

We're pleased to present the agenda for our conference "Experiments in Surveys: Foundations, Recent Applications and Prospects," scheduled for Friday, Oct. 22.

The event is open to the public, but seating is limited so please RSVP to Gabrielle Stone <gstone@iq.harvard.edu> if you plan to attend.

This conference is sponsored by the Institute for Quantitative Social Science, as part of the Eric M. Mindich Series on Experimental Social Science, and hosted by IQSS's Program on Survey Research.

Date: Friday, Oct. 22, 2010

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Location: CGIS South Building, 1730 Cambridge Street, Room S-020, the Belfer Case Study Room (lower level), Cambridge, MA 02138

Catering: We plan on serving breakfast and lunch during the conference.

Schedule of Events

9:30 – 10 a.m.

Breakfast

10 – 10:15 a.m.

Welcome: Peter V. Marsden, Harvard University

10:15 – 10:45 a.m.

Presentation: Thomas M. Guterbock, University of Virginia

"Survey Experiments: Past, Present, Future"

Professor Guterbock will seek to define the survey experiment, pointing out its virtues and pitfalls as a research tool. He will review some of the many forms that survey experiments have taken, and consider how they might contribute to the future of substantive and methodological research.

10:45 – 11 a.m.

Discussion

11 – 11:30 a.m.

Presentation: James H. Kuklinski, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

"Incorporating Self-Selection into Experimental Designs: Rationale and an Illustration"

Professor Kuklinski will present evidence that the average treatment effect generated by the random assignment experiment can fall short when trying to make causal inferences about an external world where people select into and out of the treatment of interest. By incorporating a self-selection condition in the classic experiment, Professor Kuklinski will show how we can estimate not only the average treatment effect, but also estimate the treatment effect among those who select in and the potential treatment effect among those who select out. Generally, the result is increased external validity without a significant loss of internal validity.

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Discussion

12:00 – 1 p.m.

Lunch

1 – 1:30 p.m.

Presentation: James N. Druckman, Northwestern University

“Bias in Political Communication Experiments”

Nearly all experimenters ignore events that occurred prior to the experiment. This can be problematic since events prior to the study may influence reactions to the treatment – that is, a pre-treatment effect may influence the results. Focusing on political communication, Professor Druckman will identify conditions for pre-treatment effects and present evidence from two studies as a test of these conditions. His results suggest a possible bias in extant experimental results such that they over-report short-lived or unstable effects.

1:30 – 1:45 p.m.

Discussion

1:45 – 2:15 p.m.

Presentation: Jeremy Freese, Northwestern University

“Time-Sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences”

Time-Sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS) is an NSF-funded project to promote survey-based experiments in the social sciences. Professor Freese will provide an overview of TESS, an update on current developments, examples of projects using TESS, discussion of some concerns about the platform and ideas for future development.

2:15 – 3 p.m.

Discussion and conclusion of conference

Conference presenters:

Thomas M. Guterbock is Director of the Center for Survey Research, Professor of Sociology and Research Professor in Public Health Sciences at the University of Virginia. He's authored numerous publications in political sociology, urban sociology, the sociology of community, and research methods. In his role as founding director of CSR, he has been involved in scores of survey projects for state and local government agencies, academic and health researchers with federal or foundation grants, non-profits, and some private-sector clients. He is an active member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and currently serves as president of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations.

James H. Kuklinski is Matthew T. McClure Professor in the Department of Political Science at Urbana-Champaign and the Institute of Government and Public Affairs. His current research interests include the quality of citizen decision-making and the use of experiments in social science research.

James N. Druckman is the Payson S. Wild Professor of Political Science and Faculty Fellow at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University. He also is an Honorary Professor of Political Science at Aarhus University in Denmark. His research focuses on political preference formation and communication. His recent work examines how citizens make political, economic and social decisions in various contexts. He also has explored the relationship between citizens' preferences and public policy, and how political elites make decisions under varying institutional conditions.

Jeremy Freese is Professor and Chair in the Department of Sociology and Faculty Fellow at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University. He is interested in drawing connections across biological, psychological, and social causes of divergence in individual's lives, especially as these intersect with technological and other kinds of social change. Additionally, he has done work on social science methods, including co-authoring a book on the analyses of categorical data. Prior to joining the faculty at Northwestern, he was a professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research at Harvard University.