



Message from Daniel G. Neely, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee AAA GNP Section President

GNP Section Members:

I hope this message finds everyone well. I wanted to take a moment to recap a most interesting year and discuss a few items on the horizon. First, I want to thank everyone for their participation in the GNP Section. Whether it is as a discussant, reviewer, presenter, moderator, committee member, or volunteering in some other capacity, GNP Section members seem to always rise to the occasion.

It was great to see many of you in Houston at our section midyear meeting. Thank you to all of our Friday speakers – Paul A. Pavlou, Susan Warren, Dean Mead, Edward M. Emmett, Bill Jackson, Beth Colle, and Laurie Gutierrez. The Friday speakers shared their knowledge and experience on topics ranging from health care, budgeting, accounting standards and the state of the public sector. I want to express my gratitude to Saleha Khumawala for her instrumental role in securing our Friday speakers. We also had two panel sessions at this year's meeting. The first panel addressed the future of GNP research and considered where the research stands and where we might be headed. The panelists included Erica Harris, Fred Yebba, Terry Patton, Linda Parsons, Dean Mead, and Dana Forgione. All the panelists did a fantastic job of providing fruitful ideas for future research. Building off this session, the *Journal of Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting* (JOGNA) will have a special issue on the future of GNP research. A complete description of the call for papers is provided later in the newsletter. The second panel explored the role and use of service and experiential learning in our teaching. Saleha Khumawala and Rebecca Bloch did a great job of discussing different ways we may further engage our students with service and experiential learning opportunities. We capped the Friday program with a nice dinner at Carrabba's -The Original on Kirby. After a full day Friday, we had a packed Saturday session with a research roundtable forum that includes seven research papers, followed by concurrent research sessions which include 18 research papers. Thank you to all the discussants, presenters, moderators, and audience members who collectively made the research sessions interesting and thought provoking. We concluded with lunch for all and a meeting for our Executive Committee. Finally, I want to acknowledge Nancy Feng who did a great job as the midyear meeting coordinator this year. Thank you Nancy!

Looking forward, we are now beginning the process of selecting the next editor of our section journal JOGNA. The AAA will be sending out a ballot to rank nominees for the Editor Nominating Committee. The Editor Nominating Committee will select the Editor-Elect for approval by the Executive Committee at the AAA Annual Meeting. The Editor-Elect that is selected by the Executive Committee will be announced at the business meeting. He or she will work with the Editor during the final year of the current Editor's term of service before assuming the duties of Editor.

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As we conclude the academic year, I am sure that many of you have experienced the challenges and perhaps unexpected benefits of teaching courses online. I for one could never have anticipated in January the need to convert my course to an all online format starting in March. However, I have been very impressed with my colleagues who have risen to the challenge to make the most of a difficult situation. I hope to see everyone in Atlanta this summer at the annual meeting. Brian McAllister is doing a great job as the annual meeting coordinator. Currently, we are still planning for the traditional in person format for the annual meeting. Stay tuned to communication from the AAA on any changes to the meeting schedule and/or format due to the impact of the coronavirus. I wish everyone the best as we complete the spring semester and move into the summer.

Dan Neely
neely@uwm.edu



2020 Annual Meeting News

The 2020 American Accounting Association (AAA) Annual Meeting is scheduled for August 7-12, 2020 in Atlanta, GA. (**TBD**)

Please visit AAA's Website at <https://aaahq.org> for important information about the status of this year's annual meeting.

GNP Section Events at the Annual Meeting:

- ❖ Preconference Workshop: Sunday Aug. 9 at 1-4 p.m. (**TBD**)
- ❖ PhD & New Faculty Mentoring Session & Networking Lunch: Date/time (**TBD**)
- ❖ Luncheon/Business Meeting: Date/time (**TBD**)
- ❖ Concurrent Sessions: Dates/times (**TBD**)
- ❖ Dialogue Session: Date/time (**TBD**)

Important Notice: At the time of the GNP newsletter release, the status (and program) for the annual meeting has not been released. Please visit AAA's website for information & updates. <https://aaahq.org>

GNP Sponsored Preconference Workshop

By: Brian McAllister, Annual Meeting Program Chair

GNP Sponsored Preconference Workshop on Sunday, August 9, 2020 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm (**TBD**)

Many universities value intellectual contributions that impact teaching and practice. Join us for a workshop session by Patrick Kelly and Brian McAllister that is designed to help those who are interested in publishing case-based and/or practice-related research. Focus will be on idea generation and the approach of either starting projects from the ground floor or as an extension from a traditional empirical research paper. The process involved with writing both a case-based and practice-related research paper will also be presented. The session will be split up into two parts, one concentrated on developing case-based research and the other on practice-related research.

Annual Doctoral Mentoring

By: Erica Harris, Doctoral Program Liaison

The doctoral committee of the GNP section would like to invite you to participate in our research mentoring program. If you are a PhD student or new faculty and would like to participate or if you are a senior faculty willing to provide mentoring please contact Erica Harris at erharris@fiu.edu for more details.

2020 Midyear Meeting Recap

By: Nancy Chun Feng, Midyear Program Chair

On Friday (March 6), the GNP midyear conference started with a series of speaker/panel sessions. The speakers include Paul A. Pavlou (University of Houston), Susan Warren (KPMG), Dean Mead (GASB), Edward M. Emmett (Former Harris County Judge), William (Bill) Jackson (Harris County Budget Officer), Laurie Gutierrez (Blazek & Vetterling), Beth Colle (EY), and Laurie Gutierrez (Blazek & Vetterling) and their speeches cover a variety of emerging nonprofit and governmental topics. A panel discussion, with elite researchers/practitioners including Erica Harris, Linda M. Parsons, Alfred Yebba, Dean Mead, Terry Patton, and Dana Forgione, was also held by Vaughan Radcliffe. Toward the end of Friday, Saleha Khumawala and Rebecca Bloch shared their teaching experience on Experiential and Service Learning.

On Saturday (March 7), the conference started with a breakfast and research round table session with 7 paper presentations, followed by six concurrent sessions with additional 18 research paper presentations related to the GNP research. Main topics covered by these research papers include nonprofit performance, nonprofit and governmental auditing, accounting choices in nonprofits and government, regulation, and governance, health, and education. Many thanks to all of the authors, reviewers, presenters, discussants, and moderators, especially for those who have taken multiple roles. The program would not be successful without your dedicated support!

The best paper award was announced during the offsite dinner at Carrabba's-The Original on Kirby

on Friday evening. The award was given to the paper entitled "*Mission Metrics: Reexamining the Relation between Performance, Contributions, and Executive Compensation*," authored by Erica Harris, Florida International University, Daniel Gordon Neely, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Linda M. Parsons, The University of Alabama. The selection committee consists of Brian McAllister, Randy Elder, and Nancy Chun Feng. The plaques were presented to the authors on Saturday (see the photo).



In this study, the authors find that nonprofits use an array of performance metrics (mission metrics) consistent with the diversity of missions served by the sector. There seems to be almost no correlation between mission metrics and the program ratio. They find some evidence that donors put more weight on this performance information relative to the program ratio, and mission metrics are associated with executive compensation.

We gratefully acknowledge KPMG Foundation for its generous support in sponsoring the 2020 GNP Midyear Meeting.

Report on the Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council Meetings

By: *Terry Patton*

The Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council (GASAC) held its first meeting of the year on March 23 and 24, 2020. The meeting originally had been scheduled to be in Norwalk, Connecticut at the GASB offices but was held via teleconference due to the coronavirus. An important part of the meeting was the GASAC's annual review and ranking of various potential Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) projects. GASAC input is important for the GASB as it considers adding projects to its technical agenda. The 16 highest prioritized topics identified by GASAC were:

- Electronic financial reporting
- Capital assets
- Going concern disclosures—GASB Statement No. 56
- Investment fees
- Interim financial reporting
- Reporting unit presentations
- Fund balance—GASB Statement No. 54
- In-kind contributions, contributed services, and nonmonetary interlocal agreements

- Deferrals—GASB Statement Nos. 63 and 65
- Exchange and exchange-like financial guarantees
- Statistical section—GASB Statement No. 44
- Popular reporting
- Financial reporting entity—GASB Statement Nos. 14, 39, 61, 80, and 90
- Emissions trading (carbon credits)
- Postemployment benefit plans—reporting investments in master trusts
- Certain interfund transactions—Statement Nos. 34 and 38

The GASB also sought input from GASAC members regarding several projects currently on the GASB's technical agenda. These included the financial reporting model; revenue and expense recognition; public-private partnerships; subscription-based IT arrangements; and the prior period adjustments, accounting changes, and error corrections projects.

The next GASAC meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2020.

Report on the AAA Executive Council Meetings

By: *Linda Parsons*, GNP Section Representative to the AAA Executive Council

November 2019 Meeting

Executive Director Tracey Sutherland gave an overview of several areas:

- Membership: Overall, there has been a 3.8% decrease in membership since the dues increase that Council approved at the Spring 2019 meeting.
- Segment Meetings: Attendance continues to be strong for Section meetings. The Northeast, Southeast, and Western Regions are following the Impact Meeting model, while the Midwest, Ohio and Mid-Atlantic Regions will follow the

traditional model. The Northeast Meeting had almost 200 attendees, which is higher than the previous high of 172 for attendance. The Impact meetings will be held at conference centers and have panels and sessions focusing on research and practice. This will allow for a different financial model and pricing. There is also a "triple" Section meeting for 2020 as the Accounting Information Systems (AIS) and Strategic and Emerging Technologies (SET) Sections who have traditionally partnered for meetings will also be joined by the International Accounting Section (IAS).

- Publications: Chief Innovation Officer Julie Smith David reported that the Publications department is fully staffed at this time. The migration to the new submission platform is underway which will allow for enhanced capabilities in the submission and production phases. The third phase of the migration is scheduled for December 3, 2019.
- Other Projects – Tracey announced that COSO was seeking input on useful research and resources. Invited for conversation were Board members and section Leaders from the AIS, Auditing, SET, and Forensic Accounting Sections.

Director-Focusing on Segments Audrey Gramling reviewed the Fall Segment Leader Webinar that was held in October. She also reviewed the Segment Leader website and the documents that are available for the Executive Committees of the Segments. Audrey led an activity with Council Members to illustrate how the Section websites vary greatly in terms of what information is on each site and where various items are located. Council members participated in a “Treasure Hunt” to find answers to questions about various topics found on the 17 section websites, then provided feedback on ideas for improving the navigation to the websites. Audrey went over the timeline for completing the website review and the plan to have the updated sites rolled out for August 2021. She also asked Council Members to participate in an activity where they wrote how their Sections add value to Region Meetings and a best practice that Sections have done to add value to Region Meetings.

President-Elect Elaine Mauldin spoke with Council about the history of the Business Model project and where we are in the process. She reviewed the beginnings with the Sustainability Mindset framework in 2017 and the review of reporting structures, revenues and costs of the Association. In May 2019, the Board agreed to proceed with the blended Business Model. A Task Force will be implemented to assist with reviewing and updating revenues and costs across areas such as meetings, publications and membership, and then how best to implement the

Business Model. This will be discussed further at the March 2020 meeting.

Membership Advisory Committee Chair Nancy Nichols discussed the results of the analysis of the 2019 Membership Survey. A total of 997 members responded to the survey, of which the average length of membership was 14 years. The average number of years in academia was 17, and the average number of sections that members belong to is 1.7. One of the things that the Membership Advisory Committee is going to examine is how to better get the message out to non-members about the value of being a member. Council participated in an activity where thoughts were gathered about the messaging to reach the potential non-member audience. The Membership Advisory Committee will review Council’s suggestions.

Vice President-Education Steve Kaplan discussed the combined effort of the AICPA and NASBA aimed at evolving CPA licensure to reflect the skills and knowledge that CPAs increasingly need in a technology-driven marketplace and how that impacts educators. The CPA Evolution is aimed at making sure the CPA profession is relevant 5, 10, 20 years from now, but questions still exist if technology and accounting should be on equal platforms as in the Evolution proposal.

President Terry Shevlin, Tracey Sutherland, and Julie Smith David led an activity directed at how research can be directed to more real-world problems. Is there a way that we can take the research and articles that the AAA has published and get these out to a larger audience in either a journal or magazine format? Council members were asked to provide feedback on who would the potential audience(s) be? What topics would be relevant? What revisions to existing content would be needed? Is additional content needed? Could this be a potential revenue stream for the AAA? Responses were collected and will be discussed at a future Council meeting.

Call for Papers

Journal of Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting

By: Vaughan S. Radcliffe, Editor

The *Journal of Governmental & Nonprofit Accounting* (JOGNA) is the academic journal of the American Accounting Association's Government and Nonprofit Section. JOGNA's objectives are to promote, publish, and build the community of those conducting research in governmental and nonprofit accounting, and to create new knowledge in this field.

To this end, the role of the editorial board is to identify promising manuscripts and to advise and support authors of these manuscripts toward publication.

Appropriate topics for the journal include, but are not limited to:

- Financial reporting by Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations
- Governance practices in Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations
- Audit markets for Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations
- Financing Governmental and Nonprofit enterprises
- Budgeting and financial management in Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations
- Evaluating charitable organizations
- Performance audits
- State oversight of local governments
- The role of accounting in political markets
- The use of accounting information in markets for philanthropic resources
- Financial and nonfinancial performance metrics in Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations

- Compensation in Public Sector and Nonprofit Organizations
- Regulation of reporting requirements for Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations
- Federal Accounting Standards
- Evaluating the public policy objectives, consequences, and performance of Governmental and Nonprofit Organizations
- Government Auditing Standards
- Government Cost Accounting Standards and the CASB

Appropriate methodologies include, but are not limited to:

- Empirical studies using archival data
- Laboratory studies
- Theory-based analysis
- Case studies
- Ethnography and field research
- Accounting history

Submission and Review Process: The manuscript submission/review process is completed online using the American Accounting Association online submission and peer review system available at the following link:

<http://jogna.allentrack.net>

The nonrefundable submission fee in U.S. funds is \$70 for members of the AAA Government and Nonprofit Section and \$100 for nonmembers of the AAA Government and Nonprofit Section, payable online by credit card (VISA or MasterCard only). [Click Here](#) to view the online payment form. If you are unable to pay by credit card or have any questions, please contact the AAA Member Services Team at (941) 921-7747 or by e-mail at info@aaahq.org.

Submitted manuscripts should be original research not previously published and not under consideration at another journal. After screening by the editorial board for suitability, submissions will be reviewed by qualified reviewers under the direction of the editor. Revisions not resubmitted within 12 months from notification will be considered new submissions. JOGNA is an online journal. Accepted articles will be published (posted online) shortly after their acceptance.

The JOGNA Editorial Board Members can be viewed at the following AAA link: [Click Here](#).

*****Special Issue--Call for Papers*****
Journal of Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting



Call for Papers

**Special Topic of Journal of Governmental
and Nonprofit Accounting Research**

Future of Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting Research

Journal of Governmental & Nonprofit Accounting (JOGNA) is published by the Government and Nonprofit (GNP) Section of the American Accounting Association. To promote timely, widespread dissemination of ideas to the academic and practice communities, the journal is published online. The purpose of *JOGNA* is to stimulate and report premier-quality research on a wide range of governmental and nonprofit accounting issues. The journal is interdisciplinary in scope and welcomes a broad array of research traditions and approaches. The journal solicits scholarly manuscripts of approximately 7,000 words (20 to 25 total pages). The editor and editorial assistant can be contacted at JOGNA@aaahq.org.

JOGNA plans a special issue to focus on the future of governmental and nonprofit accounting research. We encourage innovative ideas and papers of a wide range for consideration. We are looking for your thoughts on the future of GNP research.

Potential topics include:

- Future directions for GNP research
- Promising new areas of research
- New questions and new ideas
- Identification of areas that are reaching the end of their usefulness
- Review articles
- Opinion pieces

Longer or shorter pieces are feasible for this issue. We anticipate that there will be pieces of *JOGNA*'s usual length, but we will entertain shorter submissions of 2,000 words and upwards if they provide meaningful commentary on these themes.

Submissions are due by March 15, 2021. Earlier submissions are welcome and will be put into the review process. Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with *JOGNA*'s editorial policies (https://meridian.allenpress.com/DocumentLibrary/AAAN/JOGNA_Editorial_Policy.pdf) (https://meridian.allenpress.com/DocumentLibrary/AAAN/MANUSCRIPT_PREPARATION_AND_STYL_E.pdf), and submitted via the journal's normal submission process at <https://www.editorialmanager.com/jogna/default.aspx>.

In your Letter to the Editor accompanying the submission, please state in the opening paragraph that this piece is for the *Special Issue on the Future of GNP Research*.

We will publish the issue once submissions have been processed through the *JOGNA* editorial process. Acceptances will be issued as soon as individual papers reach the end of the editorial process.

If you have any questions, please contact the editor Vaughan Radcliffe, yradcliffe@ivey.ca, or the *JOGNA* editorial office at JOGNA@aaahq.org.

Have You Seen?

Please check out the GNP webpage at <https://aaahq.org/GNP> for sectional news and resources.

GNP research is published in a wide range of journals. Since you cannot read them all, this feature of the newsletter highlights a sample of recent research that you may have missed.

"How Private Foundation Sophistication Affects Capital Campaign Grant Decisions" by A. Allen and B. McAllister. *Journal of Governmental & Nonprofit Accounting*. Dec. 2019.

Abridged Abstract: The authors examine how charity financial information related to efficiency and financial vulnerability is used by private foundations in determining how much they grant to charities during capital campaigns. In general, private foundations are likely to be better able to evaluate charity financial information because they are sophisticated donors. They have the incentive to incur search costs, the ability to judge financial information, and are focused on grant-making. We find no evidence that efficiency measures are used by private foundations in determining capital campaign grant amounts, regardless of foundation sophistication. We interpret this result as being consistent with private foundations focusing on factors related to program accomplishments rather than on reported efficiency. We find evidence that private foundations pay larger grant amounts to less financially vulnerable charities. This effect is concentrated when grants are paid by more sophisticated private foundations (i.e., those that employ a professional staff).

"The Information Value of Qualified and Adverse Audit Reports: Evidence from the Municipal Sector" by C. Edmonds, R. Leece, B. Vermeer, & T. Vermeer. *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*. Feb. 2020.

Abridged Abstract: This study investigates whether qualified/adverse audit opinions on the fairness of the financial statements impact market yields for city/county general obligation bonds. Although state and local governments represent a significant part of the U.S. economy, the value of external assurance in this market is questionable given the untimely nature of municipal audit reports. We find evidence consistent with municipal bond market participants penalizing counties and local governments with qualified/adverse audit opinions for both primary market issuances and secondary trading. For example, in a propensity score

matched sample, we find that, on average, primary market yields are higher by 34 higher basis points for municipalities receiving qualified/adverse audit opinions. The results suggest that municipal investors value the information content of an independent audit report.

"GASB at 35-A Look Back, A Look Forward" by D. Bean. *The CPA Journal*. April 2020.

Abridged Abstract: The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) recently celebrated its 35th anniversary. As the GASB begins its transition to its fifth chairman, Joel Black, now is an excellent time to look back at the board's journey and forward to its next steps. The current article looks at questions that have been posed regarding GASB's creation, its promise, the compromises that were made, its achievements, and the future of governmental accounting standards setting.

"Stakeholder Groups and Accountability Accreditation of Non-profit Organizations" by N. Feng, D. Neely, & L. Slatten. *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management*. Dec. 2019.

Abridged Abstract: This study tests the association between various stakeholder groups and whether nonprofit organizations (NPOs) have obtained accountability accreditation. In particular, the study examines the following research questions: Does the governance of an NPO have any impact on the likelihood that the organization obtains certification? Does an NPO's investment in executives affect certification efforts? Does employing a professional fundraiser play a significant role in whether an organization seeks accreditation? and Are certification efforts influenced by the relative sophistication of donors of the NPO? The findings of this study indicate that organizations with strong internal governance (indicated by their answers to the governance-related questions in Form 990) are more likely to have obtained certification when compared to a group of nonprofits that did not receive the certification. In addition, nonprofits that invest

more in their executives are more likely to receive SFX certification. Interestingly, external stakeholders (donors making restricted gifts, and professional fundraisers) are not associated with the likelihood of holding the SFX certification.

“Does Government Report Readability Matter? Evidence from Market Reactions to AAERs” by Y. Kuang, G. Lee and B. Qin. *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*. March. 2020.
Abridged Abstract: We investigate whether market reactions to Accounting and Auditing Enforcement Releases (AAERs) of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) vary with different levels of readability in the AAERs. We find that when the AAER is more difficult to read, with readability measured based on the directives of the Plain Writing Act of 2010, markets react more negatively to the AAER announcement. Further tests indicate that the effect of AAER readability is attenuated by investor sophistication and firm visibility, whereas the effect is more pronounced when AAER firms are exposed to greater uncertainty. Contrary to conventional wisdom that linguistically complex

disclosures receive reduced market reactions, our results suggest that complex AAER announcements could trigger more negative stock price reactions, since investors under uncertainty and ambiguity tend to assume the worst and bid down the market value of AAER firms.

“The Impact of Accounting Regulation on Non-Profit Revenue Recognition” by C. Barragato. 2019. *Journal of Applied Accounting Research*

Abridged Abstract: This paper examines the requirement that non-profit organizations recognize unconditional promises to give as assets and revenues in the year promises are received as mandated by Statement of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) No. 116. The study finds that recognizing unconditional promises to give as assets and as revenues in the year received improves predictions of next period's cash inflows. It also finds that accrual-based contribution revenue consistently provides information content that is incremental to cash-based contribution revenue.

Let Us Hear From You

The deadline to submit items for inclusion in the next issue of **Government & Nonprofit News** is tentatively set for **October 31, 2020**. Submit newsletter items (maximum of 350 words per item) to:

Linda G. Ragland, Editor
University of New Hampshire

Phone: (603) 862-5286; E-mail: Linda.Ragland@unh.edu

*** Past GNP newsletters can be found at: <https://aaahq.org/GNP/Publications/Newsletter> ***

CIGAR Network

The Comparative International Governmental Accounting Research (CIGAR) Network is an organization whose mission is to promote worldwide discussion and research on comparative governmental accounting. The group sponsors conferences and workshops dedicated to governmental accounting research themes.

CIGAR will host a workshop in the summer of 2020 (June 16-17, 2020) at the University of South-Eastern Norway, in Norway. The theme of the workshop is “The Quality of Public Sector Audit: Profession, Institutions and Standards’ Please find conference (and paper submission) details at <https://www.cigar-network.net/>. Related, the CIGAR network has a call for papers for a special issue entitled “**The Quality of Public Sector**

Audit: Profession, Institutions and Standards” in *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Management (JPBAFM)*. The issue is to be published in 2022. Please visit:

<https://www.cigar-network.net/news/call-for-papers> for more information.

CIGAR was co-founded in 1987 by James Chan (University of Illinois at Chicago), Rowan Jones (University of Birmingham) and Klaus Lüder (German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer). The first conference was held in Chicago, but since that time, US involvement has ebbed and flowed. There are several research outlets associated with the group and/or identified on the CIGAR website at <http://cigar-network.net/>

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