Message from the Chairman

The 2013-2014 academic year was very successful for the department. Fifty-four new students joined the department this fall and our total number of graduate students is now 137. We developed a Statistical Data Science major program which will begin in Fall 2015. The new program, mainly designed by Elizabeth Slate and Dan McGee, will award a Masters in Statistics and focus on preparing professionals who are knowledgeable in applied analytics and can manage as well as analyze “big data.” The degree may be completed in three semesters and requires 32 credit units. Students enrolled in this program will obtain not only a background in applied statistical methods, but also sufficient proficiency in the software packages SAS and R to take on data management and analysis projects immediately for the most common scenarios facing data-driven decisions in government and industry. A SAS certificate offered jointly with the SAS Institute may be obtained simultaneously.

This year we successfully recruited Dr. Xin (Henry) Zhang, Ph.D. 2014 from the Department of Statistics, University of Minnesota. Dr. Zhang’s research areas include efficient estimation procedures in multivariate parameter estimation and prediction; multivariate statistical analysis in high-dimensional settings; regression graphics and data visualization; and sufficient dimension reduction in regression.

Our faculty have received many prestigious honors, awards, and promotions in the 2013-2014 academic year. Eric Chicken was promoted to full professor in 2014, and Yiyuan She was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2014. With an outstanding record in research and creativity, Anuj Srivastava was awarded the title of Distinguished Research Professor at FSU in the spring of 2014. He was also selected for a 2014-2015 Fulbright U.S. Scholar award and was elected to the rank of Fellow in the International Association for Pattern Recognition (IAPR). In the spring semester of this year, Yiyuan She received a NSF Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Award. Both Anuj’s Fulbright Award and Yiyuan’s Early Career Award have been recognized by FSU as Extraordinary Accomplishments.

Our graduate students also received many prestigious awards during their study in the department. For example, Qian Xie (supervised by Anuj Srivastava) received the FSU 2013-2014 Graduate Student Research and Creativity Awards which is awarded to only five outstanding graduate students each year; Gary Gramajo and Felicia Griffin won McKnight Dissertation Fellowships for 2014-15; we have three Legacy Fellowship holders (Collin Dougher, Kelly Findley, and Albert Steppi); and Jason Cleveland and Zhengwu Zhang received presentation awards at the Florida Chapter of the ASA Annual Meeting in 2014.

We have also begun to build partnerships with industry thanks to our alumni and current faculty. These partnerships provide internships and valuable work experience to our students and we look forward to developing more opportunities like this to continue to strengthen our department.
FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Anuj Srivastava

In 2014, Professor Anuj Srivastava was awarded the title of Distinguished Research Professor at FSU, won a 2014-2015 Fulbright U.S. Scholar award, and was elected to the rank of Fellow in the International Association for Pattern Recognition (IAPR).

The Distinguished Research Professor title is awarded to only a select few each year and is based on evaluation of one’s scholarly activities while at FSU. Dr. Srivastava received a one-time cash award of $10,000 along with the new title.

Yiyuan She

Newly Promoted Associate Professor Yiyuan She received a prestigious Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Award from the National Science Foundation this year. The award provides $400,000 in grant funding over five years and allows Dr. She to further his research into developing “methodologies for analyzing high-dimensional, multivariate data” which “may find applications in a wide range of disciplines and areas such as machine learning, signal processing and biostatistics.”

Debdeep Pati

Assistant Professor Debdeep Pati received Honorable Mention for the Leonard J. Savage Award for outstanding dissertation in Bayesian statistical theory and methods, 2013. Pati also received a Young Researcher Travel Award for participating in the International Society for Bayesian Analysis World Meeting at Cancun, Mexico (July 14-18, 2014) and has a new grant from the Office of Naval Research under the title: Bayesian shrinkage priors for high-dimensional parametric and nonparametric models.

Eric Chicken

Dr. Eric Chicken was promoted to Full Professor effective Fall 2014. He is the current president of the Florida Chapter of the American Statistical Association.
FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Adrian Barbu

Associate Professor Adrian Barbu was awarded 3 new patents recently:
1. A. Barbu; W. Zhang; N. Strobel; A. Galant; U. Bill; D. Comaniciu. Method and system for catheter detection and tracking in a fluoroscopic image sequence. Patent no. 8,396,533

Jinfeng Zhang

Professor Jinfeng Zhang’s company Insilicom LLC received an NSF STTR award for $225 K with $70K given to FSU as a subaward. His other company Innomedicine LLC recently applied for similar funding. Dr. Zhang’s innovative research in cancer treatment earned him a $50K GAP award last year from FSU’s Office of Commercialization. More info about this research can be found at http://fla.st/YMUDHH.

Victor Patrangenaru

Professor Victor Patrangenaru spent Spring Semester 2014 as a Research Fellow at the Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute, Research Triangle, N. C., as part of the Program: Low-dimensional Structure in High-dimensional Systems. While there he also organized and led the Working Group Data Analysis on Hilbert Manifolds and their Applications at the SAMS - LDHD Program in 2013-2014. In June, 12-16, 2014, Patrangenaru served as the organizer of the session on Data Analysis on Stratified Spaces at the Second Conference of the International Society for Nonparametric Statistics in Cadiz, Spain. Dr. Patrangenaru is currently directing Statistics Ph.D. students Ruite Guo, Mingfei Qiu, and David Lester and Math Student Kouadio David Yao. His textbook coauthored with L. A. Ellingson (Ph.D. 2011), Nonparametric Statistics on Manifolds and Their Applications, is tentatively scheduled for publication by Chapman&Hall/CRC in December 31, 2014. Patrangenaru had several other publications in 2013-2014 which are listed on http://stat.fsu.edu/~vic/CV.pdf.

NEW FACULTY

Xin Zhang

Xin “Henry” Zhang is our new Assistant Professor in Statistics. He was trained by Professor R. Dennis Cook and received his Ph.D. degree in Statistics from University of Minnesota. He received his B.S. degree in Applied Physics from the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC). Zhang’s current research interests include high-dimensional data analysis, model combining, sufficient dimension reduction and a nascent area in statistics called envelopes, whose goal is to increase efficiency in multivariate parameter estimation and prediction. He is currently teaching STA 4442/5440: Introductory Probability in fall 2014. In 2013, Dr. Zhang married Qing Mai who is a second-year Assistant Professor in our department.
NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS 2014-2015

The New Graduate Students in the FSU Department of Statistics this year are Eva Acevedo, Elizabeth Allgood, Britney Benzio, Apurva Bhingare, Claire Boyle, Lindsie Brantley, Yihan Cao, Danli Chen, Shan Cong, Mengyu Dai, Sutanoy Dasgupta, Yifang Deng, Collin Dougher, Yifan Du, Yiming Feng, Heli Gao, Candace Gilchrist, Jemica Gumbs, Mark Hamrick, Lijiang Han, Robert Henderson, Guanyu Hu, Shengjie Jiang, Yuting Lei, Donghang Li, Yuhang Liu, Mihir Mehta, Melaine Oliveira, Miao Peng, Jinchao Qu, Kai Qu, Amira Qumseya, Jie Shi, Inho Son, Young Jo Son, Lingxiu Su, Xin Sui, Lizhe Sun, Zhijie Tang, Jing Wang, Pengpeng Wang, Tanqing Wang, Shayla Wells, Binhua Wu, Jiaying Wu, Yichun Wu, Zhixing Xu, Yankai Xue, Jiewen Zhang, Roy Zhang, Ruiyi Zhang, Shanshan Zhang, Shuang Zhou, and Dingding Zu.

ALUMNI CONTRIBUTIONS

We would like to thank those who have donated and those who continue to donate to the department. We received recent contributions from Peiqing Liang (M.S. 2006), Doug Ransom (M.S. 1984), Ransom Solutions LLC.; Glenn Eschrich (B.S. 1966); David Fairweather (M.S. 1968, Ph.D. 1970); Terry Katz (M.S. 1995), ImClone Systems Inc.; John J. Beauchamp (M.S. 1963, Ph.D. 1967), Lipscomb University. Corporate donations came from Pharmacia Foundation and Merck Partnership for Giving.

We would also like to thank: Michiko Wolcott (M.S. 1999) who returned to give a seminar and presentation and who helped current grad students find internships with her company, Enfathom; Jaime Frade, (M.S. 2009) who will be here in October to recruiting for Wells Fargo; and Eric Aspinwall (M.S. 2012) who came in September for Seminole Futures to recruit for Deloitte.

STAFF UPDATES

Marylou Tatis left her position as Administrative Assistant in our department this year to move back to Miami. She is currently working as a Business Analyst for a small linen supply company where she uses the statistics skills she acquired at FSU while finishing her degree in International Affairs and Applied Economics. She also earned a SAS programming certificate while she was here.

Alyssa White joined our department in Spring 2014 as our new Administrative Assistant. Alyssa received her B.A. in Studio Art from FSU in 2012 and formerly worked for the FSU Libraries.

Alex Cohn, who is also a former employee of the FSU Libraries, joined our department in 2012 as our Academic Support Assistant. Alex handles all academic issues from admission and enrollment to graduation. Alex received his B.S. in Literature and Hospitality Management from FSU in 2011. He recently began working toward a M.S. in Higher Education.
RECENT PH.D. GRADUATES

2014

Aseel Almansour
Affiliation: International Monetary Fund
Thesis: The risk of lipids on coronary heart disease: prognostic models and meta-analysis
Professor: Dan McGee

Steve Chung
Affiliation: California State University, Fresno
Thesis: A class of semiparametric volatility models with applications to financial time series
Professor: Xufeng Niu

Oliver Galvis
Affiliation: MarketShare
Thesis: Sparse factor autoregression methodology for forecasting time series in high dimensions with very many predictors
Professor: Yiyuan She

Senthilbalaji Girimurugan
Affiliation: Florida Gulf Coast University
Thesis: Nonlinear multivariate tests for high-dimensional data using wavelets with applications in genomics and engineering
Professors: Eric Chicken and Jinfeng Zhang

Jose Laborde
Affiliation: Florida Atlantic University
Thesis: Elastic shape analysis of RNAS and proteins
Professors: Anuj Srivastava and Jinfeng Zhang

Michael Rosenthal
Affiliation: Naval Surface Warfare Center, Panama City Division
Thesis: Parametric and nonparametric spherical regression with diffeomorphisms
Professors: Anuj Srivastava and Wei Wu

James Derek Tucker
Affiliation: Sandia National Laboratories
Thesis: Functional component analysis and regression using elastic methods
Professors: Anuj Srivastava and Wei Wu

2013

Darshan Bryner
Affiliation: Naval Surface Warfare Center, Panama City Division
Thesis: 2D affine and projective shape analysis and Bayesian elastic active contours
Professors: Anuj Srivastava and Eric Klassen (Math)

Robert Holden
Thesis: Failure time regression models for thinned point processes
Professor: Fred Huffer
J. Derek Tucker (Ph.D. 2014) accepted a job with Sandia National Laboratories as a senior member of the technical staff where he will be performing statistical modeling and analysis of radar signals. He was also recently recognized as an outstanding reviewer for the IEEE Journal of Oceanic Engineering for 2013-2014.

Thomas Wiesen (M.S. 2014) joined the Ph.D. program in Economics at the University of Georgia.

Yu Chen Ding (M.S. 2014) is working as a Professional Service Consultant at Palamida in San Francisco, CA.

Vernon Lawhern (Ph.D. 2011) recently joined the Human Research and Engineering Directorate, Army Research Laboratory (ARL-HRED)

Leif Ellingson (Ph.D. 2011) was awarded a Texas Tech Alumni Association New Faculty Award for 2014 at the Texas Tech University Faculty Honors Convocation, April 22, 2014. This award was based on student evaluations, innovative teaching activities, initiation of research creative activities, and interaction with students.


Shuva Gupta (Ph.D. 2009) is a research fellow at the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences in Research Triangle Park, NC

Ivo Dinov (M.S. 1998 Statistics/Ph.D. 1998 Math) In the past year, Dr. Ivo D. Dinov (moved from UCLA to the University of Michigan, where he is a tenured associate professor (Departments of Leadership and Effectiveness Science, and Computational Medicine and Bioinformatics). Dr. Dinov continues to direct the multi-institutional Statistics Online Computational Resource (www.SOCR.umich.edu) and Probability Distributome Project (www.Distributome.org).

Thomas Minton (M.S. 1997) was accepted into the EdD program in Educational Leadership - Higher Education at the University of Central Florida.

Michiko Wolcott (M.S. 1999) is a Lead Data Scientist at Enfathom. Michiko returned to FSU in Spring 2014 to present a colloquium on Big Data and has helped some of our grad students obtain internships at Enfathom.

IN MEMORIAM

Kara Morgan (M.S. 1998) died from melanoma on July 15, 2014. Kara was known as a community leader in New Orleans. In the spirit of Kara’s desire to improve her community and to battle against skin cancer, a fund was created in her honor to provide shade structures for Burke Park in New Orleans.
Carlos Alberto de Bragança Pereira (Ph.D. 1980) has been awarded by the Brazilian Statistical Association in recognition for his work and career in statistics in Brazil.

A. Blanton Godfrey (Ph.D. 1974) After 14 years as the Dean of the College of Textiles and Joseph D. Moore Distinguished University Professor at NC State University, A. Blanton Godfrey has returned to teaching. Actually he is not returning, he is starting his teaching career since this will be his first time as a real professor. Blan taught graduate courses as an adjunct professor in Columbia University’s School of Engineering and Applied Science for nineteen years and as a visiting lecturer in a special course at Harvard University’s School of Public Health four years, but for the next couple of years he will focus on teaching undergraduate entrepreneurship and new product development courses and graduate courses in Lean Six Sigma and working with Ph.D students on their research. Blan also continues to serve on Florida State’s College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Council and enjoys being back on campus a couple of times a year.

Glen Grimme (M.S. 1972) participated in the SAS Institutes’ Cary/Raleigh/RTP North Carolina campus’ "Pi" day contest on 3/14/14. The contest had participants try to recall as many digits of pi as possible within 60 seconds. Glen took first place with 66 digits.

Alumni and current members of the Department at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Boston in 2014:

He Jiang, Zhengwu Zhang, Mahtab Marker, Qing Mai, Elizabeth Slate, Junxian Geng, Sebastian Kurtek, Felicia Williams, Leif Ellingson, Kaixian Yu, Xufeng Niu, Dai Ho Uhm, Michiko Wolcott, Wei Wu, Jinfeng zhang, Xin Zhang, Kelly McGinnity, Qian Xie, and Yuanyuan Tang. Photo by Jianghua He.
Mingfei Qiu received an ‘American Mathematical Society Travel Award’ in April 2014 and an ‘FSU Statistics Department Outstanding Scientific Presentation’ award for our International Year of Statistics Conference in November 2013. She was a coauthor on a publication with Dr. Victor Patrangenaru and Dr. Leif Ellingson (Ph.D.) "How Far is the Corpus Callosum of an Average Individual from Albert Einstein's?" that was presented at COMPSTAT 2014, Geneva. Mingfei was selected to be the finalist of FSU’s Three-Minute Thesis presentation in Spring 2014. “I really recommend other Ph.D. students to participate in this activity, because the Vice President of FSU’s Graduate School, Dr. Judith Devine would kindly offer a workshop for the finalists, and she gave valuable advice about our presentations. Moreover, there will be a video recording for the presenters, which could be used for hunting jobs.”

Xue Huang had a summer internship at the Pricing Actuary Department of American Modern Insurance in Cincinnati, Ohio. “It was my first summer internship. … I was working on the project of mixed model trending and credibility analysis for severity, frequency and earned exposure of different lines of insurance products.”

Shuguang Zhang had a summer internship at Enfathom which is a consulting company. “I worked on two projects with clients from the New Jersey Department of Health and AT&T. After we received the raw data from the clients, we cleaned the data, conducted statistical analysis, and presented to the clients our final findings from the raw data to help clients make business decisions. It was a great experience working in Atlanta and I learned some statistical methods and computational skills. More importantly, I had a chance to know how a consulting company functions and get in touch with people in different fields.”

Ashley Gardner was offered a Fall Internship working for the Ultimate Fighting (UFC) Research and Analytics Department. To accept the internship, Ashley had to move to Las Vegas for the semester. She plans to give a presentation when she returns to campus. Ashley has previously interned/volunteered with different sports teams at FSU.

Qian Xie received one of the FSU 2013-2014 Graduate Student Research and Creativity Awards. The Graduate Student Research and Creativity Award is the most prestigious award within FSU for graduate students. Three students from our department won the award in the last three years. Qian also received a student Travel Award from the IEEE International Conference on Computer Vision (ICCV) 2013, Sydney, Australia, December, 2013. She received a travel award from the Ermine M. Owenby Jr. Fund to Promote Excellence, Florida State University in December, 2013. She received the Bagui Award for the best student paper and presentation at the annual meeting, Florida Chapter of the American Statistical Association in February, 2013. Other travel awards received are from the Mathematical Biosciences Institute in February, 2014 and from the Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute in June, 2013.
Zhengwu Zhang received the Brumback Award and Jason Cleveland received the Lee Award at the Florida Chapter of the ASA Annual Meeting in February 2014. Each received $100 for their presentation based awards.

Michael Rosenthal received a Distinguished Student Paper Award, Eastern North American Region of the International Biometric Society for his paper "Parametric and Non-parametric Spherical Regression.". Michael also received an Outstanding Scientific Presentation Award at the International Year of Statistics Celebration at Florida State University in 2013.

Felicia Griffin and Gary Gramajo were awarded McKnight Dissertation Fellowships for the 2014-2015 year.

Gary was also invited to participate in The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers’ SHPE 2014 graduate student technical paper competition.

**The Yongyuan and Anna Li Award**

The Yongyuan and Anna Li Award was created in 1997 in memory of Yongyuan Li, one of the Department of Statistics' promising Ph.D. candidates, who died from cancer. The Yongyuan and Anna Li Award is given each year to the graduate student who delivers the best student colloquium. The award includes a cash prize and recognition on a plaque in the Department of Statistics’ Commons Room. This year’s Yongyuan and Anna Li Presentation Award is Michael Rosenthal.

**The Ralph A. Bradley Student Award**

Initiated in 1979, the Ralph A. Bradley Award is for a Ph.D. graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement. The award includes a cash prize and recognition on a plaque in the Frank Wilcoxon Memorial Reading Room. We present the R.A. Bradley Award to honor the Ph.D. student who defended his or her dissertation in the previous year and had the best dissertation. This year the prize goes to Darshan Bryner.
Best Graduate Teaching Assistant Award

This award started in 2013. Each year, we will select two graduate teaching assistants for the Best Graduate Teaching Assistant Award. These winners will also receive a one-time extra $200 travel allowance for attending conferences and presenting papers. The first two winners selected in 2013 were Glenna Gordon and Xue Huang.

In addition to winning one of the two Best Graduate Teaching Assistant awards, Glenna Gordon has also received an award for Outstanding Scientific Presentation at the International Year of Statistics event. She was also awarded money from the Congress of Graduate Students (COGS), Women in Statistics, and NIH to support her travel to the Women in Statistics event in May 2014.

Best First Year Student Awards

Each year, we give annual awards to those students (now in their second year) who did the best in the first-year courses in applied, theoretical, and computational statistics. This year these awards go to: Hoang Tran and Adam Duncan (in Applied Statistics), Kumaresh Dhara and Qi Zhao (in Theoretical Statistics) and Zhifeng Wang and Kyungmin Ahn (in Computational Statistics).

These winners will receive a one-time extra $200 travel allowance to attend conferences and present papers during their studies in our department (usually in the third through fifth years).
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT

You may show your support to the Department of Statistics at FSU by contributing to one of our already established funds or by contacting Nancy Smilowitz, Assistant Dean, Advancement and Alumni Affairs, to discuss how to establish a named endowed fund or to find more information about making a tax-deductible gift. Nancy can be reached at:

Office 850-644-9324, Cell 850-294-1034, Fax 850-645-3258, Email: nsmilowitz@foundation.fsu.edu

Our Existing Funds:

The Statistics General Development Fund was created to provide general support for our department in a variety of areas.

The Ralph A. Bradley Student Award is named for our department’s founder, Dr. Ralph A. Bradley. The award is presented to a graduating PhD student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement, culminating in the presentation of the best doctoral dissertation of the year.

The Yongyuan and Anna Li Fund was established by Anna Li in memory of her husband Yongyuan Li who died from cancer on April 7, 1997. The award consists of a cash prize and certificate and is presented to the graduate student who presents the best student colloquium each year.

The Ronald and Carolyn Hobbs Endowed Fund in Statistics was established by Ron Hobbs (MS ’67) and his wife Carolyn. The establishment of this fund was used to create an endowed chair position which Dr. Debajyoti Sinha now holds.

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