

The Mu Sigma Rho

Volume 11

1993

Charleston, SC

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327 Snedecor Hall
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011

Vice President

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Department of Statistics
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

Past President

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375 Lauralin Drive
Logan, UT 84321

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John Wasik
Department of Statistics
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, NC 27695

Directors-at-Large

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Ithaca, NY 14853

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VPI & SU
Blacksburg, VA 24061

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News from the Chapters

Iowa Alpha Chapter - Iowa State University

- The 22nd annual Mu Sigma Rho lecture was presented by Sanford Weisberg, School of Statistics, University of Minnesota. His talk, entitled "An Introduction to Regression Graphics", was presented to a large audience on Wednesday, April 28, 1993. Although the topic of graphics hardly needs an "introduction", the on-going revolution in computing can lead to a revolution in statistical graphics as well. The seminar presented a mix of theory and applications of statistical graphics as well. Using a laptop computer and projection system, Professor Weisberg allowed the audience to see in action the static and dynamic graphics being discussed. The seminar demonstrated some new techniques developed using XLISPSTAT.
- This year four undergraduate statistics majors and 16 graduate students with majors and minors in statistics were recognized for their academic achievement, especially in the field of statistics, by their election to the Iowa Alpha Chapter of Mu Sigma Rho. Faculty member F. Jay Breidt was elected for his achievements in the field of statistics. Sanford Weisberg was made an honorary member of Mu Sigma Rho.

Ohio Alpha Chapter - Bowling Green State University

- The following students were initiated by Ohio Alpha Chapter in 1993: Bindu Viswanathan, Kanokwan Hoothasarn, Jennifer Sponseller, Maria Hong, Ava Fan, Holly Drier, Khadija Ahmed, Pritha Bhadra, Rema Raman, and Cyhthia Schumacher. All students except Jennifer and Holly are master's students in applied statistics or mathematics and statistics. Jennifer and Holly are seniors in mathematics and statistics. Why no male student was initiated is a matter for statistical conjecture.
- The faculty advisor for 1993-94 is Professor James Albert. The officers are president, Phyllis Curtiss; vice president, Bindu Viswanathan; and secretary/treasurer, Zenia Nobleza.

- The chapter was very much involved in arrangements for the Third Lukas Symposium. Members helped in picking up participants from the airport, arranging the get-together and taking care of many other details. The chapter is sponsoring a team for College Bowl II to be held in Atlanta in January, 1994. The first College Bowl held in Louisville in 1992 was won by the chapter-sponsored team.

- Members Pritha Bhadra, Khadija Ahmed, Kim Menzes, and Jeffrey Dietrich graduated with master's degrees in applied statistics, and Cynthia Schumacher and Rema Raman with master's degrees in mathematics and statistics. Rema is working on her PhD in statistics at University of Iowa, Pritha is a PhD student at University of Illinois and Kim is at the University of Florida. Jennifer Sponseller will join the graduate program at BGSU in Spring, 1994. Cynthia Schumacher accepted a position in Chicago. Jeff Dietrich is working for NFO in Toledo.

South Carolina Alpha Chapter - Medical University of South Carolina

- In September, 1993, five students were welcomed into Mu Sigma Rho. They are Donna Daniel, Paul Nietert, Leonard Lusby, Paul Stepanovich, and Jean Cantey. The Department of Biometry and Epidemiology graduated five students last spring bringing the total active students to 15.

- New officers elected were as follows: Michael Pisarcik, president; Donna Daniel, vice president; Paul Nietert, secretary/treasurer.

- Mu Sigma Rho sponsored a departmental get-together in September to welcome the new students and the new department chairman, Dr. David Hoel.

South Carolina Beta Chapter - University of South Carolina

- The South Carolina Beta Chapter of Mu Sigma Rho, based at the University of South Carolina (USC) in Columbia, had a quiet year in 1993, but will be swinging into a busy spring in 1994. The major activity for 1993 was the partial sponsoring of two advanced students to attend the Southern Regional Education Board's Summer Research Conference on Statistics in Galveston, Texas, June 5-9. Chapter members Zhengqing Li and Shioh-Jen Lee attended the meeting using student activity fee funds allocated to our chapter by USC. Mr. Li also received a \$300 travel grant from SREB. Mr. Li received his MS from USC in August and is now a PhD student in statistics at the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Lee received her PhD from USC last August and is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Statistics at Virginia Tech.

- In the fall of 1993, six new members joined the chapter. They are James Lewis, Dave Mason, Jason Owen, Aparna Sengupta, Wanzhu Tu, and David Whitin. The traditional fall initiation banquet was postponed until spring due to busy schedules and plans for the winter meeting.

- In January, 1994, 11 chapter and future members will attend the ASA winter meeting in nearby Atlanta. The trip will be partially sponsored again by student activity money and also by the Department of Statistics. The group will participate in the College Bowl, attend professional and technical sessions, and utilize the placement services in Atlanta.

Virginia Alpha Chapter - Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

- Eighteen BS degrees were awarded in 1993. Some employers were Cigna Corporation, PRA Pharmaceuticals, Central Intelligence Agency, Merck and Company, and Corning Glass Works with salaries ranging from \$25.5K to \$37.5K. Three graduates opted to attend graduate school at Virginia Tech. Sixteen MS degrees were awarded with employers including Roanoke College, Tennessee Eastman, 3M, Price Waterhouse, CNA Insurance, SAIC, and Merck Sharp and Dohme Pharmaceuticals. Salaries ranged from \$29K to \$43K. Five students will be continuing in the PhD program at Virginia Tech. Eight students were awarded the PhD degree. They went to work for Procter and Gamble, and Sterling-Winthrop Pharmaceuticals. Assistant professor positions were accepted at Virginia Commonwealth, Bowling Green, Tennessee, and Humboldt State.

- The Chapter sponsored three colloquia in 1992 through December 1993. The speakers were Dr. Edward J. Wegman, Director and Professor at George Mason University spoke on "Visualizing Multivariate Data and Structure"; Dr. Klaus Hinkelmann, Department Head and Professor of Virginia Tech, speaking on "Can We Estimate What We Want To Estimate", and Dr. Dennis Lin of IBM and the University of Tennessee discussing "Plackett and Burman Designs: Some Recent Developments".

- New undergraduate initiates are Christina L. Baker, Stephanie R. Bogar, Keith Graham Curtis, James C. Decker, Jr., Jason DeLozier, Karen A. Freeman, Glen L. Hartless, Clifton W. Kelly, Mihn Vinh Truong, Andrea Denise Vess, Daniel Jacob Price, Natalie A. Caldwell, Nathan August Curtis, Patrick Fitzgerald Darken, David Foster, and Gregory S. Steeno.

- New graduate student initiates are Amita Gopinath, Yan Jia, Donggeon Kim, Rebecca G. Land, Sarah Raskin, Molly Kathleen VanCaster, Jeffrey D. Vest, Victoria Ann Vogel, Christopher A. Assaid, Michael A. Beaghan, Allen M. Cheek, Honghui Chen, Lisa M. Chiacchierini, Brian C. Dietz, Jinhyo Kim, Kiho Kim, Angela R. McMahan, Timothy Jay Robinson, William M. Wiley, Lihan Yan, and Changguo Yang. New faculty initiates are Marion R. Reynolds Jr., Keying Ye and Robert S. Schulman. Honorary members are Edward J. Wegman and Dennis Lin. The faculty advisor is Jeffrey B. Birch.

Utah Beta Chapter - Brigham Young University

- The new officers for 1993-94 are Shane Pankratz, president, and Rebecca Jeppson, secretary. The new faculty advisor is Dr. J. L. Madrigal.

- Here is news about five recent graduates. **Jeff Despain** is working for Health Benefits of America in Salt Lake City. **Justin McBride** and **Jeness Eldridge** have accepted positions at Storage Tech in Louisville, Colorado. **Jayson Chatelain** is an employee of Beneficial Life in Salt Lake City. **Paul Johnson** has moved to the East Coast to work for AT&T in Chatham, New Jersey.

- During the fall the chapter sponsored the weekly production of the Larsen-Allen Ranking by Computer (LARC), which is a system developed in 1979 by Wayne Larsen, a member of the Department of Statistics at BYU, and Terry Allen, a graduate student. Every week the results of our rankings were published in *The Daily Universe*, BYU's student newspaper.

- The chapter sponsored a service project to help orphaned children.

- On December 9 the chapter's traditional Christmas party was held with 40 persons in attendance.

- Three members have joined since the fall of 1993. **David Schlappy**, a senior from St. Maries, Idaho, plans to continue his graduate studies in biostatistics. **Robert Peck**, who is from Lehi, Utah, received his BS degree in April, 1993 and started graduate studies in the fall. **James Pugmire** from Seattle, Washington also received his BS in April and started a master's program in the fall.

- In winter, 1994 the chapter is sponsoring a seminar about consulting in statistics.

Comic Interlude

Three statisticians went deer hunting with bows and arrows. They crept through the forest until they spotted a magnificent buck. The first statistician shot and his arrow landed five meters to the right of the deer. The second one shot and her arrow landed five meters to the left of it. Immediately, the third one jumped out of the bushes and shouted, "We got him. We got him!"

A chemist, a physicist and a statistician saw a fire in the wastebasket. The chemist tried to stop the reaction by removing the oxygen. The physicist tried to lower the temperature so that there would not be enough energy for the fire. The statistician went around to all the other wastebaskets on the floor and set them afire to get a representative sample.

MU SIGMA RHO
National Statistical Honor Fraternity
Report of Treasurer
August 6, 1993

<u>Balance on Hand: August 1, 1992</u>	\$1075.49
<u>Income (No. of New Members in Parantheses)</u>	
Membership Fees	
Alabama - Univ. of Alabama (10)	\$50
Iowa - Iowa State University (30)*	60
North Carolina - N.Carolina State Univ. (23)	115
Ohio - Bowling Green State Univ.	50
Oklahoma - Oklahoma State Univ.	50
South Carolina - Medical Univ. of S. C. (15)	75
Univ. of South Carolina (7)	35
Utah - Brigham Young University (15)	115
Virginia - VPI & SU (22)	110
	\$660
<u>Expenses</u>	
Lettering Services	\$288.00
Postage/Shipping	54.83
Refreshments	8.74
	\$351.57
<u>Balance on Hand: August 1, 1993</u>	\$1383.92

* Membership fees submitted by Iowa State University were \$2.00 per initiate which was agreed to when original Mu Sigma Rho chapter was organized at Iowa State University: See Page 12 of Mu Sigma Rho Constitution and Bylaws.

August 6, 1993

Minutes of 1992 Annual Meeting
of Nu Sigma Rho

President W. Robert "Bob" Stephenson from Iowa State University called the 1992 Annual Meeting of Nu Sigma Rho, held in Boston, Massachusetts, in conjunction with the 1992 American Statistical Association Annual Meetings, to order at 7:30 AM on August 11, 1993. After a welcome from the president, attenders introduced themselves. Chapters and attenders are listed below:

Chapter	Institution	Representative
Iowa Alpha	Iowa State Univ.	Stephenson
North Carolina Alpha	N. C. State Univ.	Wasik
Oklahoma Alpha	Oklahoma State Univ.	Warde
South Carolina Alpha	Medical Univ. of S. C.	Lancaster
South Carolina Beta	Univ. of South Carolina	Padgett
Virginia Alpha	VPI & SU	Hinkelman

In addition, Larry Hough of the Univ. of Vermont which was in the process of making an application for a new chapter attended the meeting.

The minutes of the 1991 meeting and the treasurer's report for the 1991-92 fiscal year were read by John Wasik, Secretary/Treasurer. The minutes and treasurer's report were approved as presented.

The first matter under old business was a continuation of the discussion began at the 1991 Annual meeting which involved attempts to provide active support for journals designed to meet the needs of statistics majors at the university level. Bob Stephenson noted that ASA had originally decided to support STATS, but that this decision was rescinded in view of the ASA Board's decision to take over publication over a five year period of CHANCE magazine. Klaus Hinkelman stated that he had a conversation with John Hewitt, the then present STATS editor, who stated that publication of STATS would be continued by ASA.

The discussion then turned as to what to include in STATS. One suggestion included the reporting of the college bowl results. Bob Stephenson reported on his experiences in running the 1992 College Bowl at the Louisville Winter Meeting: "A lot of work and not to be done in near future."

Under new business, Bob Stephenson noted that Mu Sigma Rho co-sponsored ASA Session 268 with the STAT ED section at the 1992 Annual Meetings. Additional items related to the interest in expanding the number of Mu Sigma Rho Chapters and revitalizing existing chapters.

It was noted that the Winona State University application was on hold because of a lack of number of qualifying potential members.

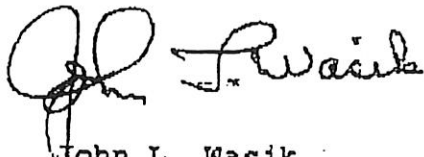
It was also stated that the State University of New York at Oneonta had failed to respond to a request for revision of their application. Finally, the Universities of Tennessee and Vermont had expressed interest in forming new chapters (University of Vermont was represented at the meeting).

Bob Stephenson noted that Cornell, Kansas State and Texas A and M Universities were presently inactive and that he would contact faculty members at each of these institutions to see about re-invigorating their chapters. The question about inactivity was also raised about the chapters at Temple, Wyoming, and Utah State. John Wasik was assigned the task to find out about the status of these chapters.

A general discussion ensued about the holding of induction ceremonies at the institutions. Bob Stephenson ended the meeting by providing information on a proposed new electronic journal (Journal of Statistical Education) and E Mail discussion group service (EDSTAT L) to be housed at the Department of Statistics at North Carolina State University. The meeting was ended at 8:35 AM.

After the meeting adjourned, a group of attendees moved to a nearby coffee and doughnut shop for general discussion. It was decided that this was a delightful way to end the business meeting and that there should be an attempt to hold one at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



John L. Wasik
Secretary/Treasurer
MU Sigma Rho

President's Column

The national organization of Mu Sigma Rho sponsored an invited paper session -- session 126 : *Introductory Statistics Courses - New Projects* at the 1993 Joint Statistical Meetings in San Francisco. The session was organized by Jeff Witmer of Oberlin College. The purpose of the session was to highlight current projects funded by the National Science Foundation for improving introductory statistics courses.

Activity Based Statistics, presented by Mrudulla Gnanadesikan from Fairleigh Dickinson University, had its focus on activities that illustrate concepts essential for statistical reasoning. By doing experiments and being involved in hands-on activities, students can better understand and remember abstract concepts. Several activities designed to show statistics in real life contexts were demonstrated.

Elementary Statistics Laboratory is a project at the University of South Carolina to develop a statistics laboratory similar to those of other elementary science courses. John Spurrier, Don Edwards and Lori Thombs are involved with the one semester hour Elementary Statistics Laboratory that can be taken with or after the traditional introductory statistics course. In the lab, students work in teams on an experiment, data analysis, or on the computer. They must then individually complete a lab report. The lab differs from the traditional science labs in that the emphasis is on statistical concepts.

Laurie Snell from Dartmouth College talked on *A Course Called Chance*. The course's goal is to make students better able to understand and critically assess current news which involves statistical and probabilistic concepts. Case studies include topics such as "Do left-handers have shorter lives than right-handers?", "Should women under 50 have mammograms?", "Should DNA fingerprinting be accepted as evidence in the courts?" Information about the logistics of the course are shared via an electronic data base and newsletter.

Dennis Pearl from Ohio State University discussed the Electronic Encyclopedia of Examples and Exercises (4Es) being created as part of a project in technology-based learning. The 4Es, a fully cross-indexed source of materials for teachers of statistics, consists of an integrated set of referenced "stories" with multiple levels of comments, questions, solutions, and accompanying data sets. A prototype was demonstrated using Hypercard™.

The session provided useful tools for anyone interested in improving the elementary statistics course. It also showed the interest and commitment of the National Science Foundation to fund projects in statistics education. Mu Sigma Rho thanks Jeff Witmer for putting together such a fine session. Thanks also go to the presenters for their work in statistics education and their excellent presentations.

In this and every issue of the Mu Sigma RhoVER, you can read about some of the activities of the local chapters across the United States. Obviously, some chapters are more active than others. Given the size of and the resources available to the individual chapters, we are not surprised at the variability in the amount and scope of activities undertaken. Still it is unfortunate that chapters do not at least participate in recognizing students' achievements in statistics. Every chapter should be identifying outstanding students in statistics and inviting them to join Mu Sigma Rho. Several chapters take advantage of college- or university-wide award ceremonies to recognize these students. This gives more visibility to the students and to Mu Sigma Rho as an honor society. For those chapters that are active in initiating new members and/or in more elaborate ways, I wish to acknowledge your efforts and encourage you to keep up the good work. For those chapters that have let Mu Sigma Rho slip into the background, I would like to encourage you to reactivate the chapter. The first step, and it is not such a big one, is to begin again to identify students deserving of membership. The national secretary/treasurer John Wasik and I will be glad to help.

