

The Mu Sigma RhoVER

Volume 14

1996

Charleston, SC

The Officers

President

Don Edwards
Department of Statistics
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

Vice President

Klaus Hinkelmann
Department of Statistics
VPI & SU
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Past President

W. Robert Stephenson
327 Snedecor Hall
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011

Secretary/Treasurer

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

Directors-at-Large

Bill Warde
Statistics Department
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74074

W. Robert Stephenson
327 Snedecor Hall
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011

Carol Lancaster
Department of Educational Services
Medical University of South Carolina
Charleston, SC 29425

Editorial Board

C. Lancaster	Editor			
M. Adams	AL α	D. Rohatgi	OH α	L. Haugh VT α
D. Boes	CO α	W. Warde	OK α	J. Birch VA α
W.R. Stephenson	IA α (Position available)		PA α	G. Hobbs WV α
D. Wackerly	FL α	Y. Palesch	SC α	R. Cochran WY α
G. Milliken	KS α	D. Edwards	SC β	
A. S. Katiyar	LA α	E. Eltinge	TX α	
C. McCulloch	NY α	R. Canfield	UT α	
C. E. Smith	NC α	J. L. Madrigal	UT β	

News From the Chapters

Oklahoma Alpha Chapter -- Oklahoma State University

- Oklahoma State University has hosted a summer science and math academy for Native Americans for the past two years and will be doing so again in the summer of 1997. The academy is a residential, one month experience in June. Students are exposed to mathematics, computers and statistics in morning classroom settings, and to environmental science and chemistry in laboratory or field setting in the afternoon. The program is funded by NASA and is designed to encourage more Native American participation in science, engineering and math.

The Statistics component covers some of the material which would be covered in a basic methods course. The students are also involved in a project in which they work in groups to design, conduct and analyze a telephone survey.

- One of our recent MS graduates, **Anthony Miller**, took a position with the Iowa Foundation for Medical Research in Des Moines, Iowa, where his boss is a former student from OSU.

Carri Duvall, another MS graduate, took a position teaching Math and Stat at an art institute in Houston, Texas.

Valerie Skaggs, another MS graduate, moved to Oklahoma City with her husband and is pursuing a PhD program in Biostatistics at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

Julie Sawyer, a PhD graduate, is currently teaching at North Eastern Oklahoma State University (where her husband is a member of the Psychology faculty).

Dong Jeong completed the PhD and returned home to Korea where he is currently looking for academic employment.

South Carolina Beta Chapter -- University of South Carolina

- The South Carolina Beta Chapter of Mu Sigma Rho, housed at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, had a very active and successful year in 1996.

In February, the chapter took a field trip to the Charleston, SC ASA chapter meeting followed by a Saturday tour of the city.

Members were also active that Spring in manning the Department's booth for the USC Showcase day, a day where local parents and other interested parties visit the University to get a glimpse of its programs and activities.

But the biggest event of the year by far was the excursion to the Chicago Joint meetings. There, five chapter members (**Jason Owen, Wanzhu Tu, Jesse Cunningham, Jennifer Lasecki, and Beth Walters**) participated in the College Bowl in a tight match against Iowa. Though Iowa won, the match was a close one and a rewarding experience for all. Members of the chapter also helped to entertain the revelers at the Monday evening student mixer that week - the Department rock band, the "Tragic Mu's", features 1996-97 chapter President **Jason Owen** on guitar and vocals.

Utah Beta Chapter -- Brigham Young University

- Since enjoying time together outside of an academic setting is of value to our Mu Sigma Rho members, a great emphasis is placed on social activities. Each academic year has an opening and closing social, with other activities throughout the year. This year's opening social, held on the BYU campus, was full of get-to-know-you games, food, and fun.

Our induction banquet was held at one of Provo's finest Mexican restaurants, with more than 30 attendees. Dr. Alvin Rencher was the honored faculty member. His speech covered topics including the value of an education in Statistics and advice for future graduates.

A Christmas social was held at the home of Dr. Gale Rex Bryce, Department Chair. White elephant gifts were exchanged, games were played, and friendships were strengthened.

Presently Mu Sigma Rho is sponsoring a volleyball/walleyball tournament for all interested students and faculty as a follow-up to our racquetball tournament last year. On schedule for the near future are an ice skating party and our annual closing social.

- The newly elected officers for the 1996-97 BYU chapter of Mu Sigma Rho are **David Dahl**, president; **Rachelle Curtis** and **Lori Lynn Price**, vice-presidents; and **Michelle Jolley** and **Keyne Monson**, secretaries. Faculty advisor is Dr. J. L. Madrigal.

Also, Dr. Howard B. Christensen accompanied a BYU student team (consisting of **Elizabeth Nagel**, 1995-96 Mu Sigma Rho president; **Michelle Jolley**, 1995-96 Mu Sigma Rho secretary; and **Todd Nelson**)

to Winona, Wisconsin to participate in the Second Annual Undergraduate Data Analysis Contest, April 13, 1996. These three students placed fifth in the contest and received a plaque and cash prizes.

Elizabeth Nagel, Julene Kemp, Chuck Jensen, and Brian Beus (all Mu Sigma Rho members and graduate students) presented papers at the ASA meetings in Chicago, held in August, 1996.

- Newly inducted members are **Valerie Clark, Jeff Bean, Keyne Monson, Lori Lynn Price, Rachelle Clark, Valerie Shellman, Jared Christensen, Leanne Cox, Matthew Eyre, Adrian Nye Nelson, and Stephanie Stanworth.**

- Several recent graduates have been hired at Intel, Intermountain Health Care, and BARD Systems Access, to name a few. Their salaries range from \$33K to \$49K. Graduates are pursuing postgraduate work include **Lance Milner**, at University of Tennessee; **Elizabeth Nagel**, at University of Washington; and **Darin Rollins** and **Chris Peterson**, both at BYU.

- Our internship program continues to grow. Last summer we had 16 students participating in internships across the United States. The companies ranged from manufacturing (food, fertilizers, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and semiconductors) to medical research and consulting, and insurance. We have recently signed a contract with DuPont allowing up to two interns per year to work with their senior statisticians in Wilmington, Delaware. This was a real breakthrough and further recognition of the quality of our program and students. **Erin Whitworth**, Mu Sigma Rho member, is currently interning at DuPont.

- Our chapter sponsored LARC, a program written in the department which ranks items based on pairwise comparisons. Each week Mu Sigma Rho members enter college football scores into LARC and print a weekly Top 100 listing. This listing is displayed in the Math and Computer Building. Next to the listing is a description of LARC and some of the statistical theory upon which it is based. Not only has LARC served to stimulate interest in the department and in the field of statistics but it has also generated six theses!

- Dr. John A. Nelder, of Imperial College, London was the principal discussion leader for the 21st Annual Summer Institute of Applied Statistics, held June, 1996. Dr. Nelder is a fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, and the International Statistics Institute. The institute was well attended and enjoyed by all participants. The 22nd Annual Summer Institute of Applied Statistics will be held June 18-20, 1997.

Vermont Alpha Chapter -- The University of Vermont

- The University of Vermont's Statistics Program awards MS degrees in Statistics and Biostatistics, with 23 students currently enrolled (10 Stat and 13 Biostat), and BS or BA degrees in Mathematics with Statistics concentrations. We also have an Accelerated Masters Program for either Statistics or Biostatistics in which an undergraduate can take some courses for graduate credit. Our first two students in that program will be graduating this May.

- In Spring Semester 1996, we initiated seven students. These students were honored both in the College of Engineering and Mathematics Honor Day ceremony and in our Department of Mathematics and Statistics honors ceremony. The students with their degrees and future plans are **Mazen Al-Athel**, MS in Biostatistics, returning to Kuwait to work; **Daniel Gottlieb**, MS in Biostatistics, new position in Ohio; **Barbara Mike**, Minor in Statistics (Math major), new position in Vermont; **Brad Mongeon**, Statistics courses (Math major) with actuarial interests; **Chris Murdough**, MS in Statistics, new position in Boston; **Zoe Pyle**, Minor in Statistics (Psychology major); and **Fei Ye**, MS in Biostatistics, new position in Boston.

- The Fall 1996 semester began with a statistics social gathering of the faculty and students, and a discussion of the role of the Statistics Student Association. This was in addition to our regular departmental picnic and an orientation for the new graduate students.

Glen McFarlane, president of the SSA, has helped plan various activities for the group, and has designed the first Web pages for the graduate programs.

- The students started a Biostatistics Journal Club that meets monthly for discussion of a selected paper. The students have been invited to attend journal clubs for our Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Low Back Pain, when the selected papers are statistical in nature.

- Dr. Kevin Little from Madison, Wisconsin presented an interesting consulting experience, and then visited with the students to discuss career possibilities. Steve Bailey of Wyeth-Ayerst in upstate New York will visit in March to discuss the types of analyses statisticians perform in the pharmaceutical industry.

- Some students are planning to attend the New England Statistics Symposium at the University of Connecticut in April, 1997. In April, 1996, a number of students attended a conference at RPI sponsored by the neighboring section of the ASA.

President's Column

Don Edwards, University of South Carolina

Mu Sigma Rho is the national honor society for statistics. Its Iowa State founders in 1969 stated its purpose as "the promotion and encouragement of scholarly activity in statistics, and the recognition of worthwhile achievement among the staff and students in eligible academic institutions." Today, Mu Sigma Rho has 20 chapters across the country, including a brand new chapter at the University of Florida.

As outgoing president this year, though, I have to admit that Mu Sigma Rho could be much more than it is. Twenty chapters is a great achievement, but continuing disinterest in Mu Sigma Rho by many major Statistics programs is a source of frustration. For example, there is only one Ivy League chapter, there are no Big Ten chapters, and there are no chapters west of Utah. I believe the problem lies in our image as a passive society, one which exists only to induct its members. This is an image I would like to see changed. Mu Sigma Rho chapters (and the local Stat Clubs on which they are built) should be active, energetic entities. Besides honoring inductees, Mu Sigma Rho has been, and can continue to be, active in sponsoring or co-sponsoring sessions on Statistical Education at ASA Meetings. Locally, some chapters are involved in outreach activities such as judging science fair competitions, manning booths for University showcases, and visiting high schools. There is so much more that can be done in this respect, and it is so badly needed. I'm sure we would all agree that our profession has an identity problem with the general public. What better PR reps than our most outstanding students?

Perhaps the best example of a useful Mu Sigma Rho activity is the College Bowl. Last summer at the Joint Meetings in Chicago, Mu Sigma Rho and the Section on Statistical Education co-sponsored the fourth Bowl, and College Bowl V is a "go" for the Anaheim meetings, featuring George Casella as emcee. ASA has been extremely supportive, reserving prime-time mid-morning session times on Tuesday and Wednesday of the meeting week, and providing substantial free advertising in the AmStat news. In the Chicago Bowl, eight teams representing eight excellent graduate programs (and six Mu Sigma Rho chapters, denoted by asterisks) competed: Brigham Young*, Chicago, Iowa, Iowa State*, Nebraska*, South Carolina*, the Medical University of South Carolina*, and Virginia Tech*. After Tuesday morning's preliminary competition, emceed by co-organizer Mark Payton of Oklahoma State, Bob "Boss" Hogg of Iowa took over as emcee for the Wednesday session. There, the Iowa State Cyclones surged ahead of Chicago to win the Bowl for the second time in three years, before a full-house audience of several hundred. The winning team from Iowa State consisted of Pam Abbitt, Kevin Dodd, Anindya Roy, and Pradipta Sarkar.

Every student Bowl participant receives an award. The 1996 College Bowl saw unprecedented corporate sponsorship, with 40 awards offered with total dollar value exceeding \$10,000 ! MathSoft, SAS, StatXact, Minitab, Wiley, Dekker, Addison-Wesley and Duxbury each provided several students with an award of value at least \$50, and in some cases professional software copies or books worth hundreds of dollars were provided.

Several of last year's teams and sponsors have already expressed interest in returning for the '97 Bowl. You (whether student or faculty) can help by being the driving force in organizing your team. **Don't wait, do it now!** Deadline for registration is June 1, 1997. There are advantages to registering early, since any "byes" awarded will be given in order of registration. Teams will consist of four players who must have been full-time students at some time during 1997. Team players need not be from the same University or College. There is no monetary registration fee for teams. All that is required for registration is that: (1) The players on a team make a serious commitment to attend the meetings and compete; (2) Each team submit 10-20 (good) questions to be used in the competition. Your team is not officially registered until its questions are submitted! Send questions to Mark Payton, Department of Statistics, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater OK 74078, or by email: mpayton@Okway.okstate.edu. Anyone (students or faculty) may write questions - care will be taken to insure that no team is asked its own questions in the competition.

See the College Bowl homepage for example questions and rules of the Bowl, and other details. You can get to it through the Mu Sigma Rho homepage, at <http://www.stat.sc.edu/msrnatl.html/>.