Liebman, Vice President, Health and Benefits, of Aon Hewitt will lead a discussion by sharing his expertise and insights on Obamacare implementation and its effect on organizations. Aon Hewitt is the world’s leading insurance broker and risk consulting and outsourcing company. They provide thought-leadership and consulting on every HR issue, including health management, retirement and financial management, talent and organizational issues, and communication.

March 21

Judi McLean Parks, the Reuben C. and Anne Carpenter Taylor Professor of Organizational Behavior at Olin Business School at Washington University, will share her expertise on “Incentive Compensation and Pay Systems.” Her areas of expertise include behavioral science, human resource management, and industrial relations. She examines the link between employers and employees in the context of conflict resolution and has previously taught at the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Minnesota.

May 6

Paul Weil, principal with Bryan Cave’s Risk Management Team, will speak on “Corporate Tax Policy: Current and Future Reforms.” As a tax and general business lawyer, he has had a long association with the life, property and casualty insurance business. He has advised stock and mutual insurance companies concerning the U.S. taxation of their income derived from the underwriting of both life and casualty risks. He has written provisions of various life and casualty insurance policies, negotiated reinsurance treaties and participated in the formation and operation of captive insurance companies underwriting health, general liability and workers’ compensation risks.

Major Donors Public Policy Luncheon Series

The Center’s Major Donor roundtable discussions continue to enable invitees to interact with faculty experts from across the University campus and other experts within the St. Louis area. Experts bring participants up to date on key current news events and then give attendees the opportunity to discuss and debate these issues in an open discussion format. Topics primarily focus on economic, political, legal, health, or international issues. Upcoming meetings will be held on January 27, February 17, March 3, April 21, and May 12. These meetings are by invitation only and registration is required.
Center Forums and Lectures are intellectually challenging programs which provide a platform to business leaders, government officials, media, and the public on economic and political issues that are important to the nation and the world. Forums are open and free of charge.

February 10 – Lecture Series

Steven Smith, Director of the Weidenbaum Center, will speak on “The Senate Syndrome.” The U.S. Senate has changed in an important way. On November 21, Democratic Majority Leader Harry Reid used the "nuclear option" to impose a new rule on closing debate on presidential nominations. Republicans complained of a "power grab" by Democrats and the demise of the Senate as a great deliberative body. Democrats charged that the Republicans had already changed the Senate in fundamental ways by their unrelenting obstructionism. Professor Smith will place the November events in context and review their implications for policy making in the U.S. Senate.

February 25 – Lecture Series

Jon Huntsman, Jr. will speak on “Opportunities and Challenges Facing America Today.” As a candidate during the 2012 presidential primary campaign, he was known as “the Reasonable Republican.” Although the former two-time Governor of Utah and former Ambassador to China under President Obama no longer holds public office, he continues to be a voice for civil discourse and sound business and government politics.

March 6 and 7 – Forums

Gerald Freidman, Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, will present two discussions — both cosponsored by Missouri Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program and Washington University’s Institute for Public Health, Center for Health Policy, and the Policy Forum at the Brown School.  

6th — “Healthcare Finance After the Affordable Care Act: Missouri and Single Payer.” This presentation will focus on ACA limits, the problems going forward, and single-payer. He will present estimates of how a single-payer system could work in Missouri, the savings it would bring, and possible financing methods.

7th — “U.S. Healthcare in International Perspective: Why We Are the Worst and How We Can Get Off the Floor.” This talk will compare U.S. health care finance and outcomes with systems in other affluent countries (OECD members). The performance of different health care systems and the characteristics of more and less effective and efficient systems will be evaluated.

April 28– Forums

Thomas Holmes, the Curtis L. Carlson Chair in Economics at the University of Minnesota, will talk on “Government Policies and Manufacturing.” Professor Holmes joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis as an economist in 1993 and currently serves as a consultant to the Bank. His research focuses on industrial organization and economic geography, and his recent models explain

Information on past or upcoming programs, program content, volunteer opportunities, or co-sponsorship should be directed to Melinda Warren (314-935-5652; warren@wustl.edu)
SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF, FACULTY AND ALUMNI

Richard Mahoney is Honored - At a special reception, Jim Schiele (Chairman of the Center’s Eliot Society and Corporate Leaders Volunteer Committee) honored Richard Mahoney, Distinguished Executive in Residence at the Weidenbaum Center, with a special engraved Washington University Chair. The engraving read “With heartfelt thanks for your insight, encouragement, dedication, and generous support. From your colleagues at the Weidenbaum Center.”


Alumni Update - David L. Cleeton

David L. Cleeton received his Ph.D. in Economics from Illinois State University. Currently he is a Professor of Economics and Department Chair at Illinois State University. His areas of expertise include financial economics and European economic integration with publications appearing in the American Economic Review, Public Finance Quarterly, Quarterly Review of Economics and Business, Health Care Financing Review, and Southern Economic Journal. He is a coauthor (with Nobel Laureate Robert C. Merton and Zvi Bodie) of the textbook Financial Economics. Formerly, he was Economics Department Chair and Associate Provost at Oberlin College, Dean of Social Sciences and Business at Christopher Newport University, and as a Visiting Professor of Finance in the Fisher College of Business at Ohio State University.

Alumni Update - Robert K. Dyer

Robert K. Dyer received his Bachelor’s in Economics in 1984. He also holds a Diploma in Accounting and Finance from the London School of Economics and Political Science. He has successfully led businesses in start-up, integration, and turnaround situations in fast growing sectors including mobile, web/retail based consumer entertainment, platform development, and business to consumer initiatives. He has worked as Director of Sales and Business Development at Disney Home Video International, President of Crystal Dynamics, President of Eidos, Senior Vice President of Publisher Relations at Sony Computer Entertainment American, and Head of partner publishing at Zynga. At Sony, he oversaw the PlayStation brand’s relationship with North American game publishers and at Zynga, he was in charge of the program to bring third-party developers and their games to the company, and to oversee its efforts to publish smaller studios’ games.
Alumni Update - Sydney Hicks

Sydney Smith Hicks received her Masters (1971) and Ph.D. (1975) in Economics. She currently serves on the Department of Economics’ Advisory Council.

She is Co-Founder, Director, and Chairman of the Audit Committee of DeviceFidelity, Inc.—a company that develops plug-and-play, patented technologies that transform mobile phones into interactive secure payments and transaction devices. She is also CEO of SSHICKS Advisors, a banking and strategy consulting firm, and serves as director at Smart Start Inc., a company that produces and manages ignition interlock devices and services.

Formerly, she was CEO of VECTORSGI, a banking software and service company selling solutions to large financial institutions. She has more than 30 years of experience in the banking industry, has been Chief Economist of NCNB, and spent nearly a decade with various regional Federal Reserve Banks and academic institutions.

She is currently a Life Member of the University of Texas at Dallas Development Board. She is additionally a member of the National Association for Business Economics, and has served as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Planning Roundtable of that organization.

Alumni Update - Edward D. Jones III

Edward D. Jones III received his Masters in Economics in 1968. Currently he serves as President and Chief Operating Officer of EMedicalFiles, Inc. He is a leading authority on healthcare, insurance, electronic remittance and payments, and health records issues— with over 30 years of experience. He is the co-author of ten books on HIPAA and electronic health records for the AMA and the American Dental Association.

In March 2013, he was selected to manage the 2013 WEDI Report project which identifies priorities for overcoming barriers to electronic healthcare information exchange. Formerly, he served as Managing Member and CEO of companies under the Cornichon Healthcare brand. One of those companies, Cornichon Healthcare Innovations, is a company he co-founded to build and market an online HIPAA/HITECH Act privacy and security risk management system and electronic document repository.
ANNUAL DINNER

On April 1, the Center will hold its annual dinner gala featuring special guest speaker Olympia Snowe. Snowe, a member of the Republican Party and former Senator from Maine, is widely known for her ability to influence the outcome of close votes, including whether to end filibusters. She is regarded as one of the leading moderates within her party.

MEDIA RETREAT

In June 2014, the Center will hold its 12th media retreat. This annual program brings several dozen writers, reporters, editors, and producers together for an interactive seminar examining the role that numbers, statistics, and data analysis play in the news, public policy, and politics. The program is geared towards media who deal with public policy issues, broadly defined — health care, the environment, trade, the work place, or politics — any area where numbers and data help tell the story.

*The seminar has four goals:* to give journalists the tools and techniques to analyze how numbers come into being to help journalists better evaluate and investigate the validity of these numbers to help journalists utilize numbers to substantiate or refute a story, and to assist journalists with new story ideas for challenging conventional wisdom.

**AWARD**—The Weidenbaum Center Award for Evidence-Based Journalism honors a past retreat participant whose work represents quality journalism on economics, business, and government and reflects the sophisticated use of research, numbers, and statistics. Entries are accepted from January to April. Please visit the Center’s website for more information or contact Gloria Lucy at 314-935-5689 or email glolucy@wustl.edu.

OUR STAFF

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**Support** - The Weidenbaum Center, while an integral part of Washington University, is responsible for its own financial support. It relies upon generous donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations. As a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, it falls under the University’s 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Anyone wishing to help provide support or assist in fundraising should contact: Melinda Warren (warren@wustl.edu; 314-935-5652) or Gloria Lucy (glolucy@wustl.edu; 314-935-5689).