

Biostatistics Faculty Meeting

February 5, 2013

12:15-1:15 PM

AGENDA

Present: Faculty: Karen Bandeen-Roche; Brian Caffo; Ciprian Crainiceanu; Marie Diener-West; Constantine Frangakis; Andre Hackman; Harris Joffe; Hongkai Ji; Jeff Leek; Martin Lindquist; John McGready; Roger Peng; Fernando Pineda; Chuck Rohde; Michael Rosenblum; Ingo Ruczinski; Daniel Scharfstein; Elizabeth Stuart; Carol Thompson; Jim Tonascia; Mei-Cheng Wang; Gayane Yenokyan; Vadim Zipunnikov; **Students/Postdocs:** Detian Deng; Amanda Mejia; Trang Nguyen; **Staff:** Mary Joy Argo; Debra Moffitt; Marvin Newhouse.

Guest: Catharine Dorrier.

Announcements:

Alexandre Bureau, assistant professor in the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine at the University of Laval (in Canada), has begun a five-month sabbatical in our department. He will be working with Ingo on methods and applications in statistical genetics.

Kudos to PhD student Hilary Parker, whose data-informed reflections on the demise in popularity of her name have been picked up by *New York Magazine*. In the piece, originally posted on her blog, Hilary compares the precipitous decline in the frequency of "Hilary" as a choice of baby name occurring in 1993 to other female names most dramatically declining in popularity in the US over the last 132 years. You can check out her findings [here](#).

Standing Reports:

BIT:

Fernando Pineda reported that the new storage system may be up and running as early as this afternoon. The expense of purchasing the new system will ultimately reduce our overall storage costs.

Graduate Program:

Brian Caffo reminded everyone of our upcoming PhD recruitment weekend this coming Friday and Saturday (February 8 and 9). Twenty-seven of our top PhD applicants will be attending this year.

Faculty Senate:

Mei-Cheng Wang reported that the Faculty Senate recently met with representatives from the School's centennial celebration planning committee (2016 is the School's centennial year). Karen has already met with planning committee representatives, and we will be scheduling them for an upcoming faculty meeting.

The Faculty Senate received a demo of the "Turn It In" software (as part of the School's continuing efforts to reduce instances of plagiarism/cheating). Mei-Cheng emphasized that use of the software is optional and the instructor's discretion. In a discussion of the pros and cons of using this or similar programs, there was consensus that this type of software may not be entirely suitable for our department's educational needs.

Students

Amanda Mejia reminded everyone of the upcoming cultural mixer on Friday, February 15 at 4 PM in the Genome Café. Presenters include Martin Lindquist, Francis Abreu, Helen Powell, and Dan Jiang.

Events

Ingo Ruczinski reported that retreat planning will soon be underway.

Center

On behalf of Rick Thompson, Gayane Yenokyan reported that Rick and John Muschelli, along with Dan Hanley's group from the School of Medicine, are attending the 2013 International Stroke Conference in Hawaii. Gayane will be meeting with representatives from the VA/University of Maryland regarding opportunities for future collaborations.

Other Business

The University has kicked off its new "[10 x 20](#)" plan, a written set of priorities that will guide the university through the remainder of the decade.

Regarding the University's recent Bloomberg gift, Karen reported that the money is intended to support cross-disciplinary professorships (particularly ones that bridge between schools). We as a faculty should think about whether we want to put together a proposal for funding (up to 10 internal people, and up to 40 new faculty, can be supported).

In a follow-up to Mei-Cheng's discussion of the School's centennial planning, Karen encouraged everyone to think about which departmental achievements/individuals we'd like to highlight; suggestions for speakers are also encouraged. There was also some discussion of possible centennial tie-ins to the 2014 ENAR and 2017 JSM meetings (both of which will be held in Baltimore).

As part of the School's fundraising efforts, each department is developing a case statement.

Best estimates are that sequestration is most likely going to happen; as a result, the School's NIH funding will be affected (anywhere from 6-20% in NIH funding costs are being projected). Some austerity measures may need to be introduced. While there was enthusiasm for having Dean Klag or President Daniels write a letter to Congress addressing the consequences of sequestration, it was noted that this may not be possible because of the university's tax exempt status. All of us as individuals, however, are free to write to our Congressional representatives.

Since our departmental self-study is due at the end of 2013, this year's retreat will have the self-study as its focus.

Marie Diener-West recently attended Harvard's workshop on case-based learning (where the onus for learning is on the students, with less emphasis on traditional classroom learning). It was noted that such an approach might work for a schoolwide DrPH here.

Patty Hubbard continues to recover and will likely be returning to work in a month or two.