Central Plains
Federal Statistical Research Data Center
WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT APPLIES TO DISSERTATION RESEARCH

AARON SCHOLL & LISSANDRA ELLYNE

Central Plains RDC @ rdc.unl.edu
Whittier Research Center, 2200 Vine St., Lincoln NE
What is a Federal Statistical RDC?

- A special research facility in partnership with the Census Bureau aiming to
  - improve the Federal Statistical System
  - enhance academic research, infrastructure and recruitment

- An RDC facility offers
  - an onsite Census Administrator to help you conduct research with CB data
  - a secure computing environment in which Restricted-use data is accessed from within the RDC facility
What the RDC means for you

- 1st in the Great Plains
  = more resources and options for dissertation research in quantitative social sciences in the region
  = access to an elite research network, with its own conference and publications, of about 200 active investigators
  improves employment prospects

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Advantages of Restricted-Use Secondary Microdata

- Detailed geographic identifiers
- Full population counts or full samples
- Original variables before they are processed
- Greater variety of variables
- Ability to link data to internal and external datasets
- Data size increases statistical power and accuracy
- Facilitates local and historical trend analysis
- AFFORDABLE – zero net cost for consortium members

*does not apply to NCHS and AHRQ data files which require a fee
Special Opportunities for Graduate Students

- **CES Dissertation Mentorship Program**
  - [http://www.census.gov/ces/researchprograms/mentorship.html](http://www.census.gov/ces/researchprograms/mentorship.html)
  - 1 year mentorship with Census Bureau employee
  - Up to $50k fellowship
  - Also qualifies for strong Master’s candidates
  - 5-page written proposal, C.V., Advisor C.V., Transcripts, & Letter of Recommendation
  - Applications due February 28th
See Available Data Sets at:

https://www.census.gov/about/adrm/fsrdc/about/available_data.html

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Types of Data Sets Available

- **Economic (42)**
  - 10 Economic Censuses
  - Longitudinal Business Database
  - Survey of Pollution Abatement Costs and Expenditures
  - Survey of Business Owners
  - Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (7)
- **Socio-Demographic (12)**
  - Decennial Census
  - National Crime Victimization Survey
  - American Community Survey
  - National Longitudinal Mortality Study
- **Health (couple dozen)**
  - National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
  - National Maternal and Infant Health Survey
  - National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey
  - National Nursing Home Survey
  - Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (5)
Decennial Census Example

- **Public-Use**
  - 1%, 5% sample sizes
  - PUMA
  - Top coding
  - No process data
  - Collapsed Categories
    - Example:
      - Real estate taxes paid: $0-$9150 in 67 categories

- **Restricted-Use**
  - 16% sample size
  - Block/Track/Place
  - Full distribution
  - Details of collection
  - Full Distribution
    - Example:
      - Real estate taxes paid: $0-$22,500 in single dollars
Decennial Census Research Examples


How to Get Started

After formulating a research question, consult rdc.unl.edu in order to:

- Identify the dataset and specific variables you require
- Choose a quantitative method of analysis (e.g. ANOVA, regression, c-b analysis, etc.)
- Determine outputs desired (e.g. descriptive stats, regression coefficients, box plots, etc.)

Contact Veronica, the CPRDC Administrator, to get her input on what you come up with and next steps

- veronica.l.roth@census.gov

The sooner you get started the better because it takes Census up to 90 days to review proposals and up to an additional 90 days to obtain special sworn status
Upcoming Brown Bag Lunches

- “Writing an RDC Proposal” by Veronica Roth

**Date:** Wednesday April 13\(^{th}\), 2016  
**Time:** 12pm -1pm  
**Place:** Whittier Center Room 344

**Date:** Monday May 9\(^{th}\), 2016  
**Time:** 12pm -1pm  
**Place:** TBD

Check [rdc.unl.edu](http://rdc.unl.edu) for updates
... the more the merrier

Please share information about this resource with students and faculty members in your program

rdc.unl.edu

Thank You
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