Committee on Applied Demography 2006 Annual Report

Submitted by Lisa Blumerman, Chair
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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:

   Lisa Jacobsen, Population Reference Bureau, 2005-2008
   Shelley Lapkoff, Lapkoff & Gobalet Demographic Research, 2003-2006

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, 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.

As of March 1, 2005, about one in five PAA members are applied demographers or are interested in the field.

Applied Demography Sessions at the PAA Meetings
Since 1997, 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, and
  3. Applied demography poster sessions be grouped together.

On Wednesday afternoon before the PAA meetings begin, CAD convenes a business meeting to discuss suggestions for sessions for the following year and any other outstanding issues. Many more than the four CAD members attend; for example, in 2005 about 25 people attended the CAD business meeting. During the business meeting, attendees discuss suggestions for next year’s sessions, topics of interest to applied demographers, and events in the field. Following the business meeting, the CAD Chair then submits the suggestions for sessions for next year’s PAA.

For the 2007 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 2007 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

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1 The CAD appreciates Stephanie Dudley’s assistance throughout the year in assisting the Committee and in preparations for the annual meeting.
track using the email list server. Applied demography sessions are almost always well attended (even on
Saturday mornings) and we believe that continuing an applied demography track will strengthen
attendance at future PAA meetings. Also, it is worth noting that because many applied demographers
work in the private sector, economic cycles have less influence their decisions to attend PAA than is the
case for 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
Four activities are initiated or supported by the CAD each year:

1. **School demography interest group** (2:00-4:00 PM, Wednesday). This year (2005) is the third
   annual meeting of the school demography interest group.

2. **Annual business meeting** (4:30-6:30 PM, Wednesday). The meeting is open to all. Typically
   about 25 - 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 the CAD
   more useful to applied demographers.

3. **Wine and cheese reception** (6:30-8:00 PM on Thursday evening). Typically, between 50 and
   100 people attend. The reception serves several important purposes for the PAA membership as
   a whole: it enables graduate students and recent graduates to learn more about non-academic
   job opportunities and facilitates informal networking and the exchange of ideas among current
   and would-be applied demographers.

4. **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 ($25). This year marks the 30th
   anniversary of the Annual Breakfast Meeting. The guest speaker at this year’s meeting is Dr.
   Paul Voss.

Email List Server
CAD maintains a list of applied demographers and communicates items of interest to them. Currently, we
have more than 600 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 about 300 subscribers and 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. CAD has been discussing whether to make current issues of the newsletter available
electronically; historical issues will be posted to the CAD website (see Website for more information).

Website
For the past year, the CAD has been developing material for a website. This website is designed for
applied demographers, and those interested in applied demography, to explore news and information on
the subfield of demography. The CAD site captures historical and present day information about the
CAD. It includes details of past meeting activities, from the annual business meeting to the breakfast
meeting. Additionally, links to previous editions of the Applied Demography Newsletter, a popular product
of the CAD, are provided; as well as up-to-date information on applied demography events. Finally, the
website includes a reference section that provides more information on applied demography and links to
applied demography courses and websites.
We are working with Stephanie Dudley of the PAA office staff to provide a linked page to the PAA website. A first draft of the CAD web page is currently undergoing Beta Testing and we plan to have it live by this year’s PAA meetings.

**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.