

BCASA NEWSLETTER

Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association

Serving Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont

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Homepage: <http://www.amstat.org/chapters/boston>

Newsletter: BCASANews@verizon.net

Event Schedule

Sat Nov 6	9:30 am	Emmanuel College	<i>New England Isolated Academic Statisticians Meeting</i>
Wed Nov 10	6:00 pm	Frontier Science	<i>STATISTICAL SCIENCE: MY STORY; Planning the Future of Statistics by Understanding its Past</i> Emanuel Parzen
Sat Nov 13	2:00 pm	Harvard University	<i>Inaugural David K. Pickard Memorial Symposium</i>
Tue Dec 7	6:30 pm	Emmanuel College	<i>Predicting Teacher Candidates' Success for Educator Licensure: An EM-Algorithm Approach</i> Matthew Tom and Kimberly Sofronas
Sat Jan 15	6:00 pm	Newtonville	<i>Annual Winter Potluck Dinner and Party</i>
Sat Sep 24		Harvard University	<i>New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports</i>

New England Isolated Academic Statisticians Meeting

Date: Saturday, November 6, 2010

Location: Emmanuel College, Boston

Time: 9:30 am – 4:30 pm

Registration: Please register for NEISM15 by November 2 at the latest. Space is limited and so we urge you to register ASAP. Simply email John McKenzie (mckenzie@babson.edu) or Bob Goldman (robert.goldman@simmons.edu) your intention to attend.

This is an invitation to join your colleagues at the 15th New England Isolated Statisticians Meeting (NEISM15) on Saturday, November 6, 2010. The meeting will take place at Emmanuel College in Boston. This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for statisticians isolated (usually, but not always, in mathematics departments) to discuss, in some depth, topics related to teaching statistics.

The organizers, Bob Goldman and John McKenzie, are working on topics for the meeting and, of course, we welcome suggestions.

The meeting will take place in the Conference Center in the Yawkey Center. People can park in the visitor's parking lot near the library. A campus map and directions to Emmanuel may be found at:

http://www.emmanuel.edu/Tools_Navigation/Maps_and_Directions.html

Here is the outline of the schedule for the day:

9:30 - 10:00 Registration and refreshments

10:00 - 12:30 Morning session

12:30 - 2:00 Lunch

2:00 - 4:30 Afternoon session and Wrap-up

The organizers would particularly like to encourage new statistics teachers and instructors who have not attended previous NEISMs to come to NEISM15. The event is sponsored by the Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association and is free; we ask only that participants pay for their own transportation.

If you know of someone who may be interested in this event, please do forward this email to them.

We look forward to seeing you on November 6.

STATISTICAL SCIENCE: MY STORY; Planning the Future of Statistics by Understanding its Past

Emanuel Parzen
Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Statistics
Texas A&M University

Date: Wednesday, November 10, 2010

Time: 6:00 – 7:00 PM: Light dinner
7:00 – 8:00 PM: Lecture

Cost: Dinner is \$12 for chapter members, \$15 for others, \$6 for Students. The talk is free.

Registration: RSVP by noon on Wednesday, November 3, at <http://parzen.eventbrite.com/>

Location: Frontier Science
900 Commonwealth Ave
Boston, MA 02215

Directions: Frontier Science is at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and St. Paul Street. There is a Green Line (B) stop at this intersection. On-street parking is available on St. Paul and Commonwealth. A Boston University parking lot is across Commonwealth, on Buick Street, which is not free. Please enter the building on St. Paul and go to the second floor, where someone will let you in.

Abstract

A technical and philosophical survey of Statistical Science as Translational Statistics, connecting practice, theory, education, users of statistical methods (the Statistics of Science), basic research (the Science of Statistics). Topics discussed include: lessons from my mentors (Mosteller, Neyman, Tukey); analogies that enable statisticians to adapt to complex data methods that work for simple data; academic statistics research: technical and fundamental; my life as a statistical time series statistician; SIEVE universal model building strategy; Bayesian and frequentist inference: united statistical analysis; intro stat reform: probability; public image of statisticians; why graduate school in statistics? To have fun!

Inaugural David K. Pickard Memorial Symposium

Co-Sponsored by the Department of Statistics and the Institute for Quantitative Social Science (IQSS) at Harvard University

Date: November 13, 2010, Harvard University,

Time: 2 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Maxwell Dworkin G115, 33 Oxford Street

RSVP: RSVP via email to symposia@stat.harvard.edu no later than Monday, November 8, 2010 if you wish to attend.

The inaugural lecture, given by Jeffrey Rosenthal, University of Toronto, will take place on Saturday afternoon, November 13, 2010, and will be hosted by the Department of Statistics, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Also speaking will be Joseph Blitzstein, Harvard University, inaugural winner of the David Pickard Award for Teaching and Mentoring.

These lectures follow the establishment of the David K. Pickard Memorial Endowment Fund, and below is a portion of the fund announcement:

The gifts of colleagues, students, and friends of David Pickard establish the David K. Pickard Memorial Endowment Fund. This fund celebrates the memory of David K. Pickard, who served as a junior faculty member in the Harvard Statistics Department from 1977 to 1985. Professor Pickard was known for his outstanding teaching, having won two major Harvard-wide teaching awards: the Phi Beta Kappa Prize in 1982 and the Levenson Prize in 1984. He also won the Hoopes Prize two years in a row for supervising and nominating a senior thesis. Professor Pickard had a strong influence on the Statistics PhD students at Harvard in that period. Sadly, Professor Pickard died of a brain tumor in August 1986 in Kingston Ontario, where he had moved after leaving Harvard.

Income from this fund shall support a biennial lecture by an outstanding university faculty member on a topic to do with teaching and pedagogy.

The Pickard symposium will begin at 2:00 PM, ending at approximately 6:30 PM, with catered Chinese buffet to follow. Professor Rosenthal's lecture is entitled "How to Discuss Statistics on Live Television"; Professor Blitzstein's lecture is entitled "Alan Turing as a Statistician: Breaking the Code by Breaking the Bayesian Egg."

For more information regarding the event, please see the link:

[http://www.stat.harvard.edu/?mode=About&page=Pickard Lecture.html](http://www.stat.harvard.edu/?mode=About&page=Pickard+Lecture.html)

Predicting Teacher Candidates' Success for Educator Licensure: An EM-Algorithm Approach

Matthew Tom and Kimberly Sofronas

Departments of Mathematics and Education, Emmanuel College

Date: Tuesday, December 7 2010

Times: 6:30 dinner, 7:30 lecture

Location: Emmanuel College
Library
Basement Classroom G15

Directions: http://www.emmanuel.edu/Tools_Navigation/Maps_and_Directions.html

Registration: <http://mtom.eventbrite.com/> by Wednesday, December 1, 2010.

Abstract

In the late 1990s, the Department of Education in the State of Massachusetts redefined the requirements for teacher licensure, implementing a series of licensure examinations called the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure [MTEL]. Since that time, many Massachusetts colleges and universities have offered preparatory support programs to help teacher candidates pass those required tests. Little research has been conducted to determine the impact, statistical or otherwise, of these measures on students' MTEL scores. This paper outlines the development and analysis of a linear model for predicting the scores of teacher candidates at a small liberal arts college on the one common MTEL that all K-12 teacher candidates must successfully complete: the Communication and Literacy Skills Test. While failing test scores are reported numerically by the Massachusetts Department of Education, passing scores are not. A variation on the Expectation Maximization (EM) algorithm is applied to address the missing data problem.

ANNUAL WINTER POTLUCK DINNER AND PARTY

At the home of Katherine Monti

Date: Saturday, January 15, 2011

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: 30 Lothrop Street
Newtonville, MA 02460

Information: <http://bcasaparty.eventbrite.com/>

RSVP: By Monday January 10 at <http://www.luckypotluck.com/potluck/BCASAAnnualParty>. Please provide your name, how many people will be in your party, what you would like to bring (appetizer, entrée, side dish, salad, or dessert), and either phone or email contact information (so that you can be reached in case of weather problems).

Directions: <http://maps.google.com/maps?q=30+Lothrop+Street,+Newtonville,+MA> or <http://www.mapquest.com/>.

Lothrop is off Crafts Street between Washington Street and Watertown Street. Crafts Street is off Washington Street, between Pike Exit 17 and Walnut Street.

The condo is at the end of Lothrop, on the right. The first few guests can park in the double bay associated with the condo (turn right immediately after passing the condo), or in one of a few spaces at the far end of the condo lot, or alongside the condo, in the driveway. Those who arrive later can park on Lothrop or Jennison or even Judkins, if necessary. Lothrop dead- ends just past the condo. If there has been snow, parking may be tight since the streets are narrow.

Cancellation: In case of heavy show, we may cancel. Please feel free to call if you have questions. Check the chapter web site for cancellation information.

President's report

Greetings from the President of the BCASA! As always it will be a pleasure to see you at any or all of our events, and at meetings of the Planning Committee. These are my last greetings as president, since after four years of yours truly serving in that capacity, in the new year we will be ushering in a new BCASA president, Tom Lane of MathWorks. I am a strong believer in terms limits and we are very fortunate to have Tom as our next president. Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for being such a dynamic chapter and very specially the team of chapter officers who by their hard work and good will made it possible.

Statistician of the Year nominations solicited

The BCASA Mosteller Statistician of the Year award is presented each year at a banquet/lecture in February to a distinguished statistician who has made exceptional contributions to the field of statistics and has shown outstanding service to the statistical community and to the Boston Chapter.

The current Statistician of the Year is Stephen Lagakos. The complete list of award recipients is Fred Mosteller, 1990; Herman Chernoff, 1991; Marvin Zelen, 1992; Ralph D'Agostino, 1993; William DuMouchel, 1994; Don Rubin, 1995; Nan Laird, 1996; David Hoaglin, 1997; Richard Goldstein, 1998; Arlene Ash, 1999; Cyrus Mehta, 2000; Alan Gelfand, 2001; Alan Zaslavsky, 2002; John D. McKenzie, Jr., 2003; Louise Ryan, 2004; Mei-Ling Ting Lee, 2005; Carl Morris, 2006; LJ Wei, 2007; Richard DeVeaux, 2008; David Hosmer, 2009; and Stephen Lagakos, 1010.

Please forward all nominations by December 12, 2010 to Scott Evans at evans@sdac.harvard.edu. Include a brief description of the candidate's qualifications for the award.

Mu Sigma Rho

Please consider nominating your top undergraduate and graduate statistics students for membership in Mu Sigma Rho, the national honorary society for statistics. Information can be found at: <http://math.smith.edu/~nhorton/msr.html> or by contacting Liam O'Brien at lobrien@colby.edu. The deadline is March 1st, 2011 but there's no reason to delay.

U.S. census at school program seeking champions

The ASA and Population Association of America (PAA) launched the U.S. version of Census at School, an international classroom project that engages students in grades 4–12 in statistical problem solving. Students complete an online survey, analyze their class census results, and compare their class with random samples of students in the United States and other participating countries. The project began in the United Kingdom in 2000 and now includes Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, and Japan. The ASA and PAA are seeking champions to expand the U.S. Census at School program nationally. This is a wonderful opportunity for statisticians and statistics educators to perform outreach in their communities. For more information about how you can get involved, email Martha Aliaga (marta@amstat.org) and Rebecca Nichols (rebecca@amstat.org).

Early notice of 2011 sports symposium

The 2011 New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports will be held on Saturday, September 24, 2011, at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. More information will be available in the coming months. Mark Glickman and Scott Evans are the co-organizers of this event.

Planning committee invitation

By Dominique Haughton (President)

Please contact me at dhaughton@bentley.edu if you would like to join the BCASA Planning Committee. We meet about once every six weeks and the chapter provides (tasty) dinners during our meetings. Come and have an impact on the choice of events proposed by the chapter! And most of all, thank you for being part of the BCASA community!

Biostatistics or SAS programmer/analyst position available

We are an epidemiology research group located in Boston, MA. Our group is actively engaged in pharmacoepidemiology, chronic disease epidemiology and genetic epidemiology research. We have several positions open for biostatisticians and SAS programmers/analysts to work on several new and continuing research projects.

Responsibilities: Assist in data management and analysis; write, document, and maintain SAS programs; construct, quality-check, and clean large analytical datasets; execute SAS programs, summarize and document output; collaborate with the principal investigator, senior biostatistician, and programmers on the preparation of datasets, reports, manuscripts and new proposals.

Qualifications: Master's degree in biostatistics, statistics, epidemiology or public health, with at least two years of SAS programming experience or proficiency in SAS. Experience analyzing large databases; excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to work independently and as leader of a team; strong organizational, documentation, and problem solving skills. Must be a U.S. Citizen.

Desired Skills: Working knowledge of statistics, experience with data management; experience with other statistical analysis and graphics packages and PC software; facile with Microsoft Office, particularly Word, Excel and Powerpoint; ability to program on a UNIX platform and in SQL or other high-level languages are beneficial; knowledge of study design, research methodology, statistical analysis

Contact: For information on how to apply for these positions please e-mail your resume, cover letter, contact information of two references, and at least one SAS programming example to Dr. Kelly Cho (stat.sasprgm@gmail.com).

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