WEIDENBAUM CENTER ON THE ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Review
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The Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy continues to play a key role on the Washington University campus by supporting social science faculty research in the Departments of Economics, Political Science, and Sociology, as well as other campus departments and programs. It brings together faculty and students and creates opportunities for students to work closely with faculty on their research programs. The Center also promotes and sponsors collaboration between departments and other organizations across campus, providing another important service to the University.

The Center’s grant program provides various levels of support to faculty, enabling them to test new research hypotheses prior to applying for major grants. Faculty are also given opportunities to place research modules on the Center’s survey instrument, The American Panel Survey (TAPS).

Many major events were sponsored or cosponsored by the Center during the past fiscal year. On October 9, 2016, as part of the presidential debate activities held on campus, the Weidenbaum Center co-sponsored the debate between the presidential candidates’ economic advisers. In December, Princeton University political historian Julian Zelizer was a keynote speaker at a forum on the 2016 election viewed in a historical context. In March, a major symposium was held that reviewed the political rise of Donald Trump, and faculty from many departments were involved in the discussion.

In June, the Center held its annual Media Retreat, which gave writers, journalists, and producers the opportunity to meet with academic experts for interactive seminars in which they examined the role that statistics and data analysis play in the news, public policy, and politics.

Throughout its 42 years, the Weidenbaum Center has educated, informed, collaborated, and brought our community together to better understand public policy issues. I am grateful to everyone working with and for the Center and to those who generously provide the support that allows the Center to pursue its important mission.

Mark S. Wrighton
Chancellor
I am pleased to report on the accomplishments of the Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy. Like previous years, fiscal year 2017 was a most productive year for the Center.

Our efforts to promote, enhance, and expand faculty and student research in economics, political science, and sociology were expanded. We continued to provide various levels of support to faculty cutting-edge research projects and enhanced our effort to provide administrative support for outside grant opportunities. Center staff worked closely with faculty to draft, prepare, and submit grants to both foundations and government entities. We also expanded the number of economic, political science, and sociology faculty that serve as Weidenbaum Center Research Fellows.

The Center’s national survey instrument, The American Panel Survey, provides original survey data to scholars at Washington University—particularly political scientists. As more and more university faculty conduct surveys and collect original data, we continue to post data and resulting articles and papers. A number of reports based on data that was collected through TAPS were published this year. (See TAPS write-up with more details about the reports on page 20.)

Another major concentration of the Center is our commitment to community outreach programs. Our forums, lectures, breakfast meetings and roundtable luncheons inform and better educate individuals on important public policy issues facing the nation and the world. Forum programs are recorded and uploaded to the Center’s website so they can be viewed throughout the country.

As you read through this report, please note that none of our activities, programs, and research efforts would be possible without our generous and loyal supporters. Thanks to all of you who provided your ideas, financial support, and friendship. We are proud to carry on the mission that Murray started.

My thanks also go to the organizations and many University departments that collaborate with the Center on its activities. And last, but certainly not least, I thank Chancellor Mark Wrighton, Dean Barbara Schaal, the University administration, and the Board of Trustees for their encouragement, friendship, and support.

Steven S. Smith
Director
STEVEN SMITH

Since 2001, Steven Smith has served as Director of the Weidenbaum Center, Professor of Political Science, and the Kate M. Gregg Professor of Social Sciences at Washington University. Under his direction, the Center has promoted ever-expanding sponsorship of faculty research efforts, students’ research opportunities, grants administration, and public policy activities geared to media and the public.

His direction of the Center’s The American Panel Survey (TAPS) continued to provide a unique and powerful platform for faculty members to conduct and gather original data specifically geared to their research efforts. Survey data from TAPS also enabled Professor Smith to generate numerous papers and articles on Americans’ political attitudes and behavior. (See page 20.)

Professor Smith continued to teach his graduate seminar, mentor political science students, and conduct his research and writing efforts. His continued scholarship on congressional politics garnered him journal articles in the Legislative Studies Quarterly and American Politics Research. He contributed to several books on this topic, including the 11th edition of Congress Reconsidered and Leadership in American Politics. His latest book, Politics over Process: Partisan Conflict and Post-Passage Processes in the U.S. Congress, will soon be published by the University of Michigan press. As well as being one of the speakers at the Center’s Media Re-
treat, he oversaw the sessions throughout the seminar. His expertise could be read in various media outlets and heard on Minnesota Public Radio on a regular basis. Further, he lectured before numerous community and educational events.

All of these efforts work to strengthen the educational and outreach efforts of both the Weidenbaum Center and Washington University.

STEVEN FAZZARI

Steven Fazzari is the Associate Director of the Weidenbaum Center and the Bert A. and Jeanette L. Lynch Distinguished Professor of Economics and chair of the Department of Sociology. During his nine years as the Center’s Associate Director, he has directed the Center’s grants programs for the University’s Departments of Economics and Sociology, coordinated joint activities with these departments, lectured at the Center’s annual media retreat, and assisted with the Center’s public policy outreach programs.

Professor Fazzari’s research explores the link between macroeconomic activity and finance, particularly the financial determinants of investment spending, issues and effects of inequality, and the foundations of Keynesian macroeconomics. He taught an Introduction to Macroeconomics course, a course on Current Macroeconomic Issues, Keynesian Economics in the 21st Century, and co-taught the popular seminar class Economic Realities of the American Dream (with Professor Mark Rank).

He has written numerous articles (such as his Huffington Post article discussing candidate Trump’s economic policies) and has presented his research at conferences in the United States, Germany, Italy, and in a seminar at Kingston University in London.

RICHARD MAHONEY

Richard Mahoney, former Chief Executive Officer of Monsanto, is the Center’s Distinguished Executive in Residence. His perspective and business experience contributed to many of the Center’s public outreach efforts and he regularly participated in the Center’s public policy activities. At the Center’s annual Media Retreat, participants had the opportunity to interact with and learn from his experiences as an industry leader. At the conclusion of the seminar, he conducted a wrap-up session which gave participants a platform for an in-depth discussion of seminar topics as well as other public policy concerns.

He also is one of the judges for the Weidenbaum Center’s “Award for Evidence-Based Journalism,” which recognizes quality journalism on economics, business, and government, and reflects the use of research, numbers, and statistics.

He serves on the Medical School National Council as well as the Medical School’s Finance and Planning Committee and as a Distinguished Executive in Residence at Olin Business School. He has been a Washington University Trustee, now Emeritus Trustee, since 1983.
Each year, Melinda Warren of the Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy and Susan Dudley of the George Washington University Regulatory Studies Center examine the Budget of the United States Government to identify federal agency spending and personnel devoted to developing, administering and enforcing regulation (the “regulators’ budget”). Key findings from the fiscal year 2018 report, *Regulator’s Budget Reflects President Trump’s Priorities: An Analysis of the U.S. Budget for Fiscal Years 1960 to 2018*, are listed below.

Although President Trump had made reducing regulatory burdens a priority, the proposed budget reflects a 3.4 percent real increase in outlays, which is twice the 1.7 percent increase estimated in 2017. Proposed out-
laysia are $69.4 billion for 2018 compared to $65.9 billion in 2017 and $63.7 billion in 2016. Proposed staffing levels would decline by 0.5 percent—from 281,300 full-time personnel in 2017 to 279,992 in 2018. Regulatory agency staffing increased 1.5 percent in 2017.

Some agencies are budgeted for significant increases in both outlays and staff, while others face dramatic cuts. For example, the expenditures of several agencies within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), particularly those focused on immigration, such as the Coast Guard, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Control, and the Transportation Security Administration, are budgeted for increases of around 10 percent or more next year. The Budget proposes that DHS regulatory agencies increase expenditures by 13.7 percent (an additional $4.1 billion) in 2018. If appropriated, this would follow a 5.9 percent increase ($1.7 billion) in 2017. DHS staffing is also budgeted to grow by 2.3 percent (3,294 additional people) in 2018 following a 1.3 percent increase (1,896 people) in 2017.

In contrast, the Budget proposes a 26.2 percent reduction in EPA's outlays, to $4.1 billion in 2018; this is down from $5.5 billion in FY 2017. If implemented, this would be EPA's smallest budget since 1987. EPA's staff under the proposed 2018 budget would decline by 3,811 employees—from 15,500 to 11,689—a reduction of 24.6 percent. The last time EPA employed fewer than 12,000 employees was 1984.

Between FY 2009 and FY 2017, which roughly conforms to President Obama’s two terms in office, regulatory outlays increased by 13.3 percent or $6.8 billion, while staff levels increased by 7.4 percent or 19,345 people. This pace of growth in both regulatory outlays and staffing was slower than during President George W. Bush’s eight years in office.

The regulatory report receives media coverage every year. This year, in addition to the many textbooks that reference the material in the report, Forbes, reason.com, and Bloomberg BNA all published articles based upon the research.

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**STUDIES IN REGULATION**

Each month, Center donors receive a special email report on current topics in regulation. **Studies in Regulation** briefly summarizes important research studies on the current state of regulatory review, enforcement, and implementation conducted by the Center and other research organizations. Specific topics covered in fiscal year 2017 included improving the FDA approval process, climate change, sales taxes on e-commerce, and renewing American infrastructure. A link to each article is provided in the emails for those who want more information.
The 16th annual Weidenbaum Center Media Retreat brought together media representatives and academics from across the nation for an interactive three-day seminar examining the role that numbers, statistics, and data analysis play in the news, public policy, and politics. Participants in June 2017 included editors/journalists from BBC, CNBC, Des Moines Register, Detroit News, Fusion, Huffington Post, The Intercept, Madison Daily Journal, Marketplace, McClatchy Newspapers, Philadelphia Inquirer, Politico Pro, Reason.com, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Salt Lake Tribune, Slate, Thompson Reuters, Wall Street Journal, WebMD, and White House Chronicle.

The seminars looked at interpretation and misrepresentation of statistics, fact checking health-care reform, economic development, public opinion polls, macroeconomic forecasts, as well as lessons learned from the great recession. Each session was designed to provide media representatives with the tools and techniques to help them further analyze, evaluate, and investigate the validity of numbers. Lecturers also addressed how to effectively utilize numbers to substantiate or refute a story and challenge conventional wisdom when appropriate.

Speakers and discussion leaders included Joel Best (University of Delaware), Don Coursey (University of Chicago), Steven Fazzari, Richard Mahoney, Timothy McBride, William Peck, and Steven Smith (all from Washington University), Tara Sinclair (George Washington University), and Louis Jacobson (Politifact). For more information about the Media Retreat, please visit https://wc.wustl.edu/media_retreat.
Neil Swidey, staff writer for Boston Globe Magazine, received the 2017 Weidenbaum Center Award for Evidence-Based Journalism. Swidey’s submission, “Hopes, Dreams, and Debt” examined the ever-mounting student debt crisis and the impacts on low-income, first-generation students. While the substance of the story was powerful, Swidey’s statistics to explain, substantiate, and enhance his story were numerous and well-used.

A staff writer for the Boston Globe Magazine, Neil writes about a wide range of topics and subcultures. He follows his reporting curiosity wherever it leads him, from medicine to parenting, and the intersection of life and technology. He has profiled celebrities, pro athletes, presidential candidates, and controversial figures. His work has been featured in The Best American Science Writing, The Best American Crime Writing, The Best American Crime Reporting, and The Best American Political Writing. He has been a six-time winner of the Sigma Delta Chi Award from the Society of Professional Journalists, a four-time winner of the National Headliner Award, an Emmy Award nominee (New England), and a finalist for the National Magazine Award.

The Award recognizes a past participant whose work represents quality journalism on economics, business, and government and reflects the sophisticated use of research, numbers, and statistics. Past participants are challenged with submitting entries that illustrated how they utilized the skills and information they gained at the retreat.
The Annual Dinner and Awards Presentation once again brought together supporters and the University community to celebrate the Center’s achievements and scholarship and to recognize the recipients of the Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence. Dr. Douglas Holtz-Eakin, President of the American Action Forum, was the special guest speaker. Dr. Holtz-Eakin’s talk was titled, “Economic Policy Under the New Administration.”

Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence—Policy Leader Award
Dr. Holtz-Eakin, the Center’s dinner speaker, received the Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence Policy Leader Award. Since 2001, Douglas Holtz-Eakin has served in many policy positions. During 2001-02, he was Chief Economist of the President’s Council of Economic Advisers, where he had previously served as a Senior Staff Economist. There he helped formulate policies addressing the 2000-01 recession and the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11. From 2003-05, he was Director of the Congressional Budget Office. During his tenure, the CBO assisted Congress as they addressed numerous policies—the 2003 tax cuts, the Medicare prescription drug bill, and Social Security reform. Since then he has been a Commissioner on the congressionally-chartered Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission and serves as an outside adviser to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence—Academic Leader Award
Dr. William Danforth received the Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence Academic Leader Award for his long-standing dedication, commitment, and achievements in academia. His invaluable service to Washington University began in the 1960s, when
as Vice Chancellor he provided counsel to Chancellor Thomas Eliot during a time of student unrest. In 1971, Dr. Danforth became chancellor. By the time he retired in 1995 and became chairman of the board, his accomplishments were legion and praised nationally. He completed the University’s transition from a local college to a national research university, established 70 new faculty chairs, built a $1.72 billion endowment, oversaw the funding and construction of many new buildings, and tripled the number of scholarships for students. During this time, nearly 60,000 students graduated, retention of undergraduate students and recruitment of minority students greatly increased, and he had become one of the longest-serving university chancellors or presidents in the country.

Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence—Student Award

Two recipients received the Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence Student Award. This award recognized current and past students for their academic achievements and their commitment to public service.

The first awardee, Bisma Mufti, graduated Phi Beta Kappa in Spring 2017 with a major in political science and a minor in creative writing. In her junior year, she obtained an internship with the Foreign Service. Before that, she worked on Muslim rights and securing civil liberties at the ACLU’s National Security Project. Bisma was active in campus groups, including peer education on sexual assault/harassment issues, and she conducted a year-long independent research project on Muslim women’s radicalization to ISIS. Building on her initial paper, she and Political Science Professor Sunita Parikh analyzed the relationship between immigration, identity, and radicalization of Muslims in the United States and Europe. That paper has been submitted to a journal.

The second awardee was Kenneth Sng, a senior from Singapore studying Economics and Mathematics in the College of Arts & Sciences. He was elected Student Body President in 2016 and introduced the second 2016 U.S. Presidential Debate with the Chancellor. He was also involved with Residential Life, Delta Sigma Pi, Socioeconomic Diversity Club, and the Singapore Students’ Association. Kenneth has interned in the Singapore Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Finance, and the Office of the Mayor of St. Louis and plans on a career in public service. Upon graduation, Kenneth will be pursuing a one-year master’s degree in China Studies with a concentration in Economics and Management at Yenching Academy, an interdisciplinary graduate program at Peking University in Beijing, China.

The Weidenbaum Center Award for Excellence honors individuals who exhibit the character, dedication, and excellence associated with Professor Murray Weidenbaum’s scholarship and public service. The Award is a medal featuring a replica of the bas relief sculpture image of Murray Weidenbaum. The other side shows the Washington University insignia. Richard Mahoney, the Center’s Distinguished Executive in Residence, commissioned former alumnus and internationally recognized artist Don Wiegand to design the award.
Economic Advisers Debate

On October 9, 2016, the same day as the presidential candidate debate held on the Washington University campus, the Weidenbaum Center hosted a debate between the chief economic advisers to Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. They faced off to discuss the economic policies of their candidates. This was the fourth time the Center has held an event of this nature. This event was co-sponsored with Macroeconomic Advisers and the Gateway Chapter of the National Association of Business Economics.


Gene Sperling, Hillary Clinton’s economic adviser, served as director of the National Economic Council and Assistant to the President for Economic Policy from January 2011 until March 2014. He also had previously served in that position under President Bill Clinton from 1997 to 2001. In the Obama Administration, Sperling played a key role representing the White House in budget negotiations with Congress as well as in designing several of the President’s economic initiatives. He also served as the White House point person on several of the President’s top priorities including manufacturing policy, housing,
and economic assistance for veterans. During his years at the White House in the Clinton Administration, Sperling helped negotiate the 1993 and 1997 Deficit Reduction Acts and the increase in the earned-income tax credit and a champion of Saving Social Security First, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, the Hope Scholarship Tax Credit and the Direct Student Loan program.

The debate covered topics such as a strategy for economic growth, monetary policy, trade with China, manufacturing jobs in the United States, affordable college tuition, and repealing the Dodd-Frank Act.

What a Long, Strange Trip It’s Been: Race, Social Movements, and the 2016 Presidential Race

On October 19, Douglas McAdam, the Ray Lyman Wilbur Professor of Sociology at Stanford University, talked about the roles social movements—and the reactions to these movements—and electoral politics have made in shifts in public policy. The surreal presidential race has been said to be singularly odd, without precedent, breaking all the rules, etc. Without denying the strangeness of the race, Professor McAdam argued that 2016 represented only the most extreme embodiment of a process of political polarization and racial division that has been going on since the early- to mid-1960s. A quote from his recent book, *Deeply Divided* (with Karina Kloos), identifies the two key processes that have produced these divisions.

The striking escalation in partisan bloodletting and governmental dysfunction during the Obama years bear the clear imprint of . . . two central structuring forces: the continuing—indeed increasing significance of race in American politics; and the dynamic interaction of, and tension between, movement and party as forms and logics of politics.

These same two forces shaped the 2016 race. Donald Trump’s characterization of Mexican immigrants as “rapists,” his failure to repudiate David Duke’s endorsement, and the proposal to bar Muslims from entering the country, represents the most extreme expression of the racially polarized politics that have characterized the Republican Party for the past half century. In short, for all the strangeness of the race, it is continuous with the past.

This forum was cosponsored with Washington University’s Department of Sociology and School of Law’s Public Interest Law & Policy Speakers Series.

2016 Election in Historical Context

An historical perspective of the 2016 presidential and congressional elections was the subject of the last forum of 2016. Prominent political historian Julian Zelizer, Professor of History and Public Affairs at Princeton University, was the keynote speaker. Peter Kastor, Professor of History at Washington University, followed up the talk with his comments. Weidenbaum Center Director Steven Smith moderated the event.

The 2016 election reflected how the Republican Party has changed over the past few decades. There has been a rightward shift on key policies such as immigration, economic deregulation, and climate change, as well as an anti-establishment
approach to politics and governance. Professor Zelizer made comparisons to the 1980s when Newt Gingrich and the “New Republicans” wanted to shake things up in the Party. More recently, the choice of Sarah Palin as John McCain’s running mate brought out more of the far-right voters to her rallies. He further stated that another reason for the election outcomes was the economic instability for blue collar and middle-class workers that currently exists. The middle-class cannot rely on the job security that existed in previous generations. Sexism also played a part in voting. The selection of Donald Trump was a vote for a candidate who embraced an older, dated version of masculinity against the first female candidate of a major party.

Peter Kastor pointed out how Trump’s campaign was similar to Obama’s. Both were outsiders who ran circles around the established candidates in part through newer communication technology. He speculated on the fate of the Electoral College and Professor Zelizer stated that he believed that the College will continue its role, even with arguments for abolishing it.

Professor Zelizer wrapped up the session by pointing out that 24-hour televised news availability and social media will continue to play a major role in elections, more so than print journalism. He expects candidates will follow Trump’s tactics in the 2020 election. Good investigative and analytical journalism is necessary when covering political campaigns.

Scientific View of Climate Change

In March, David Easterling, Chief of the Scientific Services Division at NOAA’s National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina, addressed the forum on the scientific view of climate change. Some of the major points covered in Dr. Easterling’s talk were: beginning in 1880 up to the present, one of the major types of data analyzed is the global average surface temperature of the Earth. During the last three years, the temperatures have reached record highs. Another source of data comes from satellite measurements of the troposphere. For the Earth to reduce surface air temperatures, energy from infrared radiation is needed to reflect heat back to space. But enhanced greenhouse gases, caused by emissions, adsorb the radiation, keeping the surface temperatures higher than desired. Since 1980, hurricanes have increased in numbers, with global warming being considered a major factor contributing to this.

Dr. Easterling served as an Assistant Professor in the Climate and Meteorology Program, Department of Geography, Indiana University-Bloomington from 1987 to 1990. In 1990 he moved to the National Climatic Data Center as a research scientist, was appointed Principal Scientist in 1999, and Chief of Scientific Services in 2002. He has authored or co-authored more than sixty research articles in journals such as Science, Nature, and the Journal of Climate. Dr. Easterling was also a contributor to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Second and Third Assessment Reports, and is currently a Lead Author for the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report.

This forum was cosponsored by Washington University’s Assembly Series and I-CARES.

Why Pollsters Lose but Lobbyists Never Do: The Uncertainty Principle in Economics and Politics

On April 4, David Levine, Professor of Microeconomics at the European University Institute, and Professor Emeritus of Economics at Washington University, spoke on why pollsters and economists cannot accurately predict the outcomes in elections or which way the market will go. Why are polls wrong? By and large, polls do a fairly good job of predicting how people are going to vote. But polls
cannot predict who is going to vote, which will determine the outcome of the election. Economists cannot predict when the market will crash, but analysis can show that there is a small chance that a crash could occur on any given day. If an economist announces that a crash will occur on a particular day based on data used in a model, people will sell their stocks the day before this, causing a crash to occur. So does a crisis prove that rational expectations and rational behavior are bad assumptions for formulating economic policy? Perhaps we should turn to behavioral models of irrationality in understanding how to deal with the housing market crash or the Greek economic crisis? Such an alternative would have us build on foundations of sand. It would have us create economic policies and institutions that as soon as they were properly understood they would cease to function.

The Department of Economics was a cosponsor for this event.
Gregory Magarian
In September 2016, Washington University Law professor Gregory Magarian spoke on the historical purpose of the Second Amendment and potential changes to its interpretation by a liberal-majority Supreme Court. Hoping to avoid sharp criticism and mistrust in the Court, Professor Magarian does not believe a liberal court would overturn *D.C. v. Heller* or *McDonald v. Chicago*, the two landmark cases upholding individual gun rights. Rather, he argues that a liberal majority would likely instruct lower courts to continue to uphold restrictions and regulations on the right to bear arms. He went on to state that the Court will eventually review one of these cases, affirm the lower court’s decision, and add a caveat that from here on out, judicial decisions regarding gun regulation should not be based on history. This would drastically change the precedent set by Scalia in *D.C. v. Heller* when he decided that the individual had the right to bear arms based on the history of the Second Amendment. It would also keep criticism of the Court from gun enthusiasts to a minimum.

David Kemper
In October 2016, David Kemper, Chief Executive Officer of Commerce Bancshares, Inc., warned of the harms associated with increased regulation in the banking industry. He spoke of how banks’ falling profitability is related to higher capital requirements and superfluous legislation, especially among the largest banks. This causes the large banks to trade below book value and, subsequently, forces strategic planning to shift away from highly regulated areas. He went on to mention that the fact that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has no oversight is likely to be a major cause of this needless legislation. Kemper ended with a warning that regulators need to realize that below market trading compromises banks’ profitability, which can put the entire industry at risk.

Susanne Dröge
Dr. Susanne Dröge of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs spoke in September 2016 about the Paris Agreement, an international United Nation resolution to combat climate change. Beginning with a history of international climate change legislation, Dr. Dröge argued that more needs to be done to fight increasing carbon emissions and global warming. She emphasized that the Paris Agreement holds signees accountable by reviewing their nationally determined contributions on a yearly basis. Dr. Dröge then spoke about the role of the United States in this process and how its support for this resolution as well as its continued investment in renewable energy are critical for the future of the Earth.

Steven Smith
In November 2016, Director of the Weidenbaum Center and Washington University political science professor, Dr. Steven Smith spoke about the ramifications of the 2016 presidential election result. He started by recapping the election and its major scandals and continued with an analysis on how those scandals may have impacted the polls, especially just prior to election night. Dr. Smith pointed out that the candidates took vastly different approaches in their attempts to appeal to a wide voter base, and while the electoral make-up of both parties remained similar to prior elections, the differences in turnout rates among particular demographic groups are what decided this election. In the second half of his discussion, Dr. Smith discussed what we should expect in the near future from both the newly elected president and the Republican Congress. After the inauguration, Dr. Smith expects President Trump to focus on issues such as trade, immigration, healthcare, and tax reform.
MEMBER PROGRAMS

He ended the talk by discussing the future of the two parties. While Democrats do not hold a majority in Congress, they still have the ability to filibuster in the Senate. Both parties may look to reorganize their nominating process and concentrate on the 2018 House of Representatives midterm elections, as all representatives will be defending their seats.

In April, Professor Smith provided a review of the first 100 days of the Trump Administration. During that time period, 23 executive orders were signed, 90 regulations were repealed, one Supreme Court nomination was made, and the United States withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership talks. The Administration’s priorities continue to focus on undocumented immigrants, ISIS, and tensions with North Korea.

Tara Sinclair
Tara Sinclair, Professor of Economics and International Affairs at George Washington University, spoke on the big data revolution. Vast amounts of information on everything from what we look for in goods, services, houses, jobs, mates, etc., to how we really spend our time and money, have been and continue to be collected by many private companies such as search engines, social media sites, and credit card companies. Professor Sinclair discussed how this information has the potential to improve public policy but its presence and how private companies are using it is also affecting how policy may work in this new age. She provided an overview of the new world of big data and how it is transforming economic policy and tipping the balance of power in information from the government to the private sector.

Joel Prakken
Macroeconomic Advisers Senior Managing Director and Co-Founder Joel Prakken spoke in February 2017 about the agenda for economic policy under a Trump Administration. His remarks addressed the possibilities and prospects for tax and entitlement reform, infrastructure spending, trade policy, and regulatory reform.

William Peck
Dr. William Peck, Co-Director, Center for Health Economics and Policy, and former dean of the School of Medicine at Washington University, discussed health care reform and the proposed repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act. Dr. Peck described the status of this selection process and reviewed the comparative specifics of the approaches under consideration (or the selected approach) including crucial variables such as accessibility, coverage, quality and cost.

Public Policy Luncheons

The Center’s Major Donors Public Policy Luncheons—roundtable discussions of current events—continued with monthly meetings. These luncheons, specifically designed for and limited to the Center’s major donors, brought in an array of academic experts, business and community leaders, and former government officials to interact with attendees in an open discussion format. At each meeting, four or five issues were examined with an expert briefly summarizing the issue and then leading the discussion. This format enabled participants to hear an overall analysis of each issue and then delve into the topic in more depth—i.e., importance of the issue, the underlying causes, current and future ramifications, its impact on the public, as well as ways the issue could/should be addressed, improved, or resolved if possible. Some of the topics discussed were the Paris Agreement on environmental reform, President-elect Trump’s fiscal, trade, and healthcare policies, Democratic Party leadership, presidential executive orders, and tax reform.
Now in its sixth year, The American Panel Survey (TAPS) is an online survey of a national probability sample from a panel of about 2,000 adults in the United States conducted eight times a year. Directed by Steven Smith, this survey gives researchers at Washington University and around the country one of the best survey research platforms in the social sciences. GfK Custom Research, LLC, a leading online survey research firm, conducts these monthly online panel surveys for the Weidenbaum Center.

All surveys are conducted with a national, representative panel of respondents who are reinterviewed most months. This allows the accumulation of more data per respondent and the measurement of individual-level change. Each survey has a limited number of core questions on economic and political attitudes. The rest of the time on the survey is dedicated to social science analysis, giving Washington University faculty and graduate students a new platform for research. Also collected are demographic and other key background information to give special insights on research data.

Since the beginning of the project, Washington University faculty have availed themselves of TAPS, publishing books, journal articles, and workshop papers based upon the original data collected. The following were published in fiscal year 2017:


Media coverage of TAPS reports continued. In February 2017, a Fortune article, “The Consumer Confidence Gap between Democrats and Republicans Has Never Been Wider,” referred to a 2016 report on “Partisanship and Economic Perceptions.” Complete World News used TAPS as the basis of its story, “Poll Finds Most and Least Popular Parts of ACA,” in March 2017. A similar article was published by Futurity the same month.

For more information on TAPS, please visit taps.wustl.edu.
Faculty Grants

The small grants program provides financial support for work to be done over a two-year period. The Center is particularly interested in supporting collaborative efforts, research that has a high probability of prominent publication, and research that will lead to application for external funding. Funding for a project is normally under $10,000. Since 2015, the Center has provided support for medium-size, multi-year grants. Projects most likely to be funded are those that are integral to a long-term research program, involve important theoretical or methodological innovations, have a high probability of producing publishable results in the most important scholarly venues, and involve more than one Washington University investigator. Proposals that have the potential for larger external funding are given priority. Funding for these projects range from $30,000-$45,000. Below is a list of new projects given support in fiscal year 2017.

Sarah Brierley, “Survey of Party Brokers in Ghana” (Political Science)
Daniel Butler, “The Effect of Public Opinion on Individual MPs in Party Systems” (Political Science)
Daniel Butler, “Laboratories of Democracy Project” (Political Science)
Ian Fillmore, “Price Discrimination and Public Policy in the U.S. College Market” (Economics)
Jim Gibson (with Lee Epstein and Greg Magarian), “The Slants” (Political Science/Law)
Andrew Reeves, “Influence of Geographic Environment on Political Behavior” (Political Science)
Ariela Schachter, “The Big Sort: How Online Rental Housing Advertisements Perpetuate Residential Segregation” (Sociology)
Margit Tavits, “Political Speech and Prejudice Reduction” (Political Science)

Submissions to Foundations

The Center works with faculty from many social science departments to enhance their research opportunities and provide outlets for their research findings. Assistance in acquiring external funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), other government agencies, and private and corporate foundations continues. Center staff support encourages faculty engagement in grantsmanship. Center staff conduct grantsmanship work for the Departments of Political Science, Economics, and Sociology. The Center staff gives extra effort to new and young investigators who need extra assistance in managing the application and administrative processes. If a proposal is awarded, the Center staff also provides help in hiring research assistants and processing expenses. Unless shown differently, all of the proposals listed below went to the National Science Foundation.

Daniel Butler, “Overcoming Obstacles Beyond Ideological Disagreement” (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council)
Daniel Butler, “Understanding State Level Public Policy Agendas”
Jeff Gill, “Collaborative Research: Theoretical and Human-centered Data Science”
Andrew Reeves, “Collaborative Research: No Blank Check: The Origins of Attitudes Toward Executive Power and Their Implications for Presidential Leadership”
Jake Rosenfeld, “Pay Secrecy Policies and Pay in U.S. Workplaces”
Betsy Sinclair, “Meeting the Challenge: Evaluating the Impact of the Top Two Primary on California Voters”
Faculty Publications

This is a list of articles published by Weidenbaum Center staff and fellows as well as articles that resulted from faculty support from the Center or grants.

Costas Azariadis


Daniel Butler


Matthew Gabel

Jeff Gill

Andrew Reeves

Guillermo Rosas
with Adrian Lucardi. 2016 (December). “Is the incumbent curse the incumbent’s fault? Strategic behavior and negative incumbency effects in young democracies,” Electoral Studies 44: 66-75.

Betsy Sinclair

Betsy Sinclair and Steven Smith

Steven Smith


Margit Tavits


WORKSHOP AND SEMINAR SUPPORT

The Center co-sponsors workshops and seminars with the Department of Economics in the Fall and Spring Semesters. Speakers presented and discussed their groundbreaking research with faculty and students of Washington University and participants from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. For more information on these seminars, please visit economics.wustl.edu/events/archive.

Departmental Seminars

Gary Hoover (University of Oklahoma), “Plagiarism in the Social Sciences”

Econometrics

Ivana Komunjer (University of California-San Diego), “A Perturbation Approach to Nonlinear Filtering: The Case of Stochastic Volatility”
Filippo Massari (University of New South Wales), “Price Probabilities: A Class of Bayesian and Non-Bayesian Prediction Rules”

Economic Theory

Inkee Jang (Washington University), “Moral leadership and self-control”
Eduardo Azevedo (University of Pennsylvania), “Market Failure in Kidney Exchange”
Chris Chambers (University of California-San Diego), “On Multiple Discount Factors”
Andreas Blume (University of Arizona), “Failure of Common Knowledge of Language in Common-Interest Communication Games”
Jonathan Weinstein (Washington University), “Uncertain Rationality, Depth of Reasoning and Robustness in Games with Incomplete Information”
Takako Fujiwara-Greve (Keio University-Tokyo), “Diverse Behavior Patterns in a Symmetric Society with Voluntary Partnerships”
Yoram Halevy (University of British Columbia), “Parametric Recoverability of Preferences”
Wioletta Dziuda (University of Chicago), “Gridlock and Inefficient Policy Instruments”
Mehmet Ekmecki (Boston College), “Reputation and Screening in a Noisy Environment with Irreversible Actions”
Shengwu Li (Harvard University), “Obviously Strategy-Proof Mechanisms”
Marciano Siniscalchi (Northwestern University), “Structural Rationality in Dynamic Games”
James Best (University of Oxford), “Persuasion for the Long-Run”
David Levine (European University Institute), “Lobbying versus Voting”
Paul Healy (The Ohio State University), “Epistemic Experiments: Utilities, Beliefs & Irrational Play”
Chew Soo Hong (National University of Singapore), “Haze and Decision Making: A Natural Laboratory Experiment”
Chang Liu (Washington University), “Managerial Optimism in a Vertically Differentiated Market with Demand Uncertainty”
WORKSHOP AND SEMINAR SUPPORT

Empirical Microeconomics

Rong Hai (University of Miami), “A Dynamic Model of Health, Addiction, Education, and Wealth”

Eric Nielsen (University of Toronto), “Achievement Estimates and Deviations from Cardinal Comparability”

Jonathan Hall (University of Toronto), “Is Uber a Substitute or Complement with Public Transit?”

Mallika Thomas (Cornell University), “The Impact of Mandated Maternity Benefits on the Gender Differential in Promotions: Examining the Role of Adverse Selection”

Andres Hincapie (Washington University), “Entrepreneurship over the Life Cycle”

Sharon Trairer (Yale University), “Occupations and Import Competition”


Theodore Papageorgiou (McGill University), “Geography, Search Frictions and Trade Costs”

Andres Aradillas-Lopez (Penn State), “Inference in Ordered Response Games with Complete Information”

Justin Pierce (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System), “Trade Liberalization and Mortality: Evidence from U.S. Counties”

Giorgio Topa (Federal Reserve Bank-New York), “Job Search Behavior Among the Employed and Non-Employed”


Joseph Mullins (University of Western Ontario), “Improving Child Outcomes Through Welfare Reform”


Joan Llull (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), “Selective Immigration Policies and the U.S. Labor Market”

Pieter Gautier (Vrije Universiteit-Amsterdam), “Meetings and Mechanisms”

Paul Sullivan (American University), “Job Tasks, Time Allocation, and Wages”

Michael Dinerstein (University of Chicago), “Quantifying the Supply Response of Private Schools to Public Policies”

Macroeconomics


UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

*Many undergraduate and graduate students received support for faculty research projects and NSF-funded grants*

Alena Antonowich  
Christian Baehr  
James Barton  
Ryden Butler  
Samantha Chestney  
Deepa Devanathan  
Antonia Drummond  
Constanza Figeroa Schibb  
Jeanette Freiberg  
Alejandro Frydman  
Kenneth Geisler  
Cole Goldklang  
Adam Green  
Sydney Green  
Siyu Gu  
Marcus Hallman  
Conor Hammond  
Allen Hao  
Dongyan Huo  
Dominic Jarkey

Elena Labzina  
Brian Leibowitz  
Matthew Malis  
Ashley Moore  
Nidhi Narielwala  
Todd Nobles  
Zachary Rigg  
Peter Rosenquist  
Erin Rossiter  
David Rusk  
Eli Scher-Zagier  
Ryan Schneider  
Dan Sicorsky  
Arthur Smith  
Lee Snodgrass  
Scott Solomon  
Paul Spada  
Silvia (Michelle) Torres Pacheco  
Patrick Tucker  
Mauricio Vela Baron
Even though the Weidenbaum Center is part of Washington University, it is responsible for its own financial support and relies heavily upon generous donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations. As a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, the Center falls under the University’s 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

There are many ways to make an investment in the Weidenbaum Center’s activities. You can provide annual support or make a designated gift for specific purposes such as public policy programs, research, the Murray Weidenbaum Scholars Program, or TAPS. You can give online using a credit card at https://gifts.wustl.edu/giftform.aspx, make a gift of stock, or mail in a contribution. In any of these cases, make sure you identify that your gift should be directed to the Weidenbaum Center. Expansion of current programs and the creation of new programs require additional funding on a continual basis. Every dollar helps. For further information on supporting the Center’s efforts, please contact Gloria Lucy at 314-935-5689 (glolucy@wustl.edu), Melinda Warren at 314-935-5652 (warren@wustl.edu), or Allison Oberkirsch at 314-935-5249 (allison.oberkirsch@wustl.edu).

The Center’s Eliot Society consists of individuals who have come together to support the Weidenbaum Center. Eliot Society support makes our work possible, helping to develop the fabric of a better society by working to influence and shape public policy through the dissemination of unbiased information to the public.

The Center is grateful to the volunteers who worked so hard to help it reach its annual financial needs. Special recognition goes to James E. Schiele, Chairman of the Center’s Eliot Society and Corporate Leaders Volunteer Committee, for his dedication, endless development efforts, and community outreach on behalf of the Center.

ADMINISTRATION & STAFF

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