IPSR named lead agency of the Kansas State Data Center for the US Census Bureau

In early 2019, IPSR was designated the lead agency of the Kansas State Data Center. This means that Xan Wedel, IPSR’s resident Census expert, will work with a network of other Kansas data centers to find out what data users need from the Census and help them use Census resources. Wedel brings years of experience to the role: she’s supported efforts to prepare for the decennial Census, assisted stakeholders in using Census-collected data, and attended Census Bureau conferences. Currently, Wedel is also coordinating information for 81 of 105 Kansas counties on Census tract and block group boundaries—and in some cases, reviewing and redrawing boundaries. In addition, this work includes identifying new Census designated places, such as Centerville (pictured above), which creates statistical entities for unincorporated places. Wedel’s work will help ensure that all Kansans are counted in the 2020 Census. Since Census counts are used to distribute political power and federal funding (to the tune of $6 billion per year, or $2,082 per Kansan), we’re glad she’s on the job.

To learn more about IPSR’s designation as the lead agency of the State Data Center, read “KU institute designated lead agency of Kansas’ State Data Center.” For questions, contact Xan Wedel, xan@ku.edu.
IPSR says goodbye and hello

At the end of May, we face a bittersweet leadership transition here at IPSR—on one hand, we’re happy to bid Steven Maynard-Moody a fond farewell as he steps down from his position as director and continues his role as a professor in the School of Public Affairs & Administration. On the other, we’re excited to welcome our longstanding colleague and friend, Donna Ginther, Dean’s professor of economics and director of the Center for Science, Technology, and Economic Policy (CSTEP) to the role of interim director. We’re confident in her able leadership, and we look forward to seeing Steven around campus, at our research luncheons, and in his ongoing role as mentor to the IPSR Doctoral Fellows.

IPSR’s busy April: Beyond Discourse, Vanishing Histories, Manpower & Morale

IPSR’s full calendar in April 2019 highlighted the broad range of research topics our six interdisciplinary centers consider.

Early in the month, the Center for the Study of Injustice, together with sixteen campus partners, hosted Beyond Discourse: Critical and Empirical Approaches to Human Trafficking. The conference speakers and attendees examined critical research methods on human trafficking and related social problems. The conference offered scholars the opportunity to discuss the challenges and rewards of conducting empirical work on human trafficking, including the ways of working with affected communities, collaborating with intervention organizations, and representing research findings to the public. This two-day event featured a keynote from Dr. Kamala Kempadoo of York University on April 4, which critically considered the ongoing use of the language “human trafficking”—a term perhaps too broadly applied to be meaningful—and a series of panels and speakers throughout the day on April 5.

Later in April, Dr. Hans Harmsen, archaeologist and curator of the Greenland National Museum & Archives, and two graduate students from the University of Greenland visited the University of Kansas to work with the Spencer Museum of Art and the Center for Indigenous Science, Research, and Technology (C-FIRST). Their week culminated with a colloquium on April 19, Vanishing Histories: Greenland, Climate Change & the Threat to Archaeological Heritage, which addressed the challenge facing Greenlandic researchers. Increasing soil temperatures, perennial thawing, coastal and wind erosion, aggressive plant species, and human impacts are increasingly causing damage to archaeological sites once known to be well-preserved. The work of understanding these changes and collecting as much information about Greenland’s past as possible requires new partnerships with local communities and training for the next generation of Greenlandic archaeologists. Thanks to C-FIRST, the Department of Geography & Atmospheric Science, and the Spencer Museum of Art for co-sponsoring this important colloquium.

Manpower & Morale after Tet brought together scholars of the US war in Vietnam for conversations about how the US military defined the morale “crisis” widely reported in the American press from 1968 on. During the symposium, these speakers considered the morale “crisis” during the American conflict in Vietnam and military responses to it, which ranged from the mundane and predictable to the unexpectedly creative. The daylong symposium concluded with an address from Dr. E. Casey...
Wardynski, assistant secretary of the Army for manpower, about the lessons learned from this conflict for the all-volunteer force of today and in the future. This symposium was sponsored by KU’s Center for Military, War, and Society Studies and the US Army Center of Military History. Many of the symposium sessions will be available through C-SPAN 3 in the coming weeks.

**KU’s Student Employee of the Year**

Pictured (left to right): Donna Ginther, the principal investigator on the research project Byrd supports, Abby Byrd, and Genna Hurd, Byrd’s supervisor.

Undergraduate research assistant and student administrative assistant Abby Byrd was awarded KU’s Student Employee of the Year this spring. Byrd has several roles at IPSR: she supports a sponsored research project with data collection and analysis work, she enters and formats data for the upcoming Kansas Statistical Abstract (publication anticipated in September 2019), and she provides administrative support to the IPSR staff. Evidencing her accomplishments, the nomination we drafted totaled over 2,000 words on the work she’s done for IPSR (she worked long hours to keep a project on schedule, she drafted an 8-page research protocol, she digitized thousands of files from a former workgroup). But it’s her relentless commitment to doing the best job she can on any task that we find most impressive. We’re delighted to have Byrd on our team.

**Research Spotlight: Lifestyle Migrants and the Economics of Integration In Caribbean Costa Rica**

Erin Adamson’s Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement award from the National Science Foundation supports her project on “reverse integration” in Costa Rica. Reverse integration happens when immigrants are more wealthy than local residents, especially in relatively impoverished settings, and locals depend on immigrants for jobs, favors, and advancement. In this situation, international migrants create a social system of economic incentives that requires local residents to adapt.

Adamson asks how lifestyle migrants in Costa Rica translate their economic power into cultural power through various positions of business entrepreneurship. She’s also exploring the impact of economic and social resources of lifestyle migrants on Costa Ricans, and considering whether lifestyle migrants help to advance or to further impoverish and marginalize local populations. To answer these questions, Adamson will interview North American and European lifestyle migrants and local Costa
Ricans, and she’ll observe migrant-run businesses and households, community events, and social gatherings along the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica.

We look forward to learning more about Adamson’s findings and the advances she makes in sociology and the social sciences with regard to post-colonialism, integration of migrants in the Global South, aging, and transnational identities.

*If you’re interested in learning more about National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research funding, contact Nancy Myers (ncmyers@ku.edu).*

**Research Opportunity – NSF Growing Convergence Research**

The National Science Foundation identified “convergence research” as one of its 10 Big Ideas in 2016. By convergence research, NSF means “research driven by a specific and compelling problem” and that involves “deep integration across disciplines.” NSF’s Growing Convergence Research program reflects a significant financial commitment from NSF to funding this kind of work (and stands alongside other convergence research programs such as Smart and Connected Communities and Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier).

Growing Convergence Research requires investigators to identify a grand societal problem and seek partners across fields to bring their expertise and perspective to bear on this problem. Looking beyond solutions to those challenges, NSF wants researchers to create new frameworks for understanding, new vocabulary, and new research vistas. Growing Convergence Research also seeks proposals with a broad reach across both academic disciplines and industries, and proposals that incorporate training for future researchers. This program accepts proposals each year in February and May.

*If you’re interested in thinking through or proposing convergence research, contact Nancy Myers (ncmyers@ku.edu).*

**Ask IPSR – What does NSF really want?**

Q: I want to apply for NSF funding, but the program that fits my research doesn’t have much guidance. I know that understanding an agency’s priorities is a good way to write a strong proposal. How can I understand NSF’s goals?

A: One way to understand NSF’s goals and priorities is to read through its strategic plan for fiscal years 2018 through 2022, *Building the Future: Investing in Discovery and Innovation*. NSF looks to fund research that:

- investigates transdisciplinary problems,
- requires collaboration across disciplines and industries,
- seeks understanding of complex systems
- increases use of digital technologies,
- enhances STEM education at all levels, and
- broadens science participation, particularly among underrepresented groups.

The plan further articulates several key areas where NSF anticipates “dramatic advances,” such as Navigating the New Arctic and Harnessing the Data Revolution. In addition, the plan highlights some past NSF accomplishments. These examples show how past NSF investments in basic research and
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Director, Steven Maynard-Moody  future Interim Director, Donna Ginther  Assistant Director, Jena Gunter

in promising scholars led to or enabled e-commerce, GPS, bar codes, Google, CRISPR-Cas9, and 4G wireless communications. As was the case when NSF funded those projects, “NSF’s goal is to fund transformative, curiosity-driven ideas that push the frontiers of innovation and discovery.”

If you’ve got a great idea to propose for NSF, or other, funding, contact Nancy Myers (ncmyers@ku.edu).

Visualization of the Moment – State of Kansas Migration Flows

STATE OF KANSAS MIGRATION FLOWS, 2017

Pictured above: A static photograph of a chord diagram showing Kansas migration flows.

This State of Kansas Migration Flows chord diagram displays where Kansans are going, and where new state immigrants are coming from. The information behind the graph reflects a challenge for Kansas—the state is losing population through negative net migration. It’s useful to see the places people are moving to and the places they’re leaving as we consider responses to this challenge. Thanks to Xan Wedel for this useful tool (and thanks to amCharts for the tool behind the graph).

View the full diagram and data: https://ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/census/migration/KansasFlows2017.shtml.

Do you have data you want to display visually? Contact xan@ku.edu.

Got a tip? A comment? A question? Write us at IPSR@ku.edu.