BCASA NEWSLETTER

Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association

Serving

Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont

Volume 26, No. 1, September 2007

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 29, 2007	Symposium	Cambridge, MA
October 11-12, 2007	Conference	Boston, MA
October 20, 2007	Short Course	Web Conference Event
October 31, 2007	Symposium	Boston, MA

An online event schedule is available at: amstat.org/chapters/boston/schedule.html. Detailed announcements are below. All events are announced in advance to members on our email list. We are currently planning events for the coming year. If you have suggestions please contact Program Chair Matt Tom (tomma@emmanuel.edu).

SYMPOSIUM

New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports

Harvard University

Date: Saturday, September 29, 2007

Time: 8:45 am to 5:30 pm

Cost: $20 for students and $40 for non-students

Location: Harvard University Science Center, Cambridge, MA.

Directions: Please see amstat.org/chapters/boston/nessis07.html.

Registration: Registration is now open. You may register on-site (registration begins at 8:30am at Lecture Hall C of the Harvard Science Center), or register in advance by mail. Please follow the instructions on the conference web site if you prefer to register in advance.

Abstract: The 2007 New England Symposium on Statistics in Sports will be a meeting of statisticians and quantitative analysts connected with sports teams, sports media, and universities to discuss common problems of interest in statistical modeling and analysis of sports data. The symposium will be a mixture of talks and posters, as well as a panel discussion. The proceedings of the symposium will be published in a special issue of the Journal of Quantitative Analysis in Sports (JQAS).

This meeting is sponsored jointly by Harvard University Department of Statistics, Section on Statistics in Sports of the American Statistical Association, Boston Chapter of the American Statistical Association, and the Section on Operations Research in Sports of the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences.

Contact: Organizers Mark Glickman (mg@bu.edu) or Scott Evans (evans@sdac.harvard.edu).

CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Harvard Conference on Emerging Design and Analysis Issues
in Genomic Studies in Population Sciences
Harvard School of Public Health Department of Biostatistics and
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Department of Computational Biology

Date: Thursday & Friday, October 11-12, 2007

Time: Wednesday evening poster session, 8:30 am to 5 pm on Thursday, and 8:30 am to 4 pm on Friday.

Cost: Companies: $450; Academia/Research Institutes/Doctoral Students: $280; Students (pre-doctoral): $180.

Location: Conference Center at Harvard Medical School
Boston, MA 02115

Directions: See biosun1.harvard.edu/complab/genomics_workshop/ .

Registration: Online registration is available on the conference web site.
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Abstract: This conference, supported by a grant from the NCI and NHLBI, seeks to engage statisticians, genomic epidemiologists, and computational biologists in discussions of design, data, and analysis issues including developing statistical and computational methods. The conference will focus on genome-wide association studies; gene-environment interactions; and emerging genomic techniques in population sciences. The conference goal is to provide in-depth and stimulating discussions of the major quantitative issues in these three areas. The speakers include a distinguished group of researchers. Conference sponsors additionally include the National Cancer Institute, and the National Institute of Blood, Heart and Lung.

Details: Please visit the conference website biosun1.harvard.edu/complab/genomics_workshop/ .

Keynotes: Augustine Kong of deCODE Genetics and Eric Schadt of Research Genetics, Rosetta Inpharmatics LLC.

SHORT COURSE

A practical introduction to computational Bayesian Statistics
Jean-Michel Marin (INRIA, Université Paris Sud) and
Christian Robert (Université Paris Dauphine)

Date: Saturday, October 20, 2007

Time: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

Cost: $30 for BCASA members; $40 for non-members; and $10 for students.

Location: This is a web conference course and the software being used requires initiation from a Windows browser.

Registration: Contact Sue Perry at sperry@rhoworld.com by noon Tuesday, October 16. After successful registration please contact Dominique Haughton (DHaughton@bentley.edu) to coordinate the conference server logon information. Checks made payable to "BCASA" should be mailed to Rui Wang, 229 Kelton St. #11, Allston, MA 02134.

Abstract: This short course aims at providing participants a practical understanding of Bayesian methodology, assuming no previous exposure to Bayesian ideas or methods. The course is based on the book Bayesian Core (Springer-Verlag, 2007) by Marin and Robert. While keeping the theoretical background at a minimal level, it plan to guide the participants into the practice of prior modeling and Bayesian computing for some of the most classical models (linear and generalized linear regression, mixtures) based on representative case studies provided as datasets. Given the time constraint, the emphasis will be on model selection and trans-dimensional Monte Carlo methods. Computational aspects are sufficiently detailed [with R codes available on ceremade.dauphine.fr/~xian/BCS to achieve effective programming of the methods with little effort.

Prerequisites: A basic knowledge of probability tools and statistical concepts at the level of Casella and Berger's Statistical Inference (2001) is sufficient to attend and understand the course.

SYMPOSIUM

Harvard Statistics Department 50th Anniversary Celebration

Date: Friday and Saturday, October 26-27, 2007

Time: Friday 8:30am to 5:15pm and Saturday 9:00am to 3:00pm.

Location: Gutman Conference Center, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, 6 Appian Way, Cambridge, MA

Reservations: Send an email to symposia@stat.harvard.edu.

Abstract: Join Harvard alumni, former faculty, and friends in a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of Harvard University's Department of Statistics. This program includes the following topics.

Title	*Speakers*
Memorial to William Cochran	Sir David Cox, Donald Rubin, and S.R.S. Rao Poduri
Tribute to Frederick Mosteller	Stephen Fienberg, Paul Holland, Janet Norwood, and Judith Singer
Perspectives on Statistical Inference I-The Past 50 Years	Herman Chernoff and Howard Raiffa
PM Bayesian Computation and Hierarchical Modeling	. Andrew Gelman Jun Liu, and Carl Morris
Perspectives on Statistics at Interface	Persi Diaconis, David Donoho, and Louise Ryan
Perspectives on Statistical Inference II-Building on the Past	Arthur Dempster, Chuanhai Liu, and Glenn Shafer
Thirty years of the EM Algorithm and Beyon	Xiao-Li Meng and Nan Laird.

Contact: Questions can be directed to the department administrator Betsey Cogswell, or the event coordinator Ellen Weene. One can visit stat.harvard.edu/anniversary/index.html . The 50th Anniversary Committee members include Professors Samuel Kou (Co-chair), Arthur Dempster, Rima Izem, Nan Laird (Co-chair), Xiao-Li Meng, Carl Morris, and Donald Rubin.

Lodging: Out-of-town attendees are urged to book hotel reservations immediately. A list of local hotels can be found at: stat.harvard.edu/anniversary/lodging.html.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mu Sigma Rho Inductions

The Boston Chapter of the ASA coordinates nominations for Mu Sigma Rho, the national statistics honor society. The national honorary society for statistics had a banner year, with the induction of 26 new members from 5 colleges and universities in central and northern New England. These students all displayed excellence in statistics and overall academic achievement and we are proud that they have selected to attend schools located in our Region.

Inductees this year were from:

Boston University: Audrey Eleanor Hendricks, Alison L. Pedley, Jian Rong, Nadia Timofeev, Ling Wang, Mei Yang, and Robin Lynne Young;
Colby College: Malcolm Itter, Chad Stecher , Mary S. Warlaumont , R. Andrew Yeskoo , and Jingjing Zhou; from Harvard University: David Fardo , Megan Othus , Michael Wu;
Mount Holyoke College: Katharine Fischer Berry , Wendy Chen , Janine Gresko , Eleanor Hannon ,Mufaro Kanyangarara, and Ha Thanh Pham;
and *Smith College*: Julie Grace Bacon, Onjira Boonroong, Shikha Jain, Kwun Suen Miu, and Ana Petrova Spasova.

Congratulations are extended to all of the inductees.

Students who were not already ASA members were given complimentary membership in the ASA, the Boston Chapter, and a subscription to *Chance*. The Boston Chapter provides a way of fostering careers in statistics, so a gift of membership for these strong students is particularly relevant.

It's never too early to submit nominations for worthy students. More information about Mu Sigma Rho, a list of inductees, and the guidelines for nominators are at math.smith.edu/~nhorton/msr.html.

ASA Joint Meetings

This year's joint statistical meetings (JSM) were held in Salt Lake City, Utah on July 29 through August 2, 2007. At the JSM the National ASA Council of Chapters meeting was attended by our Council of Chapters Representative, Nick Horton. Also present at this meeting was the Council of Chapters Governing Board Vice-Chair District 1, Fred C. Djang, from Bristol-Myers Squibb of Wallingford, CT, providing representation for us and our neighboring chapters such as Montreal, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, and New Jersey. Please refer to the Council of Chapters Representative's Report below for the highlights of this meeting.

Chapter Election Results

The chapter elections were held at the May 5, 2007 at the Garrett M. Fitzmaurice applied longitudinal analysis short course, resulting in the election of Jim MacDougall as vice president, Tzu-min Yeh as secretary, and Yu Zhao as treasurer. Congratulations to our new chapter officers who will begin their terms in January 2008.

BCASA Planning Committee Membership

The BCASA Planning Committee recently held its first web conference meeting. The planning committee meets bi-monthly to plan BCASA events and to resolve chapter issues. It provides a good way to gain event planning experience, network with colleagues, and discuss current statistical topics while performing a service for the local chapter. For more information on how to join the planning committee or to submit event suggestions please contact Program Chair Matt Tom (tomma@emmanuel.edu) or Chapter President Dominique Haughton (DHaughton@bentley.edu).

MEMBER NEWS

ASA Fellow Honor awarded to Kathy Monti

Congratulations to Katherine L. Monti on becoming a Fellow of the American Statistical Association. Dr. Monti serves as Director of the Massachusetts Office of Rho, Inc. and has been an Adjunct Associate Professor of Biostatistics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Kathy has made numerous valuable contributions to the Planning Committee of the Boston Chapter of the ASA for more than 15 years, serving as Secretary and President. She also has served notably on the various ASA committees and in the Biopharmaceutical Section, and she currently represents the Council of Chapters on the ASA Board of Directors. The award of Fellow is a distinguished honor as stated in the ASA by-laws "By the honorary title of Fellow the Association recognizes full members of established reputation who have made outstanding contributions in some aspect of statistical work." For more information on this distinction see amstat.org/fellows/index.cfm?fuseaction=main which states that the number of new recipients of this honor are limited each year to no more than 1/3 of 1% of the ASA membership.

Research Professorship awarded to Marvin Zelen

Marvin Zelen has been awarded the newly-established Lemuel Shattuck Research Professorship in Statistical Science effective September 1, 2007. Harvard's former president, Derek Bok, established this special named Research Professorship in recognition of Dr Zelen's 30 years of outstanding service to the University, to the School, to the profession and to science. Lemuel Shattuck was a pioneer in public health and a thus a fitting namesake for Professor Zelen's professorship: enotes.com/public-health-encyclopedia/shattuck-lemuel).

This award allows Professor Zelen to have fewer teaching responsibilities, allowing him to devote more of his time and energy to building and expanding Frontier Science & Technology Research Foundation (fstrf.org), a non-profit company "established in 1975 to advance the application of statistical science and practice and data management techniques in science, health care, and education". FSTRF is recognized as a worldwide leader in the conduct of clinical trials.

The Department of Biostatistics will hold a special reception from 4pm to 6pm on Wednesday October 3rd to congratulate Professor Zelen on his new Professorship. We will use the occasion to unveil a portrait of Professor Zelen to be installed outside the Department's Conference Room, located at the Harvard School of Public Health, 677 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA, in Building 2, on the 4th floor.

Council of Chapters Representative's Report

The Boston chapter serves statisticians in Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Our membership consists of 440 people as of 9/1/07 (down from 456 at the same time in 2006) with nearly 91 new members since January. Overall, the chapter remains very active, with more than a dozen events, including evening lectures, social activities and short courses organized in the past year. The planning committee of the chapter is busy coordinating the program for the upcoming year, and as always, suggestions for speakers or topics are welcomed.

The chapter remains an active affiliate of Mu Sigma Rho (the national honorary society for statistics). A list of recently selected inductees is included this newsletter. Congrats to affiliate committee members (and former BCASA president Scott Evans) who was recently elected national Mu Sigma Rho secretary and treasurer.

In August, The Council of Chapters convened for its annual gathering at the Joint Statistics Meetings. This meeting allows chapter representatives to share their experiences with other chapters. A number of national ASA efforts are underway. Most importantly, Ron Wasserstein has taken over the position of Executive Director, and reiterates that he wants to hear concerns and issues relevant to the organization. His email address is rom@amstat.org.

The Advisory Committee on Continuing Education (ACCE) is currently soliciting short-courses for the next JSM. If something has worked well as a chapter short-course, the chapter is able consider co-sponsoring it.

After a hiatus for a number of years, the ASA is restarting discussions of accreditation of statisticians. Mary Batcher is leading up this effort.

Strategic initiatives remain a particular focus for the ASA, particularly as they support membership recruitment and outreach to students. See the website amstat.org/about/index.cfm?fuseaction=strategicinitiatives to review this years funded initiatives. If a proposal relates to the strategic plan goals, then the likelihood of it being funded is higher. Resources available from other chapters and/or the national office include the chapter get a member program, the hugely discounted student membership fees, how to become involved with science fairs, project competitions, and poster days.

In addition to the national strategic initiatives fund, which is still accepting proposals, the chapter is soliciting proposals for initiatives that could benefit members or the wider community in our area (such as a connection with a local science fair, outreach to K-12 teachers, or a gathering of isolated industry statisticians).

Submitted, Nicholas Horton, Smith College

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

BIOSTATISTICS FACULTY MEMBER - The Department of Biostatistics at the Boston University School of Public Health seeks applicants for a faculty position at the Assistant Professor level to participate in its research and teaching activities. The Department has 20 full time faculty members, in addition to MA and PhD candidates in Biostatistics, and concentrators for the MPH degree. Candidates should have a doctorate in statistics or biostatistics. Successful applicants are expected to teach at the introductory and advanced level, participate actively in collaborative research projects, mentor masters and doctoral students in biostatistics and participate in applied methodological research. Applicants should have strong teaching, communication and writing skills. Interested applicants should send their curriculum vitae, a cover letter detailing research and teaching experience and interests, and three letters of reference to: Dr. Lisa Sullivan, Department of Biostatistics, Boston University School of Public Health, 715 Albany Street T4E, Boston, MA 02118. Boston University is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage applications from women and minorities.

SENIOR STATISTICAL PROGRAMMER - The Statistics Division of the Department of General Dentistry at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM) has a full-time Senior Statistical Programmer information technology opening at their Boston Campus. The Statistics Division of TUSDM is responsible for providing statistical support to its faculty and students. In addition, they oversee the development and implementation of research projects using Axium, the School's electronic health record system (EHRS). The senior Statistical Programmer will be responsible for Axium, an electronic health record system. The responsibilities of this position include modifying the existing system to better facilitate internal research; writing SAS programs to query the database and extract de-identified data for researchers; providing statistical support to students and faculty; taking direction from technical lead or project manager as assigned; reviewing and editing documentation; providing input to project team to define scope and work effort; and miscellaneous duties as assigned by technical lead or project manager. Candidate requirements include a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, Biostatistics or related quantitative field with 3-5 years related experience. Experience programming in SAS; familiarity

working with relational databases; working knowledge of Windows, Mac, and Linux or Unix operating systems; experience in web technologies including, but not limited, to: Java, J2EE, JSP, Servlets, EJB and JMS, HTML, Javascript, ASP and CGI technologies. This full time position is for Monday through Friday 9am to 5pm. Preferred Qualifications include a Master's Degree in Computer Sciences, Biostatistics or related quantitative field with one to three years experience. TUSDM provides a competitive salary and outstanding benefits package. Apply online at www.tufts.edu. On the web site please reference job requisition number 18151. Tufts University is an AA/EO employer and actively seeks candidates from diverse backgrounds.

RESEARCH ANALYST – The Tufts Office of Institutional Research & Evaluation currently has an opening for a Research Analyst who will be responsible for providing technical, research, and statistical support for various research projects. In addition, an individual in this position will initiate, conduct, and report on various research projects, and perform related duties, which include: questionnaire design; survey administration; data analysis; report preparation; and communication of results. This position requires a Bachelor's degree in a related field and two years' related experience. A Masters or Doctorate is preferred. Candidates must possess strong quantitative and qualitative research skills, including: experience with multivariate statistics; expertise in use of SPSS or SAS; proficiency with spreadsheet and graphics software; strong oral and written communication skills; excellent interpersonal skills; and the ability to work in a team environment. A familiarity with higher education issues, assessment, performance indicators, HTML and JavaScript is also highly desired. Please apply online at tufts.edu/ under "Careers". Tufts University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and actively seeks candidates from diverse backgrounds.

RESEARCH DATA ANALYST – The Boston Medical Center is seeking a Research Data Analyst to support the Health Sciences, Health Services Research and Health Policy Units. The Health Care Research Unit, Section of General Internal Medicine, studies who gets what health care services and to what effect. Special interests include disparities in service receipt and outcomes by race, sex and age. Main responsibilities for the research data analyst: planning and conducting analyses (including multivariable regression) and communicating findings in text, graphs, tables and presentations; conducting literature and other searches; constructing analytic files from large databases; managing projects (tracking IRB and abstract submissions, compliance with data use agreements and project timelines); providing analytic support for physicians performing clinical research; helping to develop research projects, prepare grant proposals and draft manuscripts. This position requires a Master's degree in biostatistics, health services research or a relevant discipline; a logical and inquiring mind; "team member" mentality; strong analytic skills; programming in SAS or similar statistical software; ability to set priorities while managing several projects simultaneously; good communication skills. One or more years experience with health care data/health policy issues. Boston Medical Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Contact Arlene Ash (aash@bu.edu) for further information about this opening.

STATISTICAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPER - The MathWorks (Natick, MA) produces MATLAB, Simulink, and related technical computing software. The MathWorks currently has two statistical software developer openings on the team responsible for our statistical products including the MATLAB Statistics Toolbox. These positions require advanced statistics knowledge, an interest in mathematical or statistical software, and a demonstrated ability to write software in MATLAB, R, C++, or Java. Applicants should also have some experience writing software to be used by others; work on an R package or a Statlib contribution would qualify. Applicants having any statistics specialty are invited to apply, but particularly desired are skills in PK/PD modeling or nonlinear mixed effects. For information on these openings, visit mathworks.com and search for job codes 4407-DGS and 4408-DGS. Contact Tom Lane, tlane@mathworks.com, with any questions regarding these positions.

SENIOR BIOSTATISTICIAN - New England Research Institutes, Inc. (NERI) is a dynamic, independent company specializing in clinical trials management, public health research, survey research and media development. (NERI) offers clients exceptional capabilities as a first rate Contract Research Organization together with the deep knowledge and broad experience of one of the nation's premier public health research institutes. NERI currently has an opening for a Senior Biostatistician. The Senior Biostatistician will communicate directly with senior investigators inside and outside of NERI on matters related to study design and results, select appropriate statistical methods and conduct complex analyses. The Senior Biostatistician will write sections of collaborative manuscripts and/or full papers on study design and methodological issues. The Senior Biostatistician will collaborate with other senior scientists on research proposals and related business development. .Desired qualifications include excellent oral and written communication skills; a strong background as a biostatistician to coordinate needs across multiple research projects and to stimulate methodological research; a proven ability to secure and successfully conduct funded research (both contracts and grants); interest in both applications and theoretical/methodological innovations in statistics; a Ph.D. in biostatistics, statistics, or closely related field, 6+ years experience in a collaborative research setting with biostatistical expertise in one or more of the following areas: multi-center clinical trial design and analysis, chronic disease epidemiology, cardiology, longitudinal analysis, and/or complex designed experiments; experience in the design and oversight of multi-center clinical trials, grant and manuscript writing in collaboration with other researchers; and the ability to mentor junior statisticians also necessary. Interested applicants should send a resume and cover letter to Human Resources at humanresources@neriscience.com or visit neriscience.com. NERI is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer M/F/D/V.

The BCASA Newsletter is published four times during the academic year and is emailed to current BCASA members. Send comments or suggestions to Maureen Mayer at bcasa_news@yahoo.com or to any of the individuals listed below.

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