

**Biostatistics Faculty/Student Forum**  
**May 14, 2013**  
**12:15-1:15 PM**  
**MINUTES**

**1) Announcements**

Karen Bandeen-Roche gave an overview of recent developments since our last faculty/student forum (in November 2012):

New babies include Jacob (Anna Dent) and Viggo (Kasper Hansen and Margaret Taub). Vadim Zipunnikov and his wife are expecting.

Students James Pringle, Shuo Xu, and Yenny Webb Vargas have each announced engagements.

Jointly-appointed faculty member Dani Fallin is the incoming chair of the Department of Mental Health.

Marie Diener-West has won her seventh Golden Apple Award.

We successfully recruited two new assistant professors for the 2013-14 academic year: Ani Eloyan, currently a postdoc here in our department; and Betsy Ogburn, who is completing a postdoc at Harvard Biostat. Cristian Tomasetti, a Harvard postdoc who also interviewed for one of our tenure-track slots, will be joining Oncology Biostatistics with a joint appointment in our department.

New postdoctoral fellow Guy Mahiane joined us in March. He will be working primarily with Larry Moulton and CFAR but will be moving to office space in our department in the near future.

Visiting faculty members Alexandre Bureau (from Laval University) and Tingting Zhang (from the University of Virginia) will be here for the next several months.

Hilary Parker's final thesis defense is on Wednesday, May 15 at noon in Room W2030. Hilary will be taking a position at Etsy as a data analyst. Shanshan Li (who defended on April 17) will be going to IUPUI's School of Medicine. George Wu (who defended on May 10) has taken a position at Crescendo Bioscience (in the San Francisco area). Postdoctoral fellow Brooke Anderson recently received an offer from Colorado State.

This year's master's thesis showcase will be held on Wednesday, May 22 at 3:30 in the Genome Café. All are welcome to attend.

In light of several recent "snatch and grab" incidents of cell phones, Karen encouraged everyone to be attentive to their surroundings and avoid using cellphones when walking outside.

**Standing Reports from:**

**BIT**

Fernando Pineda reported that the new storage system is due to come online this week or early next week. Anyone needing to move data should contact Marvin Newhouse in advance. On behalf of the entire department, Fernando thanked Jiong Yang for his work on the new storage system. Special thanks also go to Dean Klag for his renewal of the School's computing subsidy for the coming year.

We are working with IS to make more effective use of the basement server room.

The new university-wide storage facility, to be housed at Bayview and shared with the University of Maryland, is on track to open in 2014. At that time, we will assess whether or not to use that facility as our primary storage.

### **Students:**

Amanda Mejia reported that most first-year students are focused at the moment on the upcoming comprehensive exam (to be held on Monday, June 3). Over the next few weeks, they may be contacting first-year instructors with questions about the exam.

### **Events:**

In Ingo Ruczinski's absence, Karen Bandeen-Roche reported that ENAR's 2014 meeting will be in Baltimore. Ciprian Crainiceanu is the local arrangements chair. He is looking at various venues for a Tuesday night social event; some places being considered are the Aquarium and Peabody Library. The Department will also be hosting a welcome reception again next year. Anyone with suggestions, or wishing to participate, should contact Ciprian.

The School is gearing up for its centennial celebration, to be held during the 2015-16 academic year. Carol Thompson is our representative to the Schoolwide planning committee. Anyone with questions or comments about the celebration should contact Carol.

### **Graduate Program:**

In Brian Caffo's absence, Dan Scharfstein gave an update on the 2013-14 incoming class, which will be comprised of 10 new PhD and 7 new ScM students:

PhD:

1. Yibing (Oliver) Chen (East China University of Science & Technology/Washington State University)
2. Detian Deng (Shanghai Jiao Tong University/Johns Hopkins Biostatistics)
3. Yu Du (Beijing Institute of Technology/Johns Hopkins Applied Math)
4. Jack Fu (Duke)
5. Bing He (Peking University/Indiana University/Johns Hopkins Biostatistics)
6. Leslie Myint (Johns Hopkins Biomedical Engineering)
7. Claire Ruberman (Pomona College)
8. Sarah Salter (Kean University)

9. Elizabeth Sweeney (Purdue University/ Johns Hopkins Biostatistics)
10. Yuxin (Daisy) Zhu (Nanjing University/former summer intern here)

ScM:

1. Yang Bai (Michigan State)
2. Nicholas Carchedi (University of Maryland, College Park)
3. Katherine Freeland (University of New Mexico)
4. Zhicheng Ji (Fudan University)
5. Vivek Khatri (University of Chicago/University of Pittsburgh)
6. Andrew Leroux (Carnegie Mellon)
7. Minsun Park (Georgia Tech)

“Statistics in Action” is an initiative we proposed for the 2012-13 incoming PhD class that is supposed to provide students with exposure to how statistics are used in decision-making at the highest levels. Short trips to NIH, FDA, and the like to meet with practicing statisticians there were planned. To date, however, we’ve not implemented the program but would like to get things started. Faculty with contacts at NIH/FDA, or with ideas about what kinds of events we might hold either this year or in 2013-14, should contact Brian, Dan, or Karen. James Pringle has agreed to take the lead for the students.

Because of our large incoming class, we will need to identify additional student office space. One possibility being considered is a reconfiguration of the library (with the smaller area being converted into a student office). At this time, no decisions have been finalized; we will keep everyone apprised.

The comps will be in the same format as last year. PhD students will have a three-hour in-class exam consisting of one theory and one methods question, followed by an afternoon open-book probability question and take-home data analysis project. ScM students will have a four-hour –in class exam consisting of one theory, one methods, and one integrating question, followed by a take-home data analysis project.

Plans are in the works for a pre-seminar “didactic seminar,” whereby the seminar speaker would meet just with the students and provide a brief introduction to the seminar topic.

Since we will be temporarily losing our usual seminar room due to renovations, there was departmental enthusiasm for changing the time and date of the seminar itself for 2013-14. The new time will most likely be at noon, but the day is still to be decided. We will keep everyone apprised.

#### **Center:**

Rick Thompson reported that the Center has been interviewing for a new administrator and the top two candidates have been identified for a final interview.

On behalf of the Center, Rick thanked the members of the Department for their help on both the ICTR renewal and the MISTIE III grant application.

PhD student and Center biostatistician John Muschelli recently won an award for the top abstract (out of approximately 1,200) presented at the 2013 International Stroke Conference in Hawaii.

## Faculty Senate

Hongkai Ji reported that, so as to avoid possible copyright infringement, the School is asking faculty who wish to post PDFs of articles on their course websites to do so only through Welch Library's E-Reserve program. Faculty who currently have PDFs posted should take them down immediately. It is permissible for faculty to provide references, so that students can look up the articles for themselves. Lori Rosman, our Welch liaison, is scheduled to discuss this further at the May 28 faculty meeting.

CoursePlus now has a syllabus-editing tool. John McGready will be giving an overview of this feature, also at the May 28 meeting, in preparation for tie-in to the School's upcoming reaccreditation process (which Elizabeth Holt will discuss at the June 11 faculty meeting).

Mei-Cheng Wang reported on the new on-campus networking site, Bubbler. It will be akin to Facebook but will have as its primary purposes promoting collaborations between Hopkins researchers.

Mei-Cheng discussed recent and planned new construction on the JHMI campus and in the surrounding neighborhoods. In the works are, among other things, a Walgreen's pharmacy and an elementary school run by Hopkins (School of Education).

## Self-Study/University Collaborations

Karen Bandeen-Roche and Roger Peng presented a [summary](#) of the discussion at this year's retreat concerning the consultation/collaboration section of our upcoming self-study. In particular, we are looking for input from our jointly-appointed and adjunct faculty as to ways in which we might strengthen our ties to other departments/groups in the university. Do we need to do a better job of marketing ourselves, and if so, how and to whom? Karen also asked our extended faculty to think about how our department is viewed by others. It was offered that we are sometimes perceived as being "too busy" for collaborative projects, and so we may need to come up with a more pro-active approach to coordinating these kinds of requests for assistance.

After some discussion, the following suggestions emerged:

- Highlight our Coursera offerings
- Have Biostatistics students do "rotations" outside departments
- Look into offering a dual master's degree (ie, an ScM in Biostatistics and International Health)

Karen encouraged all faculty, students, and staff to think more broadly about these issues and email her with any feedback.