CONTENTS

Letter from the Chancellor ........................................ 4
Letter from the Director ........................................... 5
Faculty and Administration
  Steven Smith ....................................................... 6
  Steven Fazzari ................................................... 7
  Richard Mahoney ............................................... 8
Media Retreat .......................................................... 9
Special Reports ....................................................... 10
Annual Dinner ....................................................... 11
Public Policy Programs/Forums ................................. 12-13
Public Policy Breakfasts ........................................... 14-16
Corporate Leaders .................................................. 17
Public Policy Luncheons ......................................... 18
Academic Research Programs ................................. 19-21
Workshop and Seminar Support ............................. 22-24
Undergraduate, Graduate Student Support ............ 25
Financial Support ................................................... 26
Administration and Staff ......................................... 26
Now in its 40th year, the Weidenbaum Center continues to fulfill its mission to inform, educate, and bring our community together to better understand public policy issues. The Center is a nonpartisan organization that supports scholarly research in the fields of economics, government and public policy.

Through interdisciplinary research and educational programs, the Center addresses the most important public policy issues facing America. During the past year, the Center sponsored a number of stimulating events, including a presentation by former CIA operative Jack Devine on the ethics of national security, a lecture on race and school choice by Northwestern University’s Professor Mary Pattillo, and a forum talk given by Harvard University’s Professor Robert Putnam on the growing inequality gap and why fewer Americans today have the opportunity for upward mobility.

The Center’s grant program provides support that enables faculty to test new research hypotheses prior to applying for major grants. Faculty members are also given opportunities to place research modules on the Center’s survey instrument, The American Panel Survey (TAPS). Assistantships give both graduate and undergraduate students opportunities to work with faculty on funded projects.

In June, the Center held its annual Media Retreat, once again bringing writers, journalists, and producers together with academic experts to participate in interactive seminars examining the role that statistics and data analysis play in the news, politics, and public policy. The positive feedback received on this program has been overwhelming.

Your support allows the Weidenbaum Center to expand its work and provide a multifaceted program of research, forums, retreats, publications, and online resources for the Washington University community. We are very grateful for your interest, which has been a key factor in driving the Center's success.

Mark S. Wrighton
Chancellor

I am pleased to again report on the accomplishments of the Weidenbaum Center on the Economy, Government, and Public Policy. Fiscal year 2015 was a most productive year for the Center.

One of our major initiatives was to secure the legacy of Center founder, Director, and Honorary Chairman, Murray L. Weidenbaum. The Center, in collaboration with the University’s Olin Library, has catalogued his articles published by the Center since its inception. These papers and reports, as well as a collection of correspondence that helped shape Murray’s life, career, and public service, will be housed at Olin Library. A website has been created that will allow people to view online correspondence and articles published by the Center. Further information on this will be forthcoming.

Our commitment to provide original survey data through our program, The American Panel Survey (TAPS), is strong. This cutting-edge online survey continues to provide scholars at Washington University — particularly political scientists — with one of the best survey research platforms in the social sciences.

Our community outreach programs addressed important public policy issues facing the nation and the world. Meetings, forums, conferences, and lectures looked at public policy concerns such as the future of commercial banking, national security, developments in the Middle East, earmarks and pork-barrel spending in Congress, incentive compensation and pay systems, the rising inequality and stagnation in the U.S. economy, the student loan mess, and economic pressure and racial disparities in Ferguson.

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 Smith

For the last 15 years, Steven S. Smith has served as Director of the Center, Professor of Political Science, and the Kate M. Gregg Professor of Social Sciences at Washington University. As the Center’s Director, he continued to initiate and oversee the sponsorship of faculty research activities, grants administration, student enrichment programs, and public outreach activities. In addition, he continued to expand and direct The American Panel Survey (TAPS), and worked on preparing papers and articles on Americans’ political attitudes and behavior with data drawn from TAPS.

A leading scholar on legislative institutions and politics, Professor Smith’s research focuses on American politics, congressional politics, Russian politics, and positive theories of institutional development. The ninth edition of his textbook, The American Congress (Cambridge University Press), was published in 2015. The sixth edition of his reader, Principles and Practice of American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Readings (CQ Press, co-edited with Samuel Kernell) was released in April 2015. One of the chapters, “Congress: the Troubled Institution,” was written by Professor Smith. This collection of scholarly articles reflects the changing federal-state relationship, the continuing debates over American electorate and Congressional polarization, the role of media in influencing public views of politicians and issues, and the ever-evolving state of civil rights and civil liberties.

Also in Spring 2015, Solutions to Political Polarization in America (Cambridge University Press) was published. This book included a chapter written by Professor Smith titled “Partisan Polarization and the Senate Syndrome.” His co-authored paper on ideological labels in America appeared in American Politics Research, and a paper on public attitudes about the balance between majority rule and minority rights will soon be out in Legislative Studies Quarterly.

In his commitment to public outreach and education, Professor Smith’s expertise could be read in various media outlets and heard on radio stations on a regular basis. He lectured before numerous community and educational venues, including a recent public lecture on polarization in American politics.

Steven Fazzari is the Associate Director of the Weidenbaum Center, the Bert A. and Jeanette L. Lynch Distinguished Professor of Economics, and Chair of the recently resurrected Department of Sociology in Arts & Sciences. He has been a faculty member at Washington University for over 30 years and has served as the Center’s Associate Director since 2008.

Professor Fazzari’s contributions to the research and public policy efforts of the Center have been widespread. He works closely in coordinating activities between the Center and the Department of Economics. He oversees the Center’s sponsorship of economic student research assistants, economic faculty research grants and workshops, and contributes regularly to the Center’s public outreach efforts. In his new role as Chair of the Department of Sociology, he has begun to explore opportunities for the Center and the new department to combine forces to address issues of mutual interest.

His research continues to explore two main areas: the financial determinants of investment and R&D spending by U.S. firms and the foundations of Keynesian macroeconomics. His writings over the past year continued to investigate the causes and consequence of the Great Recession and its aftermath. His most recent work connects rising income inequality to the household financial imbalances that triggered the financial crisis and recession and explains how high levels of inequality have constrained consumer spending since the recession ended, leading to a historically stagnant recovery. His perspectives on these and other issues are the subject of several peer-reviewed articles appearing in 2015 and they have been highlighted in the national and international press.

He had an abundance of opportunities to share his insights and research with scholars, students, and the general public world wide. Over the past year, he has lectured and participated in conferences throughout the United States and internationally in Italy and France. A recent highlight was a lecture in June 2015 at the large Economics Festival in Trento, Italy that received press coverage from many Italian media outlets.

A prolific writer, his published articles appeared in a wide variety of academic journals and books. A recent search found more than 2,500 citations of Professor Fazzari’s publications in the Research Papers in Economics database (approaching 11,000 in Google Scholar).

Professor Fazzari has been an award-winning teacher to generations of Washington University undergraduates and doctoral students. His teaching focuses on macroeconomics, from introductory freshman courses to Ph.D. seminars. He has recently begun co-teaching a popular seminar class on the economic realities of the American Dream with Professor Mark Rank of the Brown School of Social Work. Professor Fazzari brings his love of teaching to the Weidenbaum Center with his discussions of the macroeconomic issues of the day at virtually every Major Donors Public Policy Luncheons.
Interactive Media Retreat Marks 14th Season

The 14th 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. It was limited to approximately 20 participants who were required to attend all sessions. The seminar is designed to provide media representatives with tools and techniques they need to analyze, evaluate, and investigate the validity of numbers. Additionally, it shows them how to utilize numbers to substantiate or refute a story, and provides them with new story ideas for challenging conventional wisdom. Participants in June 2015 included journalists from The Boston Globe, The Charlotte Observer, Governing Magazine, KSDK-TV (St. Louis), Los Angeles Times, New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Slate, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, WTSP-TV (Tampa), Politico, WebMD, Huffington Post, Reason, Rhode Island Public Radio, and the BBC. Speakers and discussion leaders were Joel Best (University of Delaware), Don Coursey (University of Chicago), Steven Fazzari, Richard Mahoney, William Peck, Mark Rank, Hilary Sale, and Steven Smith (all from Washington University), and Tara Sinclair (George Washington University).

The presenters covered topics such as lies and statistics, the economics of health care, how numbers are used and abused, using and reporting public opinion polls, estimating probabilities of economic fortune and misfortune, evaluating macroeconomic forecasts, understanding the great recession, and corporate governance.

For more information about the Media Retreat, please visit https://wc.wustl.edu/media_retreat.

2015 Recipient of the Weidenbaum Center Award for Evidence-Based Journalism

Mark Binker, multimedia investigative reporter, WRAL-TV (North Carolina), was the 2015 recipient of the Weidenbaum Center Award for Evidence-Based Journalism.

His submissions illustrated how the Center’s 2014 Media Retreat contributed to his focus on investigating numbers and how sources come into play. He submitted fact checks that drew, at least in part, on topics, methods, or ideas discussed at the Center’s Media Retreat. Mark has been recognized by The Washington Post as one of the best state capital reporters in America. He has reported from presidential press pools and butted heads with obstinate local politicians. “What the Weidenbaum seminar urges its participants to do is to pierce that veil of numbers just as we would sort through the tangled jumble of a politician’s explanation for bad behavior. The retreat’s motto might be, ‘If a number is too convenient, check it out.’ Over the past year I have found myself asking those who are bringing facts and figures to bear, ‘How do you know that?’ That has made me a better everyday reporter and has informed my thinking on a number of projects.”
Every year, the Weidenbaum Center’s Melinda Warren and the George Washington University Regulatory Studies Center’s Susan Dudley estimate the on-budget costs of regulation by analyzing the Budget of the United States Government. Their task is to pull out the costs and the number of people devoted to developing and enforcing federal regulations. The time-series data go back to 1960, and offer insights into the growth and changing composition of regulation over the last five-and-a-half decades. This year’s “regulators’ budget” presents the President’s requested budget outlays and staffing for fiscal year (FY) 2016, estimated outlays and staffing for FY 2015, and actual outlays and staffing for the previous 55 years.

The 2015-2016 report, Regulators’ Budget Increases Consistent with Growth in Fiscal Budget, shows that the regulators’ budget is growing at approximately the same pace as the overall Budget, 5.3 percent in real (inflation-adjusted) terms in FY 2016 and 4.3 percent in FY 2015. The President’s proposed budget for the regulatory activities tracked here is $66.8 billion in FY 2016.

The Budget also requests increases in federal regulatory agency personnel of 1.2 percent in FY 2016 and 0.2 percent in FY 2015. Staffing at regulatory agencies is expected to exceed 280,500 people in 2016. Staff is growing faster at the agencies devoted to economic regulatory activities (2.9 percent each year) than at those responsible for social regulatory activities. This appears to reverse the trend away from economic regulation of private-sector activities that began in the 1970s.

Regulatory Update Newsletter

The Weidenbaum Center continues its monthly email to donors, highlighting new research on regulation issued either by the Center or another research organization working in this area. Studies in Regulation briefly summarizes these important research studies on the current state of regulatory review, enforcement, and implementation and provides a link to the article for those who want further information. Topics covered in fiscal year 2015 include housing finance policy, climate change, the need for a federal robotics commission, water policy, the Transportation Security Administration, regulation of the internet, the impact of Dodd-Frank, and the gender pay gap.
A key aspect of the Weidenbaum Center’s mission is to hold programs that inform and further educate the general public on economic and political issues that are important to both the nation and the world. The Center’s Forum programs promote an open dialogue between experts, scholars, and the general public. Brief descriptions of the forums that were held in fiscal year 2015 are listed here.

**Importance and Ethics of National Security**

In September 2014, former Acting Director of the CIA’s clandestine operations Jack Devine discussed the importance and ethics of national security today. Mr. Devine pointed out that covert intelligence collection is as old as human interaction; the speed and pace of communications, however, has significantly improved over the last 40 years. According to Devine, intelligence continues to be critical, because it bridges the gap between diplomacy and war. Yet the idea of a clandestine entity seems counterintuitive to a democratic government, and many people tend to think of the CIA as a “rogue agency.” Devine disputed such contentions, arguing that his testimonies before Congress served as a sanity check and that the American people would agree with the agency’s actions when they became public knowledge later. This was the Biennial Lecture of the Center on Urban Research and Public Policy and co-sponsored by the Weidenbaum Center.

**Informal Institutions**

In April 2015, Chang-Tai Hsieh, University of Chicago Professor and the Sam B. Cook Visiting Professor of Economics at Washington University, spoke on informal institutions and the role they play in society. Informal institutions can be defined as family and kinship structures, traditional practices, and social norms. They can be of great importance and can affect economic development processes, especially in countries where the power of formal government is limited. This event was cosponsored by the Department of Economics.

**Race and Politics of School Choice**

In October 2014, Mary Pattillo, Professor of Sociology and African American Studies at Northwestern University, gave a talk on the race and politics behind school choice. School choice, or the ability of parents to choose between public, private, or charter schools based on a student’s individual educational needs and priorities, has been touted as a public policy capable of improving educational outcomes for African Americans. After conducting a series of qualitative interviews with 77 poor and working class black parents, however, Professor Pattillo found only limited evidence of increased empowerment or agency, and almost no control over the selection process itself. Rather, according to Pattillo, many parents reported a desire to find a quality school while still having many difficulties in actually doing so. In conclusion, Pattillo notes that socioeconomic position influences who chooses which schools, as well as what families hope to gain from their choice. This was the Biennial Lecture of the Center on Urban Research and Public Policy and co-sponsored by the Weidenbaum Center.

**Creating a Just and Inclusive America**

In January 2015, the Weidenbaum Center co-sponsored an event with the Brown School of Social Work to host Xavier de Souza Briggs, Vice President of the Ford Foundation’s Economic Opportunity and Assets Program. In his talk, Professor Briggs addressed two primary questions: What kind of economy does a just and equal America require (or how did we end up here)? How can we continue to thrive under recent racial tension (or why has it not gone away)? The common answer to the former question stems from increasing technological change and globalization undermining American jobs. While this answer is not wrong, it is incomplete. There have always been different versions of capitalism, and we have forgotten that we had to invent the inclusive form of capitalism that followed the industrial revolution. Professor Briggs also noted the reinforcing mechanism between exclusionary housing zoning and disparities in school districts such that higher paid families are able to avoid low income areas, across racial groups. Interestingly, while America has become more racially tolerant in recent years, people are also less likely to believe racial inequalities still exist and that the government should do something about them. Professor Briggs called for community building or local civic capacity that might determine important national policies going forward.

**Other People’s Houses: How Decades of Bailouts, Captive Regulations, and Toxic Bankers Have Made Home Mortgages a Thrilling Business**

In cooperation with the graduate schools of Law, Business, and Social Work, the Weidenbaum Center hosted Vermont Law School Professor Jennifer Taub in October to discuss the causes and consequences of the 2008 financial crisis within the American housing market. Contrary to most commentators, Professor Taub argues that the Great Recession was not unavoidable. In fact, Taub sees a connection between the savings and loan debacle of the 1980s and the more recent financial crisis. Then, as in 2008, some of the country’s largest investment firms were provided bailouts while regulators turned a blind eye to widespread fraud and abuse. According to Taub, the post-2008 financial reforms have been far from effective or efficient: the same banks held 37% more assets in 2013 than they did in 2008. If appropriate regulatory measures are not enacted, Taub argues, the financial crisis will happen again, with more severe consequences.

**Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis**

Harvard social scientist and Bowling Alone author Robert Putnam spoke to a packed Graham Chapel in April 2015 about his new research on income inequality and the book it led to: *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. According to Putnam, across all racial groups, rich children are significantly more likely than poor children to achieve higher levels of wealth and income during their lifetime. Putnam illustrated his point with a series of “scissor graphs” where the paths of rich children and poor children diverge over time. His argument is simply that rich children enjoy numerous, somewhat intangible benefits and protections that ensure their success. Poor children do not. For example, rich children are far more likely to live in a two-parent household, have family dinners together, receive individual attention, have a tutor, or be protected when they get in trouble with the law. Poor children lack such insurances. As a result, says Putnam, the American dream of studying, working hard, and becoming successful is increasingly unattainable for low-income kids.
A New World Order in the Middle East and Beyond: Tell Us Something We Don’t Know

Itai Sened. Washington University Political Science professor, spoke in October 2014 on the ongoing conflict and escalating violence taking place in Israel and the ramifications on the region. He then spoke more generally about conditions in the Middle East and how all the turmoil in this region continues to shape policy.

The Future of U.S. Commercial Banking: Relatively Free Market or Regulated Utility?

In September 2014, David Kemper, Chief Executive Officer of Commerce Bancshares, Inc., spoke on the future of U.S. commercial banking. With numerous small bank failures, he pointed out that the largest banks will lead the future in innovative changes. He went on to explore how rapid changes in technology are shifting how banking is done, particularly relative to local branches. Technology has and continues to affect the role of the local bank. He also pointed out that customer loyalty is always a keen concern in banking.

Earmarks, Or The Puzzling Politics of “Pork Barrel” Spending in Congress

In October 2014, Professor Joseph White of Case Western Reserve University gave a lecture on the nature of “Pork Barrel” politics in Congress. According to Professor White, the processes behind the distribution of “pork” are largely misunderstood. The idea that pork-barrel spending belongs to one party or is universal within Congress oversimplifies a complex issue. Rather, argued White, there are mixed motivations both for those seeking help and those supplying it, with less connection to constituent satisfaction than is often assumed.

Washington After the Elections

Center Director Steven Smith gave a talk in early November 2014 on what changes would be expected in Congress after the November elections. He showed the strategies that a Republican Congress, the White House, and the Senate Democrats would use to pass legislation. He outlined the main issues facing Congress in 2015: tax reform, immigration, the debt limit suspension, and the President’s agenda.

The Case For and Against Secular Stagnation

In December 2014, George Washington University Professor of Economics Tara Sinclair discussed the slow recovery from the 2008 financial crisis, the state of the U.S. economy heading into 2015, and the potential that the economy has entered a period of secular stagnation. Utilizing data pulled from the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank, Professor Sinclair showed that in the wake of the 2008 crisis, employment in the U.S. plummeted, while the number of people working “part-time for economic reasons” skyrocketed. Of greater concern, the Great Recession has been both deeper and much longer lasting than previous economic downturns. According to Professor Sinclair, however, slow economic growth may not be a passing fad; it just might be the new normal.

Rising Inequality and Stagnation in the U.S. Economy

Weidenbaum Center Associate Director Steven Fazzari spoke in January 2015 about the relationship between rising inequality and stagnation in the U.S. economy. According to Professor Fazzari, the primary reason that the U.S. economy has struggled to recover from the 2008 economic crisis is an emerging income inequality. Beginning around 1980, wages for the bottom 95% of the income distribution began stagnating, while wages among the top 5% started accelerating. As a result, more people started spending money (and driving the U.S. economy) using lines of credit rather than wages. When credit options dried up after 2008, consumer demand went with it. Professor Fazzari concluded that income inequality, a long time coming, is finally holding back the U.S. economy.

The Student Loan Mess: How It Got Here and Why It’s Not Going Away Anytime Soon

In February 2015, University of Delaware Professor Joel Best discussed the meteoric rise in student debt levels. Student loan debt in the United States currently exceeds $1 trillion and is projected to reach more than $2 trillion by 2020. While the rise in college tuition continues to outpace increases in the cost of living, he pointed out that high school students are still encouraged to go to college, even if it means taking on massive amounts of debt. As a result, more than 44% of current borrowers are not paying their federal student loans. He noted that the U.S. government still incorrectly considers these outstanding payments to be an asset on its balance sheet, assuming erroneously that the funds will be repaid in full. Professor Best argued for a reevaluation in how the government handles such loans as well as measures to slow the steady increases in college tuition.

What Can Be Done About the Poor Condition of the U.S. Infrastructure?

Also in March 2015, Robert Victor, chairman of the American Society of Civil Engineers, spoke on the future of U.S. infrastructure as it nears the end of its useful life. U.S. infrastructure (interstate highways, bridges, railways, subways, and airports) is critical to productivity in the U.S. economy, moving goods faster, reducing costs, improving productivity, and saving people money. Victor noted that other developed countries spend almost four times as much...
of their GDP on infrastructure, calling it a rarely-dis-
cussed issue in the United States. He called for inno-
vative solutions, such as varied pricing on toll roads
during commuting hours, to improve efficiency. He
noted that ultimately voters must hold public leaders
accountable for sustained and increased infrastruc-
ture spending.

Developments in Russia and Ukraine
In April 2015, Saint Louis University Professor
Ellen Carnaghan gave a lecture on the recent
developments between Russia and Ukraine.
According to Professor Carnaghan, Ukraine has
essentially been divided into
two parts in recent years: the
European-supporting western
portion and its Russian-
supporting counterpart in the
eastern part of the country.
Noting that Russian President
Vladimir Putin was willing to
take a stand against European
colonialism, Carnaghan expressed concern over
future potential conflicts between Russia and the
states traditionally included in its sphere of influence.

Payments and Security:
We Can Do Better!
Sydney Hicks, Co-Founder
and Director of DeviceFidelity,
Inc., spoke about technology
that enables mobile phones to
be used as secure devices for
interactive payments. In order
for the economy to grow,
consumers need to feel
confident that conducting
online transactions are proper-
ly safeguarded when using their card payment
system.

Incentive Compensation and
Pay Systems
Judi McLean Parks, Reuben C. and Anne Carpen-
ter Taylor Professor of Organizational Behavior at Olin
Business School at Washington University, discussed
her research on incentives, compensation and pay
systems. She pointed out how framing a compensa-
tion contract affects dysfunctional behavior in organi-
zations: specifically, the fraudulent reporting of perfor-
mance and the misappropriation of assets.

Dodd-Frank, the JOBS Act, et al.:
A Plan? Political Ping-Pong? What?
Joe Soraghan, Principal, Danna McKitrick Attor-
neys, gave an overview of the 2010 Dodd-Frank bill,
showing the market events
(i.e., financial crisis) lead-
ing up to its passage. He
pointed out the benefits and
shortcomings caused by this
legislation. The JOBS Act
was created to reduce some
of the regulation created by
Dodd-Frank, but, instead, it
focuses more on developing smaller and entrepre-
neurial companies.

Three Perspectives on the St. Louis
Economy: A Look Back, a Look
Within, and a Look Forward
Charles Gascon, Federal
Reserve Bank of St. Louis,
took a look at the St. Louis
economy, comparing the
area with that of other parts
of the country. His discus-
sion covered population
stagnation in St. Louis City,
income distribution, educa-
tion, and the pace of recovery of different sectors of
industry.
Public Policy Luncheons—roundtable discussions of current events—continued in 2015. These luncheons, specifically designed for the Center’s major donors, brought in an array of experts to interact with attendees in an open discussion format. These experts included academics, business and community leaders, and former government officials. At each meeting, four or five current topics 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., how important is this issue, what are the underlying causes, what are its current and future ramifications, what is/will be its impact on the public, as well as ways the issue could/should be addressed and improved or resolved if possible. Topics examined in FY 2015 included aspects of the economy, Congress and congressional elections, the Supreme Court, immigration, international affairs (particularly developments in the Middle East, Russia, and Ukraine), terrorism, energy, politics, and health care.

The American Panel Survey (TAPS), the brainchild of Center Director Steven Smith, is entering its fifth year. TAPS is a project involving a monthly survey of a panel of about 2,000 Americans. The panel is a national probability sample drawn from a random selection of residential addresses, stratified using ancillary data on age and ethnic group. TAPS surveys are administered online; selected panelists who do not have a computer or online service are provided a computer and internet access by TAPS. Gfk/Knowledge Networks, a leading online survey research firm, conducts these surveys on the Center’s behalf.

Led by Center Director Steven Smith and TAPS Associate Director Betsy Sinclair, TAPS is used for a variety of social science research projects, including survey experiments and long-term panel studies. Fourteen university faculty have had research modules on TAPS. In addition, seven graduate students have written papers or are planning dissertation projects using TAPS data. So far, 24 book chapters, journal articles, and papers have resulted from TAPS. Many other projects are currently underway and will produce additional papers in the near future.

Research module questions on TAPS have included unilateral power and the presidency, attitudes toward disclosure of Alzheimer disease research results, implications of ideological dissatisfaction for Supreme Court legitimacy, the relationship between personal stability and ideological structure in the mass public, and the origins and limitations of systematic individual level changes in party identification.

In addition, the Center will soon make the third year of data available online for researchers worldwide. Social scientists can view screenshots from each of the surveys from November 2011 through December 2014. The data will be released in three statistical packages (Stata, SPSS, and R) to increase usage and documentation is sorted three ways to aid researchers in locating information. With these public data releases, the impact of the data collected will continue to increase for years to come.
Government and Foundation Grant Application and Administration

The Weidenbaum Center continued to work with faculty in the Department of Political Science on research grant submissions. Staff assisted faculty with budget preparation, proposal preparation and development, and submission to federal agencies.

The following are proposals submitted to the National Science Foundation

- Jeff Gill, “Workshop On Methodological Challenges Across the Social and Behavioral Sciences” (awarded)
- Jon Rogowski and Andrew Reeves, “Attitudes Toward Executive Power: Origins, Policy Implications, and Incentives for Presidential Leadership”
- Betsy Sinclair, “Dynamic Weighting of Panel Data” (awarded)

Small, Medium-Sized Faculty Grants

The Center’s small grants program provides 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.

In the spring of 2015, the Weidenbaum Center began a new endeavor in faculty research funding. Proposals for medium-size, multi-year grants in support of promising, innovative research in the social sciences were solicited from faculty in the Departments of Economics and Political Science. Particularly interesting projects 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.

Small Grants

- Justin Fox
  Public Attitudes About Delegation
- Norman Schofield
  Role of Activists in U.S. Elections
- Margit Tavit
  Perceived Threats of Immigration

Medium Grants

- Daniel Butler
  Laboratories of Democracy
  Daniel Butler and Margit Tavit
  Cooperation and Representation in Post-Conflict Societies
- Jacob Montgomery
  and Jon Rogowski
  Improving the Study of U.S. Congressional Elections with Human Computation Analysis of Political Texts

Werner Plöberger

The Dynamics of Beliefs in the Option Market

Andrew Reeves
Geolocation Database

Publications

Below is a list of books and articles by Weidenbaum Center Staff and fellows resulting from Center-sponsored research for faculty.

- Daniel Butler
- Matthew Gabel
- James Gibson
- Juan Pantano
- Andrew Reeves

Norman Schofield

  Chapter with Anna-Sofie Kurella, “Party Activists in the 2009 German Federal Elections.”
  Chapter with Elena Labzina, “Application of the Variable Choice Logit Model to the British General Election of 2010.”

Betsy Sinclair


Steven Smith

  Chapter, “Congress, the Troubled Institution.”
Labor Workshops

Employment Cyclicality and Firm Quality
Lisa Kahn, Yale School of Management
The Demand for Effective Charter Schools
Christopher Walters, University of California-Berkeley
Intergenerational Mobility in the United States, 1850-1940: The Role of Maternal and Paternal Grandparents
Claudia Olivetti, University of Michigan
Ability Tracking, School and Parental Effort, and Student Achievement: A Structural Model and Estimation
Nirav Mehta, University of Western Ontario
Risk, Insurance and Wages in General Equilibrium
Mark Rosenzweig, Yale University
Responding to Risk: Circumcision, Information, and HIV Prevention
Rebecca Thornton, University of Michigan
How Firms Affect Wages: A Structural Decomposition
Rafael Lopes de Melo, University of Chicago
A Distributional Frame Work for Matched Employer Employee Data
Thibaut Lamadon, University of Chicago
Incentivizing Better Quality of Care: The Role of Medicaid and Competition in the Nursing Home Industry
Martin Hackmann, Penn State
Do Credit Constraints Limit Entrepreneurship? Heterogeneity in the Returns to Microfinance
Cynthia Kinnan, Northwestern University
Debit and the Consumption Response to Household Income Shocks
Scott Baker, Northwestern University
Employment Duration and Match Quality over the Business Cycle
Toshihiko Mukoyama, University of Virginia
Empirical Microeconomics (formerly Development & Public Policy)
University Choice: The Role of Expected Earnings, Non-pecuniary Outcomes, and Financial Constraints
Basit Zafar, Federal Reserve Bank of New York
Explaining the Unexplained: Residual Wage Inequality, Manufacturing Decline, and Low-Skilled Immigration
Eric Gould, Hebrew University
Neighborhood Effects and Intergenerational Mobility in the United States
Raj Chetty, Harvard University
Jean-Marc Robin, University College of London
Ability Matching and Occupational Choice
Jonathan James, Cai Poly State University
Distorted Beliefs and Parental Investment in Children
Josh Kinsler, Rochester University
Health Insurance Exchange Design in an Empirical Equilibrium Labor Market Model
Naoki Aizawa, University of Minnesota
Student Loans, College Choice, and Information on the Returns to Higher Education
Christopher Neilson, NYU/Princeton
On the Identification of Production Functions: How Heterogeneous is Productivity?
Salvador Navarro, University of Western Ontario
Internal Migration in Dual Labor Markets
Joan Llull, Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona
Economic Theory
Uncertainty in Mechanism Design
Luca Rigotti, University of Pittsburgh
On the Efficiency of Stable Matchings in Large Markets
Leeat Yariv, Caltech
Recovering Preferences toward Risk and Time
Shachar Kariv, University of California-Berkeley
Dynamic Bidding in Auctions with Costly Participation
David Mcdam, Duke University
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Ehud Kalai, Northwestern University
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Unbalanced Random Matching Markets: The Stark Effect of Competition
Jacob Leshno, Columbia University
Search, Adverse Selection and Market Clearing
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Pricing with Network Externalities
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Comparative Measures of Naivete and Sophistication for Dynamically Inconsistent Preferences
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Endogenous Matching: Adverse Selection and Moral Hazard On-Demand
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Implementing the Wisdom of the Crowd
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Market Selection and the Information Content of Prices
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Macroeconomics
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Amit Khandelwal, Columbia University
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Surnames and Social Mobility over many Generations
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UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

The Center supported 47 undergraduate and graduate student research assistant positions in fiscal 2015. These one-on-one opportunities for students were funded through the Center’s Faculty Small Grants program, the Murray Weidenbaum Scholars’ program, and other designated funds.

These research assistants worked with faculty on some of their most important research projects in macroeconomics, international relations, and American politics and policymaking.

Small Grants
Faculty instructed and trained students on key research concepts including creating effective and efficient research plans; locating, identifying, and collecting data; properly evaluating and analyzing data; and preparing reports and papers for publication. Additional support was provided for a few graduate students to attend conferences to present research papers.

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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) or Melinda Warren at 314-935-5652 (warren@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.

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