

**MINUTES OF THE STATISTICS SUBCOMMITTEE  
88TH BCCUPMS MEETING, MAY 18 – 19, 2010**

**TUESDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2010**

**Present:** Bruce Dunham (UBC) Chair; Al Fukushima (NVIT); Shane Rollans (TRU); Colin Macleod (Kwantlen); Ken Towson (Capilano); Winona Cordua-von Specht (BCIT); Richard Lockhart (SFU); Bevan Ferreira (Selkirk); Gabrielle Kakushkin (VCC); Tracy Wall (CNC). Apologies for absence received from Susan Chen (Camosun) and Larry Weldon (SFU, retired)

**Chair:** Bruce Dunham

**Acting Secretary:** Richard Lockhart

**1. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion of approval of agenda:** Moved: Ken Towson; seconded Al Fukushima; approved. **Carried unanimously.**

**2. Approval of minutes of the Statistics Subcommittee Session of the 87<sup>th</sup> meeting**

**Motion of approval of minutes:** Moved: Al Fukushima ; second Bevan Ferreira; approved. **Carried unanimously.**

**3. Matters arising from minutes**

As an action item from the previous meeting the Chair had contact Finola Finlay from BCCAT to determine whether there was a formal procedure for the appeal of articulation decisions. It transpired BCCAT has no formal procedure for appeals. In the case in hand the Chair had given UBC-V STAT 200 credit for a BUS course that it subsequently appeared articulated better to UBC-V's STAT 203. The Chair had notified BCCAT and corrected this articulation decision. A discussion ensued regarding the formalization of procedures and of the need for flexibility in evaluation of transfer, particularly for institutions who must use one course to serve needs in many disciplines. Dual designations were suggested, perhaps something like STAT 101 for UT and BUS 101 for accounting students. It was also suggested that an academic from a sending institution ensures an articulation request for a Statistics courses nominates the best match at the receiving institution.

**4. Institutional Reports**

**BCIT**

There have been no big changes recently. BCIT Statistics courses are particularly program focused and so likely do not articulate well to university courses. There may be some new engineering-oriented courses soon.

### **Camosun College**

Geoff Salloum has extended his leave of absence for another year. Eric Cormier from UBC will join this September. There are no other significant changes.

### **Capilano College**

Business is as usual. Enrolments have been at about 90% of capacity in the past year. A new president is to be appointed very shortly.

### **College of New Caledonia**

The college offers MATH 104 (Stat) and a Business Statistics course in business. Two sections are offered in Fall, one in January. The January section usually has a waiting list. Fall courses usually mostly full. Health Sciences students are sometimes choosing Business Stats as their Statistics course.

### **Kwantlen**

There have been lots of growing pains in moving to Polytechnic status. The institution is still looking for a dean and a vice president. A new president was appointed last year. There is much uncertainty regarding recent transitions. There has been a directive that the institution must offer a “true” BSc program within one year to avoid cuts. Possible majors include Biology and Mathematics. Some cancellations have been seen in low enrolment upper division classes, particularly in a course that articulates to SFU 270 though is probably at a higher level. There are moves to develop a third year Statistics course with limited prerequisites.

### **Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**

The current president is leaving and the former VP of Finance is taking over; concern was expressed about the future focus of the institute. A challenge remains covering many clients with one Statistics course because of resource constraints.

### **Northwest Community College**

NWCC offers Introductory Statistics at the Prince Rupert and Terrace campuses. In Prince Rupert both courses are for University Credit and Business Administration and are delivered by the Math department. In Terrace the two departments have separate offerings. There is much greater demand in Terrace due to the Nursing program.

### **Selkirk College**

Enrolments are up at Selkirk overall but there has been a softening of Science enrolments. Dissolved MATH 130/131: 130 is replaced by Math for elementary education and Bus. Math 131 was a finite math type introductory Statistics course that was not very transferable. Business Stat 1 is being investigated. The college is also looking at STAT 105 aimed at Arts and Social Science students. STAT 105 now transfers to Okanagan College as 121 and to 124, OC's Business Statistics 1. A collaboration with the College of the Rockies is being pursued, primarily to offer low enrollment courses jointly via video conferencing.

### **Simon Fraser University**

- 1) Reviews of both undergraduate and graduate programs are underway. Graduate program revisions are nearly complete. Undergraduate revisions focussed on STAT major courses. The changes are constrained by the needs of: Computing Science, Engineering (who use STAT 270) and Actuarial Science who use many of STAT courses. An undergraduate Time Series course is likely to appear. One aim is to increase the clarity of computing requirements within courses and this may lead to a specific course.
- 2) A proposal for a five-year high-school to MSc program is under consideration.
- 3) Efforts to collaborate with Mechatronics / Engineering were unsuccessful.
- 4) Andrew Petter is the new president.
- 5) Enrolment is up 40% or more over 08/09, largely due to increased numbers in service courses.

### **Thompson Rivers University**

The search is on for a new president after the firing of the last one who prompted major re-organization. Math/Stats is moving to Science as of 1 Sept. (to the School of Advanced Technology and Mathematics). A new chair is starting 1 June. One new multivariate course has appeared for MSc Environmental Science students. Enrolments have been good.

### **University of British Columbia, Vancouver**

A very busy year in the department saw three faculty positions being filled and work ongoing regarding the new building scheduled to accommodate Statistics from Summer 2012. The two assistant professor posts have been filled by Natalia Nolde and Alex Bouchard-Cote, the former a SFU graduate. The instructor position will be filled by Ms. Eugenia Yu.

Graduations from specialist degrees within the department were down on recent years, with 27 graduating since May 2009. The figure excludes those obtaining a minor in

Statistics of which there were about a dozen as usual. Unusually this year there were no students graduating on any of our Honours programs.

Work commenced this year on a re-vamping of the undergraduate curriculum in Statistics at UBC. Aims include modernizing the content of our 3xx/4xx offerings and also facilitating non-specialist students taking our upper-level courses. Any changes resulting from this process are unlikely to affect the STAT 2xx courses currently offered.

The department is actively involved in the development of a new course to be piloted for the first time in the 2010/11 academic year. The course SCIE 300, Communicating Science, will form part of the new, revised General Science program. A pilot run will commence in January 2011. In addition to Statistics the development team includes faculty from Life Science, Chemistry and Journalism.

Further details on any of the above can be obtained by either visiting [www.stat.ubc.ca](http://www.stat.ubc.ca) or contacting Dr. Bruce Dunham at [b.dunham@stat.ubc.ca](mailto:b.dunham@stat.ubc.ca).

### **Vancouver Community College**

There were no changes to report.

#### **5. Province-wide license for Minitab.**

Prompted by the suggestion of Veda Abu-Bakare (Langara College and Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning Division) the Chair had investigated the possibility of member institutions obtaining a BC-wide license for Minitab. It transpires this would cost around \$47k for unlimited use by faculty and students in the province, this being more than the (approximately) \$30k spent by institutions and on student rentals last year. The Chair had contacted HEITBC (Higher Education Information Technology in British Columbia), the not-for-profit organization that now deals with licensing deals for software. Although initially responsive, an executive director of HEITBC has failed to respond to several prompts from the Chair regarding how a license would be administered.

The major Minitab user in the province had been SFU, but that institution has recently opted to cut back its licenses for Minitab from 700 to 55, a move that likely makes an BC-wide deal unviable.

**Action: The Chair is to meet with a Minitab representative in July to discuss possible ways forward.**

#### **6. Flexible pre-major in Statistics**

The Chair prepared a document akin to that for the flexible pre-major in Mathematics, and which simply shows the lower division requirements at UBC, SFU and UVic lined up beside each other. The document does not suggest any sort of block transfer arrangement. There are difficulties with the differing lower division requirements outside of Math and Statistics, such as lower-level Science faculty requirements at UBC.

Additionally, the requirements for the Statistics major at UBC are likely to change in the next few years. Comments on Bruce's document are encouraged.

**Action: The Chair is to contact the Statistics representative at UVic to ensure requirements are current. Also, Chair will contact Jennifer Orum (BCCAT) to investigate how any Statistics pre-major can be ratified.**

#### **7. "Province-wide" standards in introductory Statistics courses.**

This topic was raised by Susan Chen (Camosun) *in absentia*. There was a brief discussion on the matter, partly focussed on somewhat mathematical Statistics courses that are offered at certain institutions in BC. The Chair voiced the opinion that other than where an introductory Statistics course is aimed at Engineering students (for whom the professional bodies require a calculus-based introduction to Probability and Statistics) introductory courses are better if focusing on statistical, rather than mathematical, ideas.

#### **8. Athabasca University contacts**

This Alberta university has recently been admitted into the BCCAT system, and offers several Statistics courses.

**Action: The chair is to contact Julie Peschke, Math/Stat faculty at Athabasca, welcoming her university to BCCUPMS.**

#### **9. Election of Statistics chair for 89<sup>th</sup> meeting**

Bruce Dunham was re-elected for another two-year term by unanimous vote.

#### **9. Any other business**

- The subcommittee approved in principle the notion of removing the labels of "sending" and "receiving" traditionally attached to institutions in the BCCAT system. No problems were envisaged if current articulation agreements for Statistics courses were deemed symmetrical.
- The Chair mentioned that the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM) is to be held at the Vancouver Convention Centre, 31st July to 5th August 2010. This is the largest meeting of statisticians worldwide.

#### **10. Motion to adjourn**

Bevan Ferreira moved to adjourn. Seconded by Al Fukushima. **Carried unanimously.**