



# ENHANCING O\*NET'S USEFULNESS FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS

**Michael J. Handel**

**Sociology and Anthropology Department  
Northeastern University  
[m.handel@neu.edu](mailto:m.handel@neu.edu)**

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# O\*NET

## I Great resource for

- i Students
- i Job seekers
- i Career counselors
- i Government agencies
- i HR professionals
- i many others...
- i ...including Academic researchers!

è But academic researchers aren't really part of O\*NET dissemination efforts

## I **Remedy:**

- è Create a **Researcher's Corner** on the O\*NET website, like the Developer's Corner



## Researcher's Corner should include...

- I Original, individual-level O\*NET survey data
  - i Researchers want to regress O\*NET variables on Background survey variables (e.g., education, race, ethnicity, disability)
  - i Easier with individual-level data than occupation-level data
  - i Adding Background survey items on incumbents' wages and salaries would make O\*NET a powerful tool for analyzing labor markets
  
- I Sample statistics tables (sample size, response rates, breakdowns)
  - i Researchers want to know if O\*NET incumbent sample looks like the population of American workers (e.g., gender distribution, race, ethnicity, education, age, disability)
  
- I Researcher-friendly data files
  - i O\*NET database distributed across multiple files and SAS versions not easy to find
  - i A single, consolidated data file in recognized format (SAS, Stata) more helpful



## Researcher's Corner should include... (continued)

- I All editions of O\*NET data in separate 5-year cycle files
  - i Resurveying occupations every five years is great for researchers interested in longitudinal studies of occupational change
  - i Don't just write new data over earlier data—save the earlier data!
  - i Group data in files by collection cycle, i.e., one file for all information collected before July 2008, a second file for information from 2008-2013, etc.
  
- I Occupational crosswalk enhancements
  - i Existing crosswalks are good...
  - i ...but need to crosswalk O\*NET occupation codes to Census codes because most researchers want to merge O\*NET with Census and Current Population Survey
  
- I Tools and Technology (T2) data file
  - i A great resource—can it be integrated into a file for researchers?
  - i Two options:
    - m add simple count of T2 objects to each occupation record
    - m create data file of all or top 10 T2 objects used in each occupation using UN Standard Products and Services Codes (UNSPSC)



## Recommendations

### I Create a **Researcher's Corner** on the O\*NET web site that includes...

1. Data files with all individual-level survey response information (+ wage and salary)
2. Tables with sample size, response rates, breakdowns by background characteristics (gender, race, education, etc.)
3. Single file that consolidates O\*NET information currently in multiple files (+ codebook)
4. All editions or versions of the O\*NET database (one file per 5-year collection cycle for longitudinal analyses)
5. Crosswalk translating O\*NET codes to Census occupation codes
6. Tools and Technology file