

# TEACHING of STATISTICS in the HEALTH SCIENCES

## ACTIVITIES PLANNED

### From the TSHS Chair: Ruth Mickey

A lot of work has been (and is being) done in preparation for the JSM in Atlanta, August 5-9. TSHS members are among those who are hard at work, making sure that Section members have opportunities to participate in sessions and other activities related to the teaching of biostatistics. I would like to thank Lynn Ackerson, our JSM 2001 Program Chair and organizer of our Topic Contributed Session, "If We Teach Them, Will They Learn? Ways of Teaching Biostatistics", Dan Freeman, organizer of our Invited Panel Discussion "Resolved: Required Biostatistics Courses Should be Dropped from Medical School Curricula", and Walter Ambrosius, organizer of our two luncheons. I also thank all those who have agreed to participate in Section activities.

Tuesday, August 7 is our big day for presentations, as the events mentioned above will take place on this day. Each one has been planned to allow for discussion. I hope a large number of TSHS members will be able to come and support each other in our Section's activities.

Our other big events are our annual members meeting and the mixer afterwards. These will be held on Wednesday, August 8, 6:00 - 7:30 pm. They will give us opportunities to exchange ideas about our Section and how it can best meet the needs of its members. At the mixer, we will be able to interact and socialize, in a more informal setting, with others who share our interests in the teaching of biostatistics; food and beverages will be provided.



**TSHS MEMBERS  
MEETING AND  
MIXER  
WEDNESDAY  
6:00 - 7:30 P.M.  
August 8, 2001**

On Monday and Tuesday, August 6 and 7, our Section is also sponsoring three continuing education short courses. These should be useful to anyone involved in study design. Each short course illustrates sample size and power calculations using a different software package.

In addition, our Section is co-sponsoring eight sessions related to either teaching or consulting. At least one of these is scheduled each day, from Sunday August 5 through Wednesday, August 8 (with most on Wednesday). These sessions will no doubt be of interest to TSHS members as well. Please see the article by Lynn Ackerson elsewhere in this issue for more details on all of the sessions sponsored or co-sponsored by our Section.

I'd like to comment on a couple of other things related to the meetings. We will no longer publish paper editions of the proceedings of our Section's sessions. Instead, our papers will be published on the ASA ProCDings, the CD-ROM which will include work presented at JSM 2001 from all sections.

Finally, I received the following from Nancy Hiatt, Office of Chapter and Section Relations, requesting people to volunteer to staff the Council of Sections Information Booth at the JSM 2001. "I am sending out the sign-up sheet for you to distribute to your members at [http://www.ocedge.com/COS\\_schedule.cfm](http://www.ocedge.com/COS_schedule.cfm). The Information Booth is a great opportunity for the Sections to talk with potential members as well as current Section Members. Please take this opportunity to recruit volunteers to spend a couple of hours at the book. Thank you in advance". I have volunteered to staff the Information Booth and I hope you will be able to volunteer your time to help our Section as well.

## 2001 JSM IN ATLANTA

### From the 2001 Program Chair: Lynn Ackerson

**W**hen you come to ASA this summer, save Tuesday as THE day for TSHS sessions. Starting at 10:30, we'll have a **Topic Contributed session (#180): "If We Teach Them, Will They Learn? Ways of Teaching Biostatistics."** The great thing about Topic Contributed sessions is that the speakers get 20 minutes instead of the usual 15 for a Regular Contributed session. First, John McGready will speak on "Everyone's Favorite Subject Now Online! Bringing Biostatistics to the Web!" Following him will be next year's Program Chair for our section, Walter Amrosius, talking about "A Web-Based Introductory Course for Fellows." Next up will be Renee Stolove who will discuss "Integrating Biostatistics Into the Curriculum of an Entry-Level Physical Therapy Program." And finally, Todd Nick's topic is "Biostatistical Consulting: An Opportunity to Teach." Anna Baron will wrap things up as the discussant.

Next, get ready for some great conversation at one of our **Roundtable Luncheons**. You can join either Peter Imrey to discuss "**Statistics and Epidemiology in Medical Education**" (#301743) or Nami Fineberg to discuss "**Teaching Short**

**Courses to Physicians**" (#301744). Personally, I love these luncheons because it gives us the best opportunity to meet and share ideas with people who have the same interests.

Finally comes the big debate (#206): "**Resolved: Required Biostatistics Courses Should be Dropped from Medical School Curricula.**" This is our **Invited Session** which begins at 2:00 and I'm very excited about it. Dan Freeman has brought together Peter Imrey, Ted Colton, Beth Dawson, and Naomi Fineberg to debate this topic. This session will be run like a classic debate with two people arguing in favor of and two arguing against the proposal.

This year, TSHS will present awards for **Best Invited Paper and Best Topic Contributed Paper**. Please be sure to vote at the sessions you attend. The awards will consist of a plaque and a cash prize and will be announced at the TSHS Open Members Meeting and Mixer on Wednesday, August 8.

We will also be sponsoring two **Short Courses** this year, both returning by popular demand. On Monday from 8:00-12:00, Janet Elashoff will hold her class on "**Determining Sample Size and Power in Study Planning: nQuery Advisor**" (#2001-27W). Ralph O'Brien will follow on Tuesday from 8:30-12:30 with "**Determining Sample Size and Power in Study Planning: UnifyPow - Intro**" (#2001-27W) If you do any consulting at all, you know how important it is to have the latest tools for sample size calculations.

Along with our own sessions, we are also **co-sponsoring** the following sessions and classes which may be of interest to you:

Sunday at 2:00: Session 19 - **Teaching Data Mining**

Monday at 2:00: Session 129 – **Contemporary Issues in Statistical Consulting and Collaboration**

Tuesday at 10:30: Session 176 – **Web-based Instruction and Distance Learning: Boom or Bust**

Tuesday from 1:00-5:00: CE Course 2001-31W – **Complex Power and Sample-Size Analyses Using SAS-Based Tools**

Wednesday at 8:30: Session 229 – **Nuts and Bolts: Teaching Modern Topics**

Wednesday at 8:30: Session 246 – **Teacher Training and Classroom Instruction Experiences**

Wednesday at 10:30: Session 251 – **Improving Statistical Consultation Using Recent Advances and Applications of Statistics Methods in Biomedical Research**

Wednesday at 1:30: Session 262 – **Statistical Literacy and Big Ideas**

Wednesday at 2:00: Session 303 – **Teaching Statistical Concepts Using New Technological Tools**

So if you haven't registered yet, now's the time. Don't miss any of these great events planned for JSM 2001 in Atlanta. See you there!

2002 JSM IN NEW YORK CITY

## From the 2002 Program Chair: Walter Ambrosius

I had no idea how far in advance the JSM meetings were planned until I helped with local arrangements for the 2000 meetings in Indianapolis. It was an interesting experience and I learned a lot about the internal workings of the JSM. As I write this, it seems like the 2002

meetings in New York City are a long ways in the future but now is the time to get the TSHS sessions for that meeting organized. The conference will be August 11-15, 2002 and the theme of the meeting will be "Statistics in an Era of Technological Change."

Because of the theme, I would like to organize a session about ways to teach statistics using technology. One obvious candidate would be a web-based course, but an instructor can also integrate technology into a classroom either by doing live demonstrations of statistical analysis or by exploratory graphics. Any other ideas along this line would be very welcome.

Many of the previous TSHS sessions have been about teaching in a formal setting, either a short course or a course for credit. In contrast, I think that it would be interesting to have a session devoted to teaching our collaborators in the informal setting of consulting. This session could touch on statistical methods we have taught to our colleagues and how well they have understood them.

I need to submit an invited paper session to ASA in July. If either of the above ideas for a session are interesting to you, please let me know. If you would like to propose another topic, that would also be wonderful. My email address is wambrosius@yahoo.com.

TSHS is allocated one invited session but we can have multiple special contributed and contributed sessions. Any and all ideas for invited, special contributed, and contributed sessions are very welcome.

See you in Atlanta.

### 2001 Section Officers for TSHS

Chair	Ruth Mickey	(802) 656-2526	Ruth.Mickey @ uvm.edu
Past Chair	Ralph O'Brien	(216) 445-9451	robrien @ bio.ri.ccf.org
Chair-Elect	Todd Nick	(601) 984-6313	tnick @ shrp.umsmed.edu
Program Chair	Lynn Ackerson	(510) 450-2386	lma @ dor.kaiser.org
Program Chair-Elect	Walter Ambrosius	(336) 716-7108	wambrosius@yahoo.com
Publications Officer	Stephen Looney	(502) 852-6376	Stephen.Looney @ louisville.edu
Newsletter Editor	Stephen Looney	(502) 852-6376	Stephen.Looney @ louisville.edu
Secretary-Treas.	Naomi Fineberg	(317) 274-4334	nfineber @ iupui.edu
Council of Sections Rep.	Ralph O'Brien	(216) 445-9451	robrien @ bio.ri.ccf.org
ASA Staff Liaison	Mary Fleming	(703) 684-1221	mary @ amstat.org

## Congratulations!

A BIG pat on the back for these deserving statisticians . . .

TSHS Chair – 2002: Todd Nick, Univ. of Mississippi Medical Center

TSHS Program Chair - 2002: Walter Ambrosius, Indiana University School of Medicine

TSHS Rep. to Council of Sections – 2001-2003: Ralph O'Brien, Cleveland Clinic Foundation

American Statistical Association  
 TSHS Newsletter  
 Stephen W. Looney, Ph.D., editor  
 1429 Duke Street  
 Alexandria, VA 22314-3415  
 USA