Committee on Applied Demography 2004 Annual Report
by Shelley Lapkoff, Committee Member
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Committee Membership
The Committee on Applied Demography (CAD) represents the interests of applied demographers to the PAA Board of Directors. The committee has four members, each serving a four-year term. Traditionally, two members have represented the business demography community and two have represented the state and local demography community. Current members (and their terms) include:

- Lou Pol, University of Nebraska-Omaha, 2001-2004
- Shelley Lapkoff, Lapkoff & Gobalet Demographic Research, 2003-2006

In January 2005, Lou Pol’s service will be complete, and a new member will be added to the committee. We will be happy to provide the new PAA President with suggestions regarding potential candidates to join the committee for the 2005-09 term.

Applied Demographers in the PAA
Applied demography is the subfield of demography that focuses on practical applications of demographic methods and materials for decision-making purposes. Its practitioners come from a variety of academic disciplines and professional backgrounds and are employed primarily by government agencies, universities, businesses, and non-profit organizations. Their work often includes data collection, demographic analysis, the interpretation and communication of demographic trends, strategic planning, and the development and evaluation of population estimates and projections.

At least one in seven PAA members are applied demographers or are interested in the field.²

Applied Demography Sessions at the PAA Meetings
For the last several years, we have requested that the annual meetings contain an “Applied Demography track” where
1. sessions do not overlap,
2. there is a session of interest to applied demographers in each time slot,
3. applied demography poster sessions be grouped together.

We want to thank the current President, Sara McLanahan, and the program committee for largely achieving these goals for this year’s meeting. We have regular paper sessions in all Thursday and Friday time slots and all of the applied demography posters are grouped in the last poster session on Friday afternoon.

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¹ Thanks to Stephanie Dudley for her prompt assistance in providing information for this report.
² There are several ways to measure the number of applied demographers in the PAA: fields of interest, subscribers to the Applied Demography newsletter, employment, and subscribers to the Applied Demography email list server. The various measurements were discussed in last year’s report to the Board.
We recommend one improvement for the applied demography track at the PAA’s 2005 annual meeting: if possible, avoid overlapping the applied demography poster session with applied demography paper sessions. Many applied demographers will present posters. For that reason, and because other applied demographers will want to view the posters, we wish to separate the poster session in time to avoid lower attendance in the applied demography regular sessions that overlap with the poster session.

Aside from the above qualification, we believe that the 2004 program is a model for future years in which applied demography sessions do not overlap and there is an applied demography session scheduled for nearly all time slots. We again thank and applaud the program committee members for their attention to our interests.

For the 2005 meetings, CAD is happy to help the program committee with the Applied Demography track. As we have done for many years, we will:

1. Send a carefully formulated list of sessions and potential organizers to the program chair. This can serve as a starting point for an applied demography track. As usual, sessions suggested by other PAA members will be potential candidates for the track.
2. Encourage participation in and submissions for the 2005 meetings through our email list server (this list server is discussed below).
3. Assure that the CAD chair or an applied demographer on the program committee identifies applied demography sessions so that sessions are in separate time slots.

Establishing a clearly identified applied demography track is our recommended low-cost strategy for attracting more applied demographers as paid registrants to PAA meetings. The CAD advertises the track using the email list server. Applied demography sessions are almost always well attended (even on Saturday mornings) and there is a good chance that continuing an applied demography track will strengthen attendance at all future PAA meetings. Also, it is worth noting that because applied demographers often work in the private sector, economic cycles often do not influence their decisions to attend PAA meetings in the same way that they influence academic demographers. When academic demographers do not attend meetings because money is scarce, non-academic demographers very well may be able to attend.

Core Applied Demography Activities at the PAA Meetings

Three major activities are initiated by CAD each year:

1. **Annual business meeting** (usually 4:00-6:00 PM on Wednesday before the meetings start). The meeting is open to all. Typically about 20 to 30 people attend. We discuss sessions to recommend for next year’s PAA meetings, ideas for next year’s breakfast speaker (see #3 below), and ways to make the PAA and CAD more useful to applied demographers.

2. **Wine and cheese reception** (usually 6:30-8:00 PM on Thursday evening). Typically, between 50 and 100 people attend. This reception is accompanied by a panel of applied demographers discussing some aspect of the state of the field,
often careers in applied demography. The reception and panel serve several important purposes for the PAA membership as a whole: they enable graduate students and recent graduates to learn more about non-academic job opportunities and they facilitate informal networking and the exchange of ideas among current and would-be applied demographers.

3. **Annual breakfast meeting** (7:00-8:20 AM, Friday) with keynote speaker. This breakfast is open to everyone but requires the advance purchase of a ticket ($20).

**Email List Server**
CAD maintains a list of applied demographers and communicates items of interest to them. Currently, we have 750 email addresses on the list server. The PAA meetings and submissions to the meetings are advertised and encouraged through the email list server. We have many subscribers who are not PAA members. These individuals represent a potential source of new members. The announcements alert these demographers that the organization exists and encourages them to join and also keeps current PAA members more connected to the organization.

Applied demography job openings are frequently posted via the list server.

**Applied Demography Newsletter**
The *Applied Demography* newsletter currently has 380 subscribers. The newsletter comes out two or three times a year. Subscriptions to the newsletter ($5 per year) generate revenues that go into a reserve fund. As of December 31, 2003, the balance in the fund was $11,729.

**New Issue: Website**
The CAD has been discussing a website to serve applied demographers who belong to the PAA. This would be especially useful for helping us retain institutional memory. At a minimum, the website could contain past CAD reports to the PAA Board of Directors, minutes of the Applied Demography Business Meetings, and past members of CAD (who continue to mentor and are usually very active). As the CAD Board changes membership over time, it would be very helpful for new members to see what past CAD Boards have done.

We will be discussing this issue at our annual meeting on Wednesday, March 30, 2004. At this time, we have no requests regarding the website for the Board of Directors.

**Appreciation**
The CAD appreciates and applauds the Board’s efforts to reach out to the applied demography community by sending PAA representatives to the annual CAD business meeting and breakfast, nominating several applied demographers as candidates for PAA offices, appointing an applied demographer to the editorial board of *Demography*, and, most importantly, working with us to establish an applied demography track at the annual meetings. We believe these efforts will be beneficial to applied demographers and to the PAA as a whole. The CAD will continue to encourage applied demographers to join the PAA and to attend the annual meeting.