Seminar Series: Special Seminar

Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2017
Time: 3:30 – 4:20 p.m.
Location: LWSN 1142
Speaker: Dr. Barry D. Nussbaum
Affiliation/Organization: President, American Statistical Association

It’s Not What We Said, It’s Not What They Heard, It’s What They Say They Heard

Abstract: Statisticians have long known that success in our profession frequently depends on our ability to succinctly explain our results so decision makers may correctly integrate our efforts into their actions. However, this is no longer enough. While we still must make sure that we carefully present results and conclusions, the real difficulty is what the recipient thinks we just said. This presentation will discuss what to do, and what not to do. Examples, including those used in court cases, executive documents, and material presented for the President of the United States will illustrate the principles.

Bio: Barry D. Nussbaum was the Chief Statistician for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from 2007 until his retirement in March, 2016. He started his EPA career in 1975 in mobile sources and was the branch chief for the team that phased lead out of gasoline. Dr. Nussbaum is the founder of the EPA Statistics Users Group. In recognition of his notable accomplishments he was awarded the Environmental Protection Agency’s Distinguished Career Service Award.

Dr. Nussbaum has a bachelor’s degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and both a master’s and a doctorate from the George Washington University. In May, 2015, he was elected the 112th president of the American Statistical Association. He has been a fellow of the ASA since 2007 and is an elected member of the International Statistical Institute. He has taught graduate statistics courses for George Washington University and Virginia Tech and has even survived two terms as the treasurer of the Ravensworth Elementary School PTA.