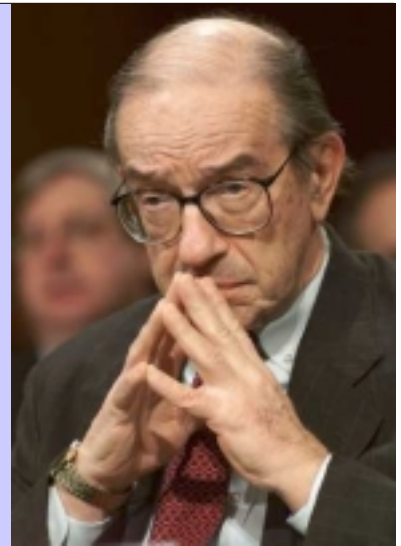


Alan Greenspan

to speak at the

AUBER/NABE

Spring Economic
Policy Conference



In the swirl of affairs set off by the November Presidential elections, one can hardly forget that a new incoming administration and the 107th Congress will face numerous difficult tasks. The thin margin of differences in Congress between Republicans and Democrats creates an uncertain environment; though, for sure, these are interesting times. Yet, it goes without saying, Washington power brokers will be keen to sustain the longest-on-record expansion. To get a better understanding of the current environment you will want to attend the 2001 Washington Economic Policy Conference.

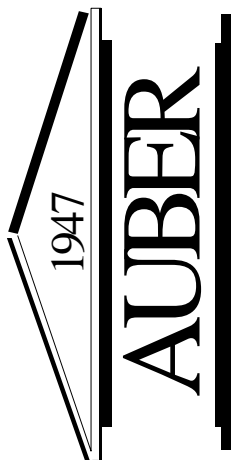
The National Association for Business Economics (NABE) and AUBER will host the conference. The NABE office, located in Washington, D.C., will handle all conference registration. AUBER members will receive a registration brochure by mail, if you have not already. The conference will begin Monday, March 26th at 8:30 a.m. and will continue through 4:15 p.m. on Tuesday, March 27th. The agenda in short is:

- Sunday, March 25th: AUBER Executive Committee Meeting with AUBER reception following
- Monday, March 26th: Microeconomic Policies and Business Implications Evening reception at the Embassy of Canada
- Tuesday, March 27th: Microeconomic Policies and Economic Implications

Conference location is the Capitol Hilton at 16th and K Streets, Washington, D.C. If you so desire, you may use E-mail registration at nabe@nabe.com or register through NABE by phone at 202-463-6223. For the most current information visit <http://www.nabe.com>.

Though things in Washington may remain in flux for some time after the election, you can be assured that conference key issues and distinguished participants will offer insights for the new administration. For one, Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Chairman, is one of the confirmed conference presenters. Please feel free to use your AUBER membership to invite university administrators and colleagues. The breadth of the program, quality of speakers, and the current winds of change should be reason for a heavy turnout from AUBERites.

R. Keith Schwer, UNLV, and Dee Jones, ULM



NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

The AUBER 2000 Fall Conference in Chicago was quite successful. Members learned about new research and service programs that have been successfully implemented in our research centers. The opportunities for networking and learning about best practices allowed us to come away with optimism about the value-added through participation in our organization. My special thanks to Terry Creeth (Indiana University), for her leadership in the local arrangements. Please feel free to contact Ashvin Vibhakar (University of Arkansas at Little Rock), Fall Conference program chair with your ideas for program topics, sessions and speakers.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will learn about the strategic alliance AUBER has with the National Association for Business Economics (NABE). This will culminate in the 2001 Washington Economic Policy Conference, *Policy Challenges Facing the New Administration and Congress*, March 25-27 in Washington D.C. My thanks to Tim Hogan (Arizona State University), R. Keith Schwer (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), Marshall Vest (University of Arizona), John Knapp (University of Virginia), and Ashvin P. Vibhakar (University of Arkansas at Little Rock) for their leadership in developing this alliance and program with NABE. At the conference the Executive Committee will have its Spring meeting on Sunday, along with a reception for AUBER members. Information about NABE can be found at www.nabe.org.

I want to encourage AUBER members to add other members to your mailing lists. Our Bureau has obtained numerous research and conference ideas from the publications and announcements received from other AUBER members. This reciprocal complimentary arrangement is one of those membership benefits that is underutilized by our members. We are also exploring the reactivation of the AUBER Listserv for use in communicating directly with other AUBER members.

One of our new initiatives is the distribution of our Executive Committee minutes immediately following the board meetings. This allows the committee to review and clarify any action items as well as creating action items for immediate response. You will find these minutes posted on the AUBER website www.auber.org in the very near future.

In the next month you will receive a request for proposals to operate the office of Secretary-Treasurer and the AUBER website. The University of Louisiana at Monroe has notified the Executive Committee of their interest in completing their term as Secretary-Treasurer effective at the 2001 Annual Meeting and we have honored their request. The solicitation will be open to all AUBER members and represents an opportunity for your institution to house the office of a national association. We anticipate making a decision about the new location of the Secretary-Treasurer's Office and AUBER web at the March 25, 2001 Executive Committee meeting.

I want to thank the AUBER membership for electing me as your president during this year. I recall attending my first AUBER Conference in 1985 at Salt Lake City, Utah. At that meeting I was warmly welcomed into the AUBER family. Since that time the knowledge and networking with AUBER members has permitted our Bureau to initiate new programs and enhance existing programs in ways I would not have imagined in 1985. I hope that my tenure this year will permit me the opportunity to repay this organization and contribute to the addition of value-added to AUBER members.



TOM S. WITT
2000-2001 AUBER PRESIDENT

Tom S. Witt

West Virginia University

THE EDITOR'S EDGE



CHICAGO...

FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IN AUBER SESSIONS
AT UPCOMING REGIONAL MEETINGS
(FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS
WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS)

WESTERN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION (WEA)

AUBER has been formally designated as a Participating Organization by the WEA. With this designation, AUBER has the ability to organize additional AUBER-sponsored activities for the 2001 WEA conference to be held July 4 - 8, 2001 in San Francisco. Anyone interested in organizing an AUBER-sponsored session around a particular subject area or with ideas for other types of events, please contact Tim Hogan (by email at tim.hogan@asu.edu or by phone at 480-965-3961) as soon as possible so that we can begin to get things organized prior to the WEA deadline early in 2001. Tim would also like to hear from anyone interested in presenting a paper even if you are not interested in organizing an entire session.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION (SRSA)

As a first step toward establishing closer ties with the SRSA, AUBER will be sponsoring one or more sessions at the 2001 SRSA conference to be held at the Driskill Hotel in Austin, TX, April 5-7. Anyone interested in presenting a paper based upon a research project/study done by your center, please send Tim the title of the paper, the author(s), and a brief abstract of the paper as soon as possible. (The published deadline for submissions is 12-15-00.)

Timothy D. Hogan
Arizona State University

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK RECEIVES \$13.6 MILLION GRANT

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock has received a grant of \$13.6 million from the Donald W. Raynold Foundation to construct a Center for Business and Economic Development. In addition, the Institute for Economic Advancement of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock was awarded a grant of \$1.8 million to enhance the building, providing IEA in excess of 25,000 square feet of new facility with state-of-the-art technology. The new IEA center will have a decision support system laboratory, a GIS Lab, a distance learning facility, and a multimedia conferencing facility. The library of IEA will be expanded threefold to over 5,000 square feet of space. IEA is looking forward to occupying the new facility in July of 2002.

Well, as happens almost every year, this year's meeting in Chicago seemed like the best, the most informative, and the most fun ever. The opening session, which could have been just a getting-to-know-you session, went far beyond. After the first hour we hadn't gotten around to everyone, but the exchange of ideas that came out of the attendees' descriptions led to a lively and invaluable question and answer session on real world problems faced in AUBER units. It was really wonderful, with as much, or more, "content" as the more structured sessions. As the morning ended, you could feel the energy generated by the stories and tips shared. Other highlights were a visit from the Web mistress of the University of Chicago Press Q & A page and a new way to look at marketing by Northwestern professor Martin Block the head of the Department of Integrated Marketing Communications. In another great session from the staff of the University of Florida, Eve Irwin and Carol Griffin gave some practical tips on problem solving for publications. Credit for the quality of the program goes to Lynn Reinke who worked extraordinarily hard (I know because she kept sending emails about the trouble she was having getting the Chicago business press to even return her calls!) and to the editor's group in attendance. The generosity and enthusiasm with which the editors share their expertise is the key reason why editors who attend AUBER meetings find them both valuable and inspiring.

Like most of you, I am sure, I always appreciate knowing that I have colleagues in the AUBER editors around the country. I don't actually call for help very often, but I feel better knowing that I can draw upon the experience and expertise of my fellow editors if I need to. This was brought home to me recently when my Illinois colleague Susan Hartter left the Bureau to take a job across campus. It was a great move for her, and we are all happy for her. However, our boss was told that she could not be replaced until we had a new dean in place (next summer, we hope). In the meantime, her duties have fallen into my lap. Suddenly, I was responsible for getting the *2000 Illinois Statistical Abstract* finished and off to the printer. Since the only contact I have had with our abstract was as an extra pair of eyes for checking blue lines, I was pretty apprehensive. By the time you read this, the abstract should be printed and being mailed out to purchasers, but know that I felt all of you standing behind me during my trial by abstract. I have attended sessions you have offered on statistical abstracts over the last few years, and I knew I had friends who could help me out with good advice if I panicked. So thank you all for your great help and support—even though you had no idea you were giving it!

Janet Fitch,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



QUICK, CHEAP STREAMING VIDEO ON THE WEB

Ean video enhance your web site? Movies on the computer screen help to capture the attention of an audience when it adds content that would otherwise be omitted.

For sending files to remote, users with various connection speeds, HTTP streaming is another approach to offering RealAudio and RealVideo files on the Web without costly server-side streaming software (and dedicated hardware resources). This method relies on HyperText Transfer Protocol, which is used by Web servers to transfer media files. Additional production efforts are unnecessary because the files prepared for HTTP servers match those used with a streaming media server.

There are differences between HTTP and dedicated media servers with additional software (Real Networks). First, the hypertext transfer protocol will not detect the user's modem speed. As an alternative, files prepared for each connection speed must be accessible on the site. Second, complete files must be stored on a Web server before accessed, so HTTP will not permit live streaming audio or video presentations. Third, it does not make use of server resources well, and cannot be expected to manage a high volume of traffic. If you only need to allow a small number of user-accesses at a given moment then this is an ideal way to add streaming audio and video features to your Web site.

The only requirement for HTTP streaming is that the server must recognize the .ra, .ram, .rm and .rpm mime types. Here are instructions for referencing RealAudio or RealVideo files for use on the Web:

1. Copy encoded files (files with the .ra, .ram, .rm or .rpm extension) to a World Wide Web server.
2. Use a text editor such as Notepad to create a metafile containing a URL to your file. For example, the contents of your metafile should be in the following form: `http://hostname/path` where hostname is the name of your World Wide Web server. For example: `haas.uwf.edu`
3. Save your metafile as a text using a .ram file extension.
4. In your HTML document, reference the metafile in a hyperlink. For example: ``
``. You can use relative or complete paths. If you use complete paths, you must include both the hostname and the complete path (i.e., ``).
5. When a user clicks on the link, the streaming file(s) begin to download. The RealPlayer begins playing after a few seconds; it does not need to wait for the entire file to be downloaded.

There is a short video of a UWF Jazz Band concert on the Haas Center's HTTP web server so that you may compare a streaming mpg download (`http://haas.uwf.edu/rmtest/playme.htm`) to an ordinary mpg download (`http://haas.uwf.edu/rmtest/one.mpg`). High-speed web surfers may not notice a difference. Both methods offer different advantages. This compares two ways of transferring exactly the same mpg file. Neither option requires dedicated hardware resources or special software.

With HTTP streaming and video compression tools, web developers have the ability to create and broadcast on-demand real-time audio and video. This brief article reviews the pros and cons of only one cost-free method of placing existing digital video on your web site. Visit this web site:

<http://www.streamingmedia.com/>

for additional information on other products and services available.

*Nicole Gislason,
University of West Florida*

The **AUBER NEWSLETTER** is a quarterly publication of the **ASSOCIATION FOR UNIVERSITY BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH.**

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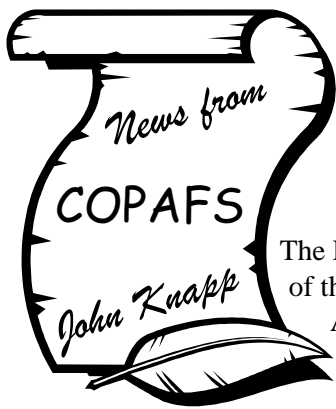
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MEASURING FOOD INSECURITY AND HUNGER IN U.S. HOUSEHOLDS

The Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is working on a new social indicator—“hunger and food insecurity.”

Congress passed the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990. This act led to the U.S. Food Security Measurement Project in 1992—a collaborative effort among federal agencies, academic researchers, and private organizations to develop standard measures of food insecurity and hunger. Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways. Hunger is defined as the uneasy or painful sensation caused by a lack of food, or the recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food. According to Mark Nord of ERS there is a behavioral continuum associated with the severity of these conditions. Initial responses include worry over food, and stretching and juggling resources. As insecurity worsens, the quality and variety of diet is reduced, followed by reduced intake among adults, and finally reduced intake among children. It is these behavioral responses that the surveys measure. Data from the CPS Food Security Supplement indicate that about 10 percent of U.S. households are food insecure. Only about 3 percent are food insecure with hunger, but the press has sometimes reported the 10 percent insecurity as a measure of “hunger.” The time series is still short, but as one might expect given the strong economy, trends show a decline in food insecurity and hunger in recent years. You can download the ERS study, *Household Food Security in the United States, 1999* at:

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/epubs/pdf/fanrr8/>

PRODUCTIVITY IN THE SERVICES SECTOR

Jack Triplett, a senior fellow at Brookings and former BEA executive, spoke about his work on productivity in the services sector with Barry Bosworth. He commented that much of their work has been overtaken by events. For years everyone was working to explain the post-1973 slowdown in services sector productivity—as measured by output per hour. However, now that BEA has revised the national accounts (in late 1999), they have “found a lot of GDP,” and there is now a productivity speed up after 1995. As he described it, they never did figure out the post-1973 slowdown, and

they have not yet had time to explain the post-1995 acceleration. It is clear from this experience, however, that many statistical issues are involved. For example, in the old measures, many food expenditures—such as lunches reimbursed by employers—were not being recorded in traditional measures of food consumption. These expenditures, or outputs, were being recorded elsewhere, but the revised measures allocate them to the restaurant meals category—thus boosting services sector output. Triplett described additional obstacles to the measurement of services sector productivity. For example, much attention has been paid to the contribution of computers to productivity, and 1992 data confirm that computer use has been disproportionately high in the services sector. However, much of the output from industries that are the heaviest users of computers relate to things like business services that do not affect aggregate productivity. It is very difficult, for example, to measure the output of something like consulting services. Or, as Triplett quipped, “Economists don’t know how to measure their own activity.” To address such complications, Brookings has been bringing experts in for workshops on the measurement of output in areas including business services, retail trade, e-commerce, insurance, banking and medical care. Triplett described e-commerce as an example where “hype” seems to have run away with the numbers. At a Brookings workshop, they determined that the industry’s own numbers—indicating astronomical growth—included a lot of double counting. Apparently unaware of the double counting concept, industry analysts were counting things such as the re-selling of beanie babies on eBay, which adds nothing to (GDP relevant) output. Healthcare is another area of interest, as there has been much concern over price inflation, but great difficulty in measuring output. Triplett noted that healthcare output measures cannot be as simple as “days in a hospital,” and that one must look instead at the cost of treating a condition, such as a heart attack (regardless of how it is treated), relative to the probability of surviving the heart attack. Triplett concluded with the observation that we are making many public policy decisions based productivity data that are clearly problematic, and maybe just plain wrong, and he argued that more research is needed to establish improved measures. For more about the work of Bosworth and Triplett see the Brookings site at:

<http://www.brook.edu/views/papers/bosworth/20001020.htm>

UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Chip Alexander, Ken Bryson and Mary Ellen Davis, Bureau of the Census, reported on recent developments at the September meeting of COPAFS. Mary Ellen Davis

started with an operational update, noting that the ACS is in its second year of collecting data for the 31 comparison sites. She also described the Census 2000 supplementary survey in 1,200 counties, which will become part of a Census Long Form Transitional Database. The objective is to get users accustomed to three-year average data, and provide the census comparisons needed to guide the transition from long form to ACS data. Davis then described several ACS operational tests. An Internet test is investigating the extent to which Internet response options could make ACS response easier, and reduce follow up burden. A Puerto Rico test is testing the feasibility of mail out/mail back and other procedures in Puerto Rico, and a remote Alaska test is looking at ways to reduce costs in these high cost areas. Davis concluded by noting that 109 ACS tables are now available on American FactFinder, and that more are on the way. However, ACS PUMS data are on hold pending decisions on confidentiality issues. Ken Bryson discussed some ACS data for Bronx, NY. Specifically, he presented ACS estimates, and compared them with 1990 census data, and where available, recent Census Bureau estimates, such as from the SAIPE program. Although inconclusive these comparisons provide a preview of the comparisons that can be made against 2000 census data in the comparison sites.

Following up on discussion over Ken Bryson's presentation, Chip Alexander noted that ACS estimates will be presented (on the Internet and other census products) with the relevant confidence intervals. Alexander then reviewed some upcoming issues and updates. For example, he noted that congressional criticism of the 2000 long form is driving yet another reassessment of the need for these items—this time on the ACS. This will be an interagency process for determining and defending content, and the level of geography for which it is required. Alexander also described the ACS coverage program, featuring the Community Address Updating System—an automated listing and mapping instrument, which the Census Bureau hopes will find growth where MAF and TIGER are not providing complete coverage. Program Integrated Estimates is another area of activity, as the integration of ACS and intercensal estimates becomes a more immediate concern. Differences in residence rules are a major issue in this integration, and Alexander noted that they hope to learn more about these differences in the comparison sites where seasonal differences would be expected. ACS research tasks include the interpretation of seasonal patterns, and exploring the possible contribution of the ACS to the Census Bureau's intercensal estimates program. Alexander concluded by describing a problem (or "learning opportunity") brought to their attention by an academician in Bronx, NY. It seems that the adjustment of small area ACS estimates to race/Hispanic control totals had some unanticipated effects—such as decreases in

numbers that should have increased. It remains to be determined whether the problem is with the ACS or the control totals, but this is a good example of the types of challenges faced in making the transition from the long form to ACS data. A CD-ROM containing data and examples from the 1996-1998 ACS survey sites may be obtained by calling 1-888-456-7215, contacting the Census Bureau at <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>, or by contacting the ACS staff at acs@census.gov.

PROPOSED NEW METROPOLITAN AREA STANDARDS

Jim Fitzsimmons, Bureau of the Census, spoke on the proposed new metropolitan area standards at the fall meeting of COPAFS. Jim is familiar to AUBER members who heard him at our spring meeting. A December 1998 notice described four approaches for new metropolitan area standards; the October 20, 1999 notice described recommended standards; and, the August 22, 2000 notice described a revised set of recommended standards. The October 20 recommendations are now referred to as "initial," with the August 22 recommendations (which were not on the original schedule) described as "final" recommended standards. Fitzsimmons described the final recommended standards as simpler and easier to implement than the current standards, and noted that they are internally consistent, and account for a larger portion of U.S. area and population than the current definitions. Many features of the August 22 recommendations are the same as the October 20 recommendations—including the use of county building blocks, ties based on commuting, and the combining and merging of areas. Both describe what they call Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs). However, the August 22 recommendations restore the term "metropolitan," and establish fewer levels — distinguishing only between metropolitan and micropolitan areas, and eliminating the megapolitan, macropolitan, and mesopolitan terms and distinctions. Other differences are the identification of metropolitan divisions, and the use of employment interchange rates as a basis for combining CBSAs.

The goal of the Metropolitan Area Standards Review Committee is to publish final standards by December 2000. Want more information? Go to

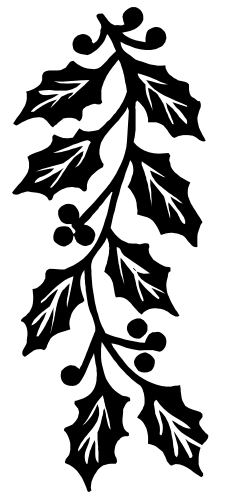
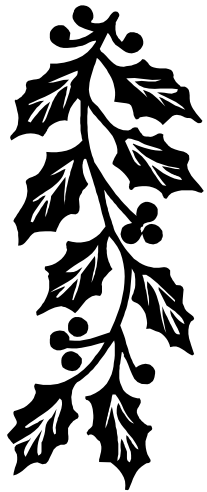
<http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/masrp.html>

2000 CENSUS PRODUCTS—PLANNED RELEASE DATES

The planned release dates for 2000 Census products are on the web at

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/c2kproducts.html>

*John Knapp,
University of Virginia*



The AUBER Business Office would like
to wish each and every one of you
a safe, peaceful, and wonderful
Holiday Season!



Center for Business & Economic Research
University of Louisiana at Monroe
700 University Avenue
Monroe, LA 71209-8046



2001 AUBER/NABE SPRING ECONOMIC POLICY CONFERENCE

MARCH 25 - 27, 2001
CAPITOL HILTON
WASHINGTON, D.C.

This is the first joint meeting of AUBER and the National Association for Business Economics (NABE). It will be held at the Capitol Hilton in Washington, D.C., March 25 - 27, 2001. Room rates are \$185/night for singles and \$205/night for doubles. Registration fee is \$245/per person. Current conference plans are:

Sunday, March 25: AUBER X-Com Meeting followed by a reception for AUBER members;

Monday, March 26: Morning sessions on statistics, afternoon NABE roundtables (AUBER members are invited), and a reception;

Tuesday, March 27: A full day of presentations including congressional speakers, new administration speakers, and policy analysts (breakfast and lunch included).

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!