I am happy to have this opportunity to tell you a little bit about what has been going on in the Department of Statistics this year. After being appointed as interim Chair in October 2002, I was appointed to a three-year term as Chair of the Department and Director of the Statistical Laboratory in July 2003. State budget rebates in 2003 and further cuts in 2004 have made this a challenging year, but the State budget picture seems to be improving and I am looking forward to a bright future for the department. I am fortunate to be working with a very generous and productive faculty who have worked through our budget problems with minimal complaints and kept us moving forward. Our faculty continues to receive national and university awards, and these are covered in annual reports available online (http://www.stat.iastate.edu/preprint/publications.html).

The support many of you have given the department in the past few years has been greatly appreciated. It has enabled us to support faculty development and student scholarships at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Tuition scholarships from your donations have helped us have one of our best years in recent memory for recruiting new graduate students. Eli Lilly provided a major boost this year with a three-year gift from the Lilly Foundation that provides additional research support for one advanced graduate student and supplements to scholarships of four students who will enter our graduate program next fall. The Eli Lilly Scholarship will be featured in the fall newsletter. The Klemm Analysis Group, Inc. continues to support a graduate student focusing on “Statistical Communication”. This year’s fellow worked on a research project that compared a web-based course with a traditional lecture course.

There have been some major changes in personnel this year. Four excellent scholars, Song Xi Chen, Ranjan Maitra, Michael Larsen and Petruta Caragea, joined our faculty in 2003. Brief biographies are included in this newsletter. We have also had some resignations. After working as a visiting research scientist at the IBM Watson Research Labs for several years, Yasuo Amemiya resigned from our faculty to assume a full-time research director position at the Watson labs. After serving three years as an NSF Program Director, John Stufken has left our faculty to become the Chair of the Department of Statistics at the University of Georgia. Many of you greatly benefited from their teaching and mentoring, and I am sure you will join us in wishing them well. Kirk Wolter returned to NORC last June. The new Interdisciplinary Research Institute for Survey Science (IRISS) that Kirk developed to promote research activities in survey sampling, education and the social sciences will not formally continue after July 2004, but the collaborations and new initiatives that he established will have continuing impact on our research community. The Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (CSSM), currently directed by Sarah Nusser, will continue as an independent center.

We have also had some changes in the staff. Many of you have communicated with Beth Weiser, who produced our newsletters and annual reports and worked on our website and alumni correspondence. Beth resigned in November to take an extension communications position in the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department. Unfortunately, university cuts prevented us from filling Beth’s position. Beth’s duties were distributed among the staff and Sherri Martinez will serve as a primary contact for alumni. Paula Beckman joined our staff as Clerk Typist III in September, but her position was lost in the budget cuts to the Statistical Laboratory and she will leave the department in July. We enjoyed having her on our staff. Brenda Hewitt, who is a half-time Clerk Typist III, is another victim of budget cuts and will also leave us this summer. Brenda has been a valuable Statistics Department employee for 18 years.

In 2001, the Department of Statistics was awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) Vertical Integration of Research and Education (VIGRE) grant to help promote graduate study in Statistics among U.S. citizens. Mark Kaiser and Dean IsaacsJn administer this grant. I am proud to report that we had a successful three-year review of our VIGRE program in the fall and it was extended for two more years. VIGRE is focused around seven working groups of faculty and students that meet on a regular basis to discuss current research. The current working groups focus on engineering statistics, survey statistics, social sciences, graphical and computational statistics, probability and math-
mathematical statistics, bioinformatics and genetic statistics, and ecological environmental statistics. These groups provide opportunities for younger graduate students to become engaged in departmental research activities. The VIGRE program also currently provides financial support for one post-doctoral fellow and about a dozen graduate students. This support allows the graduate student to reduce normal TA or RA duties and concentrate more on research. We are in our third year of VIGRE sponsored summer research opportunities for undergraduates. This year we have nine summer VIGRE scholars and several other undergraduate scholars who will be supported through our NSF-sponsored program for minority students. Mentoring these students will keep a number of faculty and graduate students busy. The undergraduates will each write a research paper and present the results of their research projects in July.

Our graduate program remains strong. We have about 140 graduate students and this year we awarded nine Ph.D. degrees and 39 M.S. degrees. We also have another 32 students enrolled in our distance education M.S. program. More information about our distance education program can be obtained from the department website or by contacting either Dean Isaacson or me.

We also have been actively advancing our undergraduate program. In the last three years our undergraduate program has grown from about 20 majors and co-majors to 37 majors or co-majors in Spring 2004. Bob Stephenson, Bill Duckworth and Amy Froelich have received NSF funding for a project to develop new teaching methodology. This has supported development of an honors section of Stat 101 that will promote the study of statistics to some excellent undergraduate students. Last summer, before the budget cuts hit, we were fortunate to secure funds to replace the computers in the Snedecor 322 computer lab and install ceiling mounted projection and audio systems in both Snedecor 321 and 322. These are now very nice interactive teaching facilities. We were also able to replace the computers in our graduate student computing lab.

We will send out the next newsletter in October. We hope to save some money on postage by posting an online copy of both the newsletter and the annual report. Any questions or information you have may be e-mailed to Sherri Martinez at StatTimes@iastate.edu. The URL address for both the Newsletter and the Annual Report is (http://www.stat.iastate.edu/preprint/publications.html).

We are currently working on an alumni section to our website to post news, list employment opportunities, and help you communicate with us and other alumni. If you have significant life events or professional accomplishments that you would like to share, please contact Sherri Martinez at StatTimes@iastate.edu. We would like to hear from you. I hope to see many of you at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Toronto.

Ken Koehler
Chair and Director

Honors & Awards

Wayne Fuller, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, was the recipient of the 2003 Marvin Zelen Leadership Award in Statistical Science. Given by the Department of Biostatistics at the Harvard School of Public Health, the award recognizes an individual in government, industry, or academia, who has greatly influenced the theory and practice of statistical science. As part of the award, Fuller delivered a public lecture at the Harvard School of Public Health entitled, “Analytic Studies with Complex Survey Data”, on May 30, 2003. He was also presented with a citation and an honorarium.

William Q. Meeker, Distinguished Professor, was the recipient of the William G. Hunter Career Award from the Statistics Division of the American Society for Quality Control, October, 2003, El Paso, Texas.

William Q. Meeker, Distinguished Professor, and Huaiqing Wu, Associate Professor, were awarded the Jack Youden prize for best expository paper published in the 2002 edition of Technometrics.

Sarah Nusser, Professor, Director of CSSM, and Philip Dixon, Professor, were named Fellows of the American Statistical Association.

Ranjan Maitra, Associate Professor, received a National Science Foundation Career Award.

Jean Opsomer, Associate Professor, received the Distinguished Achievement Award by the American Statistical Association Section on Statistics and Environment.
2002 6th International Conference on the Teaching of Statistics (ICOTS 6) – S. Africa

Mervyn Marasinghe, Bob Stephenson and Steve Vardeman received foreign travel grants to attend the International Conference on Teaching of Statistics held on July 7-13, 2003 in Cape Town, South Africa.

Marasinghe’s presentation was entitled, “Computer Modules for Teaching Statistical Concepts.”

Stephenson’s presentation was entitled, “Experiencing Statistics at a Distance”.

Vardeman’s presentation was entitled, “Providing ‘Real’ Context in Statistical Quality Control Courses for Engineers”.

Vardeman noted that a very good thing about the conference was that in parallel to the regular program, there was a training course for a large group of South Africa high school teachers, which was supported by the conference.

2002 XXXVe Journees de Statistique Conference

Jean Opsomer presented an invited talk at the XXXVe Journees de Statistique Conference, “Nonparametric Estimation in Complex Surveys with Auxiliary Information”. This conference was held on June 1-6, 2003 in Lyon, France. The Journees de Statistique Conference is in association with the Societe Francaise de Statistique in Monte Verita, Switzerland.

Faculty & Staff Achievements

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Outstanding Achievement in Research/Artistic Creativity – Soumendra Lahiri, Professor, was recognized for his national and international reputation for contributions in research and influence on the research activities of students.

Iowa State University Foundation Award for Outstanding Achievement In Teaching – Kenneth Koehler, University Professor of Statistics, was recognized for outstanding teaching performance over an extended period of time.

P&S Outstanding New Professional Award – Howard Butler, Systems Analyst with CSSM, was recognized for his contribution to campus units and collaborators, CSSM, and the NRI survey program.

ISU Foundation Award for Early Achievement in Teaching – Amy Froelich, Assistant Professor, was recognized for teaching excellence in Stat 101 and Stat 341-342; contributions to the development of a Stat 101 honors section; and mentoring and improving the teaching skills of graduate teaching assistants.

Margaret Ellen White Graduate Faculty Award – Mack Shelley, Professor, was recognized for his dedication and excellence in mentoring graduate students.

Promotion to Professor (Already Tenured)
Kaiser, Mark
Nusser, Sarah

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure
Maiti, Tapabrata
Wu, Huaiqing

Mark Kaiser, Professor, is Applications Editor for the Journal of the American Statistical Association.

Carl Roberts and Dianne Cook participated in the Center for On-line Learning’s inaugural “Case Studies in On-line Learning” on April 18, 2003. Faculty groups presented case studies in the development and use of on-line learning materials. Roberts’ presentation was entitled, “Statistical Control Applet”, and Cook’s presentation was entitled, “Development of On-line Quizzes for Statistics Courses”.

Krishna Athreya co-authored, with P.E. Ney, a book titled, Branching Processes, which has been published by Dover Publications.
New Faculty

Petrutza C. Caragea, (top left photo)
Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Statistics, 2003, University of
North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
Interests: Spatial statistics, mathematical statistics, time
series, environmental statistics.
Office: 125 Snedecor (Ph: 294-5582)
E-mail: pcaragea@iastate.edu

Song X. Chen, (2nd from left photo)
Associate Professor, Ph.D., 1993, Australian National Univ.
Interests: Empirical likelihood, financial econometrics,
statistical inference for various risk measures, testing of
diffusion models, smoothing methods for curve estimation,
surveys: line transect and capture-recapture.
Office: 315F Snedecor (Ph: 294-2729)
E-mail: songchen@iastate.edu

Chen’s personal interests are reading, listening to music, and
bush walking. Chen and his wife, Ling, have been married for
14 years. He grew up in Beijing and Ling grew up in Inner
Mongolia. Since leaving China 14 years ago, they have lived
in Wellington, New Zealand; Canberra, Hobart (Tasmania);
Melbourne (Australia); and Singapore. The Chen’s have two
children – daughter, Maya, is almost 5 and son, Oliver, is 2.
Maya was born in Melbourne and Oliver in Singapore. Both
are looking forward to snow, which they have not yet seen.

Michael Larsen, (3rd from left photo)
Assistant Professor, Ph.D., 1996, Harvard.
Interests: Survey sampling, missing data problems, mixture
and latent class models, Bayesian modeling, small area
estimation, administrative records and record linkage.
Office: 216A Snedecor (Ph: 294-5189)
E-mail: larsen@iastate.edu

Mike and his wife, Alice, have been married for 1½ years.
They have two cats, Mariah and Felix. His hobbies include
walks and movies. He and Alice are still exploring Ames, Des
Moines, and the surrounding area.

Ranjan Maitra, (top right photo)
Associate Professor, Ph.D., 1996, University of Washington.
Interests: Statistical computing, spatial statistics and image
analysis, multivariate methods, analysis of large datasets.
Office: 123 Snedecor (Ph: 294-7757)
E-mail: maitra@iastate.edu

Joint Statistical Meetings
August 3 - 7, 2003
San Francisco, CA

The Department of Statistics held a reception at the JSM 2003
in San Francisco from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 4.
The reception was held in one of the host hotels so it was
convenient for alumni and friends to stop by, even if they had
other scheduled events that evening.

The department provided hors d’oeuvres and soft drinks along
with a cash bar. The reception was well attended by about 75
current faculty and students, alumni, and friends.

Many informal discussions continued beyond the scheduled
time and some graduate school friends had dinner together one
more time.

The department plans to hold similar receptions at future JSMs
and we hope that you will all plan to join us.

JSM 2004 Meeting in Toronto

The Joint Statistical Meetings are always a good opportunity
to get together with Iowa State alumni and current faculty and
students. We have not yet organized a formal reception but
would be happy to help sponsor a gathering. Perhaps early
Monday evening, August 9, might be a good time. If anyone
would like to help make local arrangements in Toronto, please
contact Sherri Martinez at smart@iastate.edu. When we have
more information on this, we will post it on the alumni section
of the Statistics Department website (http://www.stat.iastate.edu/alumni/homepage.html). We would like to get
something organized by early July.
STAT-ers
By Tammy Brown
President

STAT-er Seminars:
The following were some seminars that STAT-ers enjoyed this semester:
- Dr. Lorenz talked about research at ISU’s Institute for Social & Behavioral Research (ISBR). He gave an overview and an example.
- Dr. Shelley talked about recent projects involving political science and statistics, using methods such as structural equation models, factor analysis, logistic regression, multiple regression/analysis of covariance, or general loglinear models, involving survey research and analysis of institutional data.
- Reid Landes and Justin Recknor talked about “Clients, Consulting and Collaborating”.
- People from John Deere came and presented opportunities within their company.

STAT-er Sports:
We have had a good year so far with two of our men’s volleyball teams winning their division. Hopefully, next semester we will have more IM championship T-shirts around Snedecor.

STAT-er Activities:
On October 31, Rhonda DeCook hosted the STAT-ers annual Halloween Party. Since we no longer have the Howard House available, we must find other places to hold events. Rhonda was brave enough to let us use her house. The winners of this year’s costume contests were as follows:
Best Halloween Costume:
Xiaoxi Li – Hula Girl

Most In-Character Costume:
Ivan Ramler – A Russian

Most Out-of-Character Costume:
Ben Skalland – Jesus on the Cross

Best Group Costume:

STAT-er Events:
The most exciting event was the Talent Show/International Dinner held in the spring with a great line-up of talent, representing faculty, staff, and students. Acts included skits, magic, and music. Jude Burger was an excellent MC, dressing for the occasion in a white tux with tails. There was a wide variety of food from just as wide a variety of countries.

Wayne Fuller & Dean Isaacson performed magic tricks w/cards

Talented staff gave their take on everyday life at Snedecor

Classical music played by Max Morris and the Dixons
Scott Kongable (B.S., ’89) has been promoted to President of Crystal Group Inc., Hiawatha, Iowa, a company that provides rack-mount server products, integration services, and custom system design. He wrote: “The founder stated the main reason was my analytical nature and the statistical analysis I performed on our business systems. Thanks for the education.”

Barbara (Mock) Sauter (M.S., ‘97) and her husband, Lonnie, are the proud parents of a son, Ryan Matthew. Ryan was born May 4, 2003, and Barbara says that he is a “very healthy and very active little guy”. Barbara works for H&R Block. The Sauters currently reside in Olathe, KS.

Phil Iversen (Ph.D., ’93) returned to Iowa in July. Iversen and wife, Sarah, have settled in Decorah. Phil is a statistician for Eli Lilly and Company. He has joined the ranks of telecommuters and travels to Indianapolis on a regular basis for meetings.

Daniel Mundfrom (Ph.D., ’91) received the M. Lucile Harrison Award for Professional Excellence, University of Northern Colorado’s (UNC) top faculty honor. The award is presented to a faculty member who has excelled at teaching, research and community service. He also received the 2003 Teaching Excellence in Graduate Education Award. Daniel is chairman of Applied Statistics and Research Methods. He has been on the faculty at UNC since 1995 and became department chairman in 2002.

David Dickey (Ph.D., ’76) is co-author of a book entitled *SAS for Forecasting Time Series*, Second Edition. Dickey is a professor of statistics at North Carolina State University. David is also a fellow of the American Statistical Association and a member of the Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

The department’s annual spring breakfast was held May 1st at Brookside Park. This year’s menu featured omelets, hash browns, coffeecake and pancakes. Faculty, staff and students contributed time and “expertise” to make the breakfast a success.

Anna Gaertner (one of our Dortmund exchange students) perfecting her flips at the spring breakfast!
From probabilities to paintings…

Shashikala Sukhatme, Emeritus Associate Professor of Statistics, has rechanneled her creative talents from biomedical statistical researcher to artist extraordinaire. Immediately following her retirement in December of 2000, Shashi took a 4-month trip to India to unwind and reflect upon her future. After returning, she decided “it’s time to paint”. Professional recognition of her work has shifted from refereed statistical journal articles to paintings accepted in juried watercolor shows.

When did she begin her artistic journey? In 1984, inspired by former department employee, Sylvia McNulty, Shashi took a 10-hour short course in painting, where she learned the principles of the color wheel and how to mix colors. Upon completion of the course, she felt disappointed in her ability to paint. While browsing an art magazine, she admired a scene of Mexico and thought “maybe I can do this”, so she began sketching at 6 a.m. and finished her painting at 2:30 p.m. without a break or lunch. Seventeen years later, Shashi still immerses herself in her current project and doesn’t come up for air for at least a week or two until the painting is completed.

Needing a sense of validation from other watercolor artists, Shashi became a member of the Iowa Watercolor Society (IWS) and began attending local meetings, where artists bring their own paintings to be critiqued by the group. Many of the participants have been painting for over 25 years and were surprised at the quality of Shashi’s paintings, being self-taught and having no formal training in painting. They encouraged her to enter her work in juried shows in Iowa.

Encouraged by her peers, she entered two paintings in her first juried IWS show, which was held in April of 2002, at Webster City. Both paintings, “Primrose” and the “Monarch Butterfly” were accepted and the Primrose received an Honorable Mention of Show.

Shashi’s story is an inspiration to all of us because she has proven that with courage, creativity, and hard work, it is possible to travel a new path and attain success.
As you may be aware, state appropriations to Iowa’s public universities have once again been slashed. As a result, the colleges and departments at ISU must once again tighten their belts.

In an effort to help the department save money, we are posting the newsletters and annual reports on the department website for your on-line viewing instead of mailing out hard copies. We will be creating an e-mail list for both the newsletter and the annual report so that we may notify you when a current newsletter or annual report is published. This will lower our printing and mailing costs and spare you the effort of trying to decide where to file another document! If you desire a hard copy, please e-mail us with your request and we will be happy to send you one.

If you are interested in receiving e-mail notification about the newsletters and annual reports, please e-mail: StatTimes@iastate.edu and put Newsletter or Annual Report in the subject line (put BOTH if you would like to receive e-mail notification for both publications).

Publications are accessible on-line (http://www.stat.iastate.edu/preprint/publications.html).

Also, we need your news! Drop us a line (StatTimes@iastate.edu) and tell us what’s new with you. Marriages, births, promotions, relocations, etc., are all newsworthy to us. We want to know what our grads are doing!

Thank you in advance for your response! We look forward to hearing from you.

Paula L. Beckman, Editor

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