Update from the Chair of the Statistical Education Section

January 2017

Welcome to a new year in the Section on Statistical Education. It’s an honor to be chairing the section in 2017 – the energy and passion for statistical education among section members is quite humbling and inspiring. I hope, like me, you are excited to engage in statistical education in an era where the value of data and of individuals who can answer questions with that data has never been higher. Determining the most important ideas to teach and how to teach them seem to be fast-moving targets.

As we begin a new year, I believe it’s important to reflect on our section’s mission, which reads:

Statistics is the science of learning from data. Our mission is to promote the teaching and learning of statistics at any level for any audience. Specifically we will:

* Advise the Association on the educational elements of the ASA strategic plan, including the need for education on the role and value of statisticians to the following audiences:
  + Management in business and government
  + Professionals such as journalists, lawyers and medical personnel
  + Public policy makers at state, national and international levels
  + K-12 policy makers, administrators and teachers
  + Academic non-statisticians
* Promote research and practice to improve statistics education and statistical literacy
* Support the dissemination of professional development and funding opportunities, teaching resources and research findings in statistical education.
* Improve the pipeline from K-12 through colleges to statistics professionals.

Outcomes:

* Help ASA achieve strategic goals, in collaboration with external entities
* Expanded professional development opportunities
* Improved teaching
* Improved cooperation between statistics education researchers and practitioners in their role as statistics educators
* Improved pipeline

Executive committee officers will be actively pursuing this mission. Some planned or proposed activities include: a great JSM 2017 program, increased social media presence, promotion of meetings such as USCOTS 2017, dissemination of materials such as new undergraduate data science guidelines and GAISE reports, support for initiatives such as early career profiles and mentoring, etc. Look for a newsletter in early spring detailing opportunities and initiatives for the year. But your energy and ideas are vitally needed too – being an ambassador for statistics in your network, implementing the latest ideas from statistical education research in your classrooms, sharing and debating ideas for best teaching practices, … And if you need a little seed money to get your idea off the ground, please submit proposals to the executive committee – we hope to fund several this year.

Thanks to outgoing executive committee officers Bill Notz, Pat Humphrey, Jennifer Kaplan, Tim Jacobbe, Kari Lock Morgan, and Chad Schafer for all of their hard work behind the scenes on behalf of the section. Thanks also to incoming officers Beth Chance, Kelly McConville, Kay Endriss, Garrett Grolemund, Rebecca Nugent, and Erin Blankenship for their willingness to step into some big shoes. And speaking of big shoes, thanks to last year’s chair Nick Horton for all of the initiatives and framework he helped put in place to further the mission of our section.

Finally and most importantly, thanks to you for your membership in the Section on Statistical Education and your support for these activities. We hope this year is a fulfilling one in your statistical education pursuits; don’t hesitate to contact me or any officer if there are ways we can help.

Sincerely,

Paul Roback

Chair, ASA Section on Statistical Education