

HARRIS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES
Research Development Grants RFP
Food Assistance Research

The Harris School announces its Research Development Grants program for social science scholars interested in food assistance research.

Grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$40,000 for the 2008-2009 program. Start-up projects and projects by young and less experienced scholars will be offered grants of up to \$20,000. Awards will be made to scholars who propose research including, but not limited to:

Food Assistance Research

- Interactions between food assistance programs and other welfare programs with respect to participation, administration, budget exposure, and the role of food assistance as a personal and fiscal stabilizer
- The effects of the macroeconomic environment on the need for food assistance, level of participation, and food assistance program costs
- The well-being of current and former food assistance recipients

Organizational Structure, Incentives and Performance

Economists have long recognized the importance of organizational structure, but previous work has typically developed theories for commercial for-profit firms. Yet, as the literature in fiscal federalism recognizes, some of the same issues involving centralization vs. decentralization hold for public decision-making as well. Who has what information? Whose preferences are to be reflected in decisions? What incentive mechanisms are in place to respond to information and take preferences into account? Conceptually oriented work that applies the insights of organizational theory, public choice, industrial organization and network theory to the context of food assistance programs and policies is of interest.

Implications of Limited and Biased Survey Information on Programs

Although there are both false positives and false negatives, respondents to survey questions on average underreport participation in food assistance programs by magnitudes of about one-fourth. Program participation rates—whether expressed relative to total population or an estimate of eligible population—would be biased downwards if survey data alone were used to construct them (actual program participation rates use administrative data to obtain a count of program participants). What types of biases emerge in summary statistics and in regression coefficients? How does the form and magnitudes of those biases depend on the extent of Type I and Type II errors, the correlations between program participation and other variables, and whether program participation is treated as a dependent or independent variable in a regression context? What treatments and or adjustment factors might eliminate or reduce various

biases and under what conditions? There is interest in synthesizing and developing econometric analyses and formulae by which to deepen understanding of the biases that result from underreporting. For the scope of work in this area, there is limited expectation of empirical implementation using actual food assistance program data.

Other topics related to welfare reform and macroeconomic interactions with food assistance will be considered.

This program is designed to encourage:

- Experienced researchers in other areas to start projects in the area of food assistance;
- Research on food assistance using innovative approaches and research methods;
- Smaller, start-up projects with the potential to make a significant contribution to food assistance research; and
- Younger and junior scholars to develop research agendas in the area of food assistance.

Applications are due July 1, 2008. Absolutely no applications will be accepted after July 1. For more information, contact the Harris School at (773) 702-3957 or clarkb@uchicago.edu.

The awards will cover a period of performance from approximately October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009. Grant recipients will be expected to present their preliminary work at two workshops to be held in the winter of 2009 and in late summer of 2009 in Chicago and are required to present their research at a conference in Washington, D.C. in the fall of 2009.

Funding for these studies is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service through the Research Innovation and Development Grants in Economics (RIDGE) Program.

Current and Former Recipients of USDA Food Assistance Research Development Grants:

2007-2008

David Alexander and **Marcia Stoll** – Illinois Action for Children
Food Assistance and Child Care Quality

Patricia Dill and **Linda Southward** – Mississippi State University
Child Care Centers in the Mississippi Delta: Does CACFP Participation Influence Food Choices?

Helen Levy – University of Michigan
Food Stamp Use Among the Elderly: Evidence from Panel Data

Parke Wilde – Tufts University
The Economics of the Thrifty Food Plan.

2006-2007

Craig Gunderson and **Brent Kreider** – Iowa State University
Estimating the Impact of Food Insecurity on Health Outcomes in the Presence of Food Insecurity Reporting Errors

Ariel Kalil – University of Chicago
Food Stamps Receipt and Food Insecurity After Welfare Reform: Links to Health and Behavior Among Low-Income Immigrant and Native Children

James Sullivan, University of Notre Dame, and **Bruce Meyer**, University of Chicago
Improving our Information on Who Receives Food Stamps and the Program's Effects on Income and Consumption

Kathleen Ziol-Guest, Harvard University, and **Daphne Hernandez**, University of Michigan
Food Stamp Program and Women, Infants and Children: Effect on Children's Health and Well-being

2005-2006

Mariana Chilton – Drexel University
Wellbeing of Citizen Children of Immigrants in Relation to Food Stamps and WIC, 1998-2005

Neeraj Kaushal – Columbia University
Food Stamps and Obesity Among Immigrants

Daniel Schroeder and **Deanna Schexayder** – University of Texas at Austin
Food Stamps, Unemployment Insurance, and the Safety Net

Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach – University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy Studies
The Introduction of the Food Stamp Program: Impacts on Food Consumption and Family Well-being

2004-2005

Douglas Almond, Columbia University, and **Kenneth Chay**, University of California, Berkeley
Health Effects of the 1960s Food Stamp Program

Steven Garasky and **Susan D. Stewart** – Iowa State University
Father Involvement, Food Participation, and Food Security among Children with Nonresident Fathers

Jeffrey Grogger – University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy Studies
Markov Forecasting Methods for the Food Stamp Caseload

2003-2004

Helen Levy and **Thomas DeLeire** – University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy Studies
Welfare Reform and Nutritional Well-being

Andrew London, Syracuse University, and **Ellen K. Scott**, University of Oregon
Food Security: Transitions and Stability in the Context of Welfare Reform

Mairead Reidy – University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children
The Role of Food Stamp and WIC Take-Up on the Welfare Careers and Self-Sufficiency Pathways of TANF Recipients

2002-2003

Katherine Cason, Clemson University, and **Anastasia Snyder**, Pennsylvania State University
Dietary Intake and Food Security Among Migrant Farm Workers in Pennsylvania

Beth Osborne Daponte and **Melvin Stephens, Jr.** – Carnegie Mellon University
The Relationship Between Food Assistance, the Value of Food Acquired, and Household Food Security

Laura Leete, Willamette University, and **Neil Bania**, Case Western Reserve University

The Interaction Between Food Stamps and Welfare Programs: An Empirical Model of Program Dynamics in the Cleveland Metropolitan Area, 1992-2002

Jennifer Van Hook – Bowling Green State University

Welfare Reform and Long-term Stability in Food Security among Children of Immigrants

2001-2002

Thomas DeLeire, University of Chicago, and **Jayanta Bhattacharya**, Stanford University

The Allocation of Nutrition within Poor American Families

Stephan Goetz, Pennsylvania State University, and **Julie Zimmerman**, University of Kentucky

Determinants of Spatial Variation in Food Stamp Program Participation Dynamics

Ann Nichols-Casebolt – Virginia Commonwealth University

Making Ends Meet: An Examination of TANF and Former TANF Food Pantry Users in Virginia

Mark Rank, Washington University, and **Thomas Hirschl**, Cornell University

Estimating the Life Course Probabilities and Patterns of Food Stamp Use Among American Adults

2000-2001

Diane Gibson – Baruch College, City University of New York

The Influence of Food Stamp Program Participation on Adult Health: Estimates from the NLSY79

Joseph Harkness and **Sandra Newman** – Johns Hopkins University

Interactions of Food Stamps and Housing Assistance

Donald Kenkel – Cornell University

Economic Evaluation of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program in New York State

1999-2000

Michael Brien, University of Virginia, and **Christopher Swann**, SUNY – Stonybrook

Does Participation in Multiple Welfare Programs Improve Birth Outcomes?

Maria Hanratty – University of Minnesota

How Has Welfare Reform Affected Take-Up of Food Stamps and Medicaid?

Christopher Jencks – Harvard University

Monitoring Changes in Food Security among Single Mothers

1998-1999

George Borjas – Harvard University
Immigration and the Food Assistance Program

Howard Chernick – Hunter College, City University of New York
State Budgetary Behavior and the Fiscal Interactions between Food Stamps, TANF-AFDC, Medicaid, and SSI

Bong Joo Lee – University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children
The Patterns of Food Stamp and WIC Participation and Their Effects on Low-Income Families with Young Children

Marianne Page – University of California, Davis
Does the Maximum Wage Affect AFDC and Food Stamp Participation?

Lori Reid – Florida State University
The Consequences of Food Insecurity for Child Well-Being: An Analysis of Children's Health and School Behavior Outcomes

HARRIS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES
Terms of the Research Development Grants
Food Assistance Research

1. Applicants must hold a Ph.D.
2. The funding request cannot exceed \$40,000. Funding may include:
 - Compensation for the PI's time;
 - Research assistance;
 - Travel;
 - Purchase of data, computers, or other research related items.
3. Applicants must include in their budgets a two-day trip to Washington, D.C. to attend the conference at which their results will be presented. The conference will be held in the fall of 2009.
4. Grant recipients will be expected to present their preliminary work at two workshops to be held in the winter of 2009 and late summer of 2009 in Chicago. Applicants should include in their budgets travel expenses for these single day workshops.
5. Funding will be issued through a subcontract from the University of Chicago with the researcher's institution.
6. Researchers are advised to consult with their institution's sponsored research office before submitting a budget. The total budget, including any indirect cost recovery to the institution, cannot exceed the maximum amount of \$40,000. The indirect rate cannot exceed 10%. Researchers must provide a copy of their institution's current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.
7. Grant recipients will be asked to provide brief (one page or less) quarterly reports of their progress. Their final report will consist of a 2-page Executive Summary and the paper they present at the conference revised to respond to comments made at the conference.
8. Research papers will appear in the Harris School Working Paper Series at the discretion of the Harris School.

Application Instructions

Applications must be submitted by July 1, 2008.

Each application should include six (6) copies of the following:

1. A cover sheet with:
 - Title of the proposed research

- Amount requested
- Principal Investigator's name, title, institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone, fax and email address
- Additional authors' name, title, institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone, fax and email address

If more than one researcher is involved with the project, one Principal Investigator must be identified. All correspondence regarding the proposal will be with the Principal Investigator.

2. A one-page abstract, describing the purpose, data and methods.
3. Description of the proposed research *not to exceed 12 double-spaced pages* (excluding references).

The proposal should carefully describe the question to be answered, the hypotheses to be evaluated, the proposed methodology and data sources, and the anticipated results of the research. The results should be explicitly related to policy issues.

4. A proposed budget describing the funding requested from the Harris School and funding available, or applied for, from other sources.

The budget must be itemized to cover the major expense categories after "compensation for PI's time (percentage of salary and fringe charges)." List salary and fringe charges separately. Other categories include:

- Research assistance;
- Travel;
- Purchase of data, computers, or other research related items.

5. The PI's curriculum vitae.
6. For proposals that involve human subjects, the appropriate human subject review documentation may be required.

The Decision Process

Applications will be evaluated independently by a panel of Harris School affiliated faculty and by staff members from USDA ERS. Decision-making criteria will include:

1. The clarity with which the question, methodology and the theory are described, including the background knowledge the researcher demonstrates in the proposal about the topic and the demonstrated ability of the researcher to undertake the research.

2. The extent to which the proposed research addresses an important or relevant research question, and/or the innovation and creativity of the research question or the methodology.
3. The reasonableness of the funding requested.
4. The appropriateness of the data source to the problem being studied.

Application Deadline: July 1, 2008

Applications should be addressed to:

**Harris School of Public Policy Studies
University of Chicago
1155 E. 60th St.
Chicago, IL 60637
Attn: USDA Food Assistance and Nutrition Programs: RIDGE**