

## Happening in SRO

You can find this “Happening in SRO” and all similar updates on the SRO Intranet. Look for the Section titled: Did You Know?



### SRO Staff Contributions to the 2014 ISR Summer Institute (SI)

This year, as in many years past, SRO is very pleased to contribute to the ISR Summer Institute. The SI is recruiting staff from SRO to teach or co-teach courses or to contribute specific guest lectures in several courses. Below we highlight the key contributors as reported by the instructors.

For more than 15 years, **Kat Donahue** and **Andrew Hupp** have served as guest instructors for the *Workshop in Sampling Techniques* (SurvMeth 616), working with Steve Heeringa to present a week-long training module on the design and development of the SRC National Sample. Andrew draws on his SRO experience and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) training to discuss the many applications of GIS to National sample development including stratification at each stage of the sample, listing of area segments and special applications such as scheduling travel and work assignments for data collection. Kat shares her extensive experience in the sample listing and field sample management in an overview lecture on techniques for sample listing and a field exercise in which the Workshop students actually apply their newly acquired listing skills to enumerate housing unit addresses on a Census Block located near central campus.

**Heidi Guyer** will co-teach a one-week course with Colter Mitchell of the Survey Research Center and Population Studies Center -- *Biomarker Data Collection in the Social Sciences* (SurvMeth 988.229). This course is a completely new course offered by the SI in response to the growing trend in survey research to include various types of biomarker measurements. The course will cover the rationale and methods of various types of biomarker collection as well as hands-on practice sessions.

**Zeina Mneimneh** will teach a four week course – *Introduction to Survey Methods and their Application in International Settings* (SurvMeth 988.208). This course has been taught in different formats over the past five years by a team of instructors (Beth-Ellen Pennell, Janet Harkness, Lars Lyberg, Peter Mohler, and Zeina Mneimneh). This year, Zeina Mneimneh will teach this class with **Jennifer Kelley** as the course assistant. This is Jennifer's 3<sup>rd</sup> year as course assistant. Zeina will also draw on the expertise of staff from SRC including SRO, who will contribute to the course by giving guest lectures. These staff members include: **Beth-Ellen Pennell, Jody Dougherty, Kat Donahue, Lisa Holland, Stephanie Chardoul, Sunghae Lee, and Ting Yan**. The course is designed to provide an overview of the theory and practice of survey research methods. Guidelines regarding each phase of the survey lifecycle from planning and preparation to implementation, data processing, and analysis will be covered. For each phase of the survey lifecycle, the challenges faced when designing and implementing surveys in international and multicultural settings will be discussed. This includes challenges faced in translation and adaptation of questionnaires, implementing proper sampling techniques, cultural variations in response styles, and quality assurance in multi-national studies. Examples will be drawn from several large-scale international programs.

## **Becoming a Man (BAM) Pilot Study**

Sarah Crane & Stephanie Chardoul

A team of researchers at the University of Chicago Crime Lab is trying to answer the question “What is the most effective (and cost-effective) way to improve the long-term life outcomes of disadvantaged youth?” Budget-constrained policy makers need guidance on how to allocate human capital investments in developing academic and social cognitive skills. The average high school graduation rate in the 50 largest urban schools districts is just 53%. Traditional academic intervention programs don’t seem to be improving outcomes, and there is a growing racial disparity. Also, many programs “give up” on these most at-risk kids by middle and high school.

Last year, SRO worked with the lead principal investigator, Jens Ludwig (with whom we also worked on the Moving to Opportunity study) to prepare and submit a large program grant (“P01”) to conduct an evaluation of intensive tutoring programs targeting adolescent boys in the Chicago Public Schools system. The programs focus not only on academic skills (specifically bringing students up to grade level math competency), but also on “social-cognitive” skills such as self-regulation, social information processing, conflict resolution, and future orientation. While we are waiting for the outcome of that proposal submission, the research team pulled together other sources of funding (private foundations) to conduct a pilot of this same evaluation, which would give us an opportunity to develop data collection systems and protocols ahead of the large project award. SRO’s work scope for the BAM (“Becoming a Man”) Pilot study includes using a list of almost 900 students who have participated in one or both of the intervention programs (males aged 14-17, from 12 different high schools) to contact the respondents and conduct an in-person interview (either at the respondent’s high school or in his home). The session will include a 40-minute CAPI interview, as well as a self-administered math achievement test. If all funding comes through, SRO field interviewers in Chicago will complete up to 570 interviews, from late April through August. Project Manager Sarah Crane and Production Managers Veronica Connors-Burge, Barb Homburg, and Sharon Parker are currently conducting the interviewer training.

Our involvement in this study is exciting, and we’re hoping for good news on funding of the larger project. The BAM program has received lots of national attention – here are a couple articles if you are interested in learning more:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/27/education/intensive-tutoring-and-counseling-found-to-help-struggling-teenagers.html?hpw&rref=education&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/27/education/intensive-tutoring-and-counseling-found-to-help-struggling-teenagers.html?hpw&rref=education&_r=1)

<http://news.uchicago.edu/article/2014/01/27/targeted-tutoring-can-reduce-achievement-gap-cps-students-study-finds>