

SBSS 2010: Annual Report from the Chair

Mike West
August 17, 2010

The ASA Section on Bayesian Statistical Science held its traditional meetings at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Vancouver in August 2010. The business meetings on Tuesday 3rd August were an Executive Committee Meeting (attended by 7 people including the ASA Council of Sections liaison officer for SBSS) and the member Business Meeting and Social Mixer (attended by approximately 100 people). This report summarises some of the discussions from these meetings and other SBSS activities in 2010.

A. Membership and Finances

- SBSS membership continues to grow each year. At over 1,400 members, SBSS is among the largest 4 or 5 of the 27 sections of ASA. Continued presence of SBSS at meetings is clearly a big factor in maintaining membership vitality and growth, and we are actively working on new initiatives (see below) to ensure and expand the “services” to SBSS members and the community. Like other sections, SBSS encourages all members to be active in promoting membership among others. Of particular interest is activism to promote continued membership and renewals from student members as they move on and have the opportunity to covert to regular membership.
- SBSS is in sound financial shape. SBSS has two sources of income: member dues and return on CE (Continuing Education) courses at JSM. See later comments about an initiative developing between SBSS and ISBA to expand the latter. Expenses are primarily restricted to awards for students and junior researchers to attend JSM and other Bayesian meetings, and expenses for food for the member social/business meeting at the annual JSM.
- Full details of recent and current budgets are appended; see Attachment 1.

These are unaudited and some 2010 figures (for example, the return/income from 2010 JSM CE courses) are not yet available. One set of questions concerns the reported income figures from member dues *before* 2010; this was raised at the Executive Committee meeting and is currently under investigation by and with ASA. The reported figures come from previous SBSS treasurer reports. The historical (pre-2010) dollar figures are somewhat low compared to the dues \times regular member head-counts; it may be that the latter are misleading due to some “hidden” free memberships or other reasons, or that ASA member counts have been misaligned with other sections. Either way, we aim to resolve this quickly, in 2010, with ASA financial officers.

Thanks are due to Don Malec, Treasurer and Secretary, for his efforts and diligence on budgetary and membership matters.

B. SBSS at JSM 2010

See Attachment 2 for the record of the full SBSS program at JSM 2010. Well over 400 SBSS members pre-registered for JSM 2010; the actual membership attendance is likely to come in nearer or above 500. At the meeting, SBSS had 34 primary sessions:

- 4 allocated invited sessions and 1 invited ASA central (Good memorial)
- 10 topic contributed sessions, of which 3 were student paper sessions

- 12 contributed sessions
- 4 round-table luncheons
- 3 continuing education courses

In addition, SBSS co-sponsored another 13 Bayesian sessions for which one of the other ASA sections was “primary” – 5 additional invited sessions, 4 topic contributed and 4 contributed – as well as 2 poster sessions.

Thanks are again due to Alyson Wilson, Program Chair, for her efforts and diligence in developing and smoothly running a strong and excellent program, as well as to Program Chair Elect Vanja Dukic for her active supporting efforts.

C. SBSS at JSM 2011

In planning for JSM 2011 (in Miami Beach Florida in August 2011), SBSS again has 4 allocated invited sessions, as many as any other Section; most have fewer. This reflects the size of SBSS membership and the active attendance at SBSS sessions (among other factors). Similar to this year, based on no changes of ASA session allocation policy and expectations of similar attendances, we anticipate:

- 4 allocated invited sessions
- up to 2 additional invited sessions from the ASA-wide competition
- up to 5 memorial invited sessions from the ASA-wide competition
- the usual rules for one-talk per speaker, otherwise open for as many topic contributed sessions (student paper) sessions, regular contributed sessions and round-tables
- continuing education courses tba

Calls have been out for some weeks, and posted on the SBSS web site, with the listed deadline of **September 1st 2010** for submissions for invited sessions, topic sessions and CE courses; see the SBSS web page.

Thanks are due to Vanja Dukic, Program Chair Elect, for her efforts and diligence in getting us off to a strong start. Members are encouraged to contact Vanja to discuss JSM planning and to contribute session and course ideas.

D. Awards

SBSS has a tradition of supporting student travel to JSM and is a continuing co-sponsor of the several major awards in Bayesian statistics and related areas, most of which are administered by ISBA with support from SBSS.

See Attachment 3 for full details of the 2010 awards, and the SBSS awards web page, as well as the ISBA awards web page, for information on deadlines for the upcoming 2011 awards.

E. Continuing Education Initiative

Discussions that took place in 2009 between Joe Ibrahim (then SBSS chair) and Mike West (then ISBA President and now SBSS Chair) led to an inter-societal discussion of potential collaboration between ISBA (the International Society for Bayesian Analysis) and SBSS on CE courses. This led in spring 2010 to the establishment of an ad-hoc ISBA/SBSS educational committee, reporting to

the ISBA Board of Directors, via ISBA President Peter Müller, and to the SBSS Executive Committee, via SBSS Chair Mike West. Peter is taking a lead and very active role in this in coordination with SBSS.

Full details of the committee report are in Attachment 4. The report was discussed and approved by both the ISBA Board (in June 2010) and the SBSS Executive Committee (in August 2010); both groups endorse the overall recommendation for collaborative development of short-courses, and are now proceeding with initial planning.

SBSS has designated this as a duty of the elected SBSS Program Chair Elect, consistent with the existing role of the Program Chair Elect in organising CE courses for the JSM. The Program Chair Elect will work with the designated ISBA Board Member to develop specific plans and initiate a series of CE courses to begin as soon as feasible.

The SBSS Program Chair Elect in 2011, Marina Vannucci – with support from the 2010 Program Chair Elect Vanja Dukic – is now beginning discussions and collaboration with ISBA counterparts with the expectation of running initial courses in 2011.

Details of cost and revenue sharing will be worked out shortly, and SBSS members can feel free to contact Marina to discuss the initiative, contribute ideas for CE courses and, if interested, volunteer!

This initiative will be managed from here on by these elected representatives, reporting to the Executive Committee of SBSS through the Chair; since the initial, key efforts will begin in 2011, Wes Johnson, SBSS Chair Elect, will be in oversight and, with Marina, point-of-contact. These SBSS officers will ensure communication with ASA “central” and ASA’s continuing education department. These new CE ventures will be developed so as to avoid any kind of conflict with the annual SBSS-JSM courses that are organized by and with ASA (and for which ASA shares revenues).

We hope and fully expect that this will become a major activity for SBSS in the next few years, a major member benefit as well as broader service to the expanding worldwide Bayesian community.

F. Inter-Societal Online Encyclopedia Initiative

As many of you will know, discussions in 2009 between several statistics societies and the Springer publisher led to the establishment of a new online encyclopedia:

StatProb: The Encyclopedia Sponsored by Statistics and Probability Societies

This inter-societal venture is a free, open source, online encyclopedia hosted by Springer, run and developed via an Editorial Board comprised of editors representing several statistics societies. Among the societies are ASA, with designed editor George Casella, and ISBA, with designed editor Susie Bayarri. SBSS members may contribute to the encyclopedia and are encouraged to do so, as well as – once up and running – using it as an educational resource. This is a major new publication venture that SBSS is a partner in, through ASA central, and that has the potential to become a substantial resource for Bayesian communication, research and education. See the formal flyer appended here as Attachment 5 and linked at the SBSS web page, and further details – as well as sign-up information – at www.StatProb.com.

Attachment 1: Summary of membership and finances (unaudited, July 2010)

2010 SBSS Business Meeting

1) Membership

year	total	regular	student	free
2010	1490	1036	454	138
2009	1407			
2008	1389			
2007	1303			

fees: Regular membership: \$7 and student membership \$1
ASA takes a fee of \$1 from all

2) Budget Summary

year	begin- ing funds	total expend- itures	total reve- nue	ending funds
2010	26,360			
2009	29,270	-13,500	10,590	26,360
2008	21,760	-12,150	19,660	29,270
2007	36,320	-25,750	11,190	21,760

3) Details: Budget Expenditures

year	Contributions			Food, etc.			total contri- butions	total food etc.	total expend- itures
	Savage travel award	other ISBA	SBSS student award	Bus./Mix	JSM Exec	JSM rnd/tbl food			
2010	0	8,500	5,000	-	-	-	13,500	-	-
2009	4,000	0	6,000	2,580	800	120	10,000	3,500	13,500
2008	0	0	7,000	4,950	-	200	7,000	5,150	12,150
2007	12,000	1,600	10,340	1,280	360	170	23,940	1,810	25,750

4) Details: Budget Revenue

year	dues	CE	Interest	total revenue
2010	-	-	-	-
2009	4,180	5,490	920	10,590
2008	4,100	14,790	770	19,660
2007	3,940	6,370	880	11,190

Attachment 2: SBSS Activities at the JSM 2010

Continuing Education (3 Total)

- Saturday (7/31), 8:30am-5:00pm: Monte Carlo and Bayesian Computation with R, Maria Rizzo and Jim Albert
- Sunday (8/1), 1:00pm-5:00pm: Bayesian Ecology: Hierarchical Modeling for Ecological Processes, Alan Gelfand and Jim Clark
- Tuesday (8/3), 8:30am-5:00pm: Bayesian Adaptive Methods for Clinical Trials, Brad Carlin, Don Berry, Scott Berry, Jack Lee

Roundtable Luncheons (4 total)

- Monday (8/2), 12:30pm-1:50pm, Bayesian Modeling for Space-Time Surveillance of Disease, Andrew Lawson
- Monday (8/2), 12:30pm-1:50pm, Meta-Analysis: Current State, Recent Developments, Unresolved Problems, Dalene Stangl
- Tuesday (8/3), 12:30pm-1:50pm, Decision-Making in Public Policy: Problems from DOT, FDA, and NASA, David Banks
- Wednesday (8/4), 12:30pm-1:50pm, Bayesian Methods in Genomics: Searching for Unity in Diverse Data, Bhramar Mukherjee

Invited (5 Total)

- Sunday (8/1), 2:00pm-3:50pm, How Fast Can We Compute? How Fast Will We Compute?
- Monday (8/2), 10:30am-12:20pm, Bayesian Analysis Invited Session
- Monday (8/2), 10:30am-12:20pm, The I. J. Good Memorial Session: Remembering a Genius
- Wednesday (8/4), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Approaches for Safety and Efficacy Analyses
- Thursday (8/5), 8:30am-10:20am, Nonparametric Bayes: Beyond the Dirichlet Process

Co-Sponsored Invited (5 Total)

- Sunday (8/1), 4:00pm-5:50pm, Statistics Degree Programs in a Data-Centric World: What Needs to Change?
- Monday (8/2), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Methods in Time-Series Econometrics
- Tuesday (8/3), 10:30am-12:20pm, Big Science: Opportunities for Statisticians in the World's Most Massive Projects

- Wednesday (8/4), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Nonparametric Modeling of Longitudinal and Survival Data
- Wednesday (8/4), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Methods in Pharmaceutical Development and Clinical Research

Topic Contributed (10 Total)

- Sunday (8/1), 4:00pm-5:50pm, Student Paper Competition: Bayesian Nonparametric and Semiparametric Methods
- Monday (8/2), 8:30am-10:20am, Bayesian Approaches to Molecular Evolution
- Monday (8/2), 10:30am-12:20pm, Student Paper Competition: Bayesian Modeling for Longitudinal Data, Propensity Scores, and Predictive Information Criteria
- Monday (8/2), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Inference in Massive Data Problems
- Tuesday (8/3), 8:30am-10:20am, Novel Priors for Spatial/Temporal Effects in Bayesian Hierarchical Models with Applications in Health and Environmental Studies
- Tuesday (8/3), 10:30am-12:20pm, Bayesian Model Selection and Model Diagnostics
- Tuesday (8/3), 2:00pm-3:50pm, New Advances in Bayesian Survival Analysis
- Wednesday (8/4), 8:30am-10:20am, Student Paper Competition: Bayesian Spatial Models
- Wednesday (8/4), 10:30am-12:20pm, Dependent Priors for Bayesian Nonparametric Inference: Applied and Methodological Advances
- Thursday (8/5), 10:30am-12:20pm, Bayesian Spatial Modeling

Co-Sponsored Topic Contributed (4 Total)

- Sunday (8/1), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian and Adaptive Design Applications in Early Phase Clinical Trials
- Sunday (8/1), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Recent Developments of Bayesian Methods with Applications to Biomedical Research
- Wednesday (8/4), 10:30am-12:20pm, Applications of Bayesian Methodology to Clinical Trials in Oncology
- Wednesday (8/4), 10:30am-12:20pm, Bayesian Semiparametric and Nonparametric Methods

Contributed (12 Total)

- Sunday (8/1), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Models for Health, Consumer Choice, and Recidivism
- Sunday (8/1), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Models for Ordinal, Binary, Item Response, and Preference Test Data
- Monday (8/2), 10:30am-12:20pm, Gaussian Process Models, Computer Experiments, Differential Equation Models, and Subsurface Inversion
- Monday (8/2), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Analysis of Genetic and Metabolomic Data
- Tuesday (8/3), 8:30am-10:20am, Markov Chain Monte Carlo: Applications and Improvements
- Tuesday (8/3), 8:30am-10:20am, Bayesian Nonparametric Methods
- Tuesday (8/3), 10:30am-12:20pm, Prior Distributions, Posterior Distributions, and Decision Functions
- Wednesday (8/4), 8:30am-10:20am, Bayesian Clinical Trials
- Wednesday (8/4), 10:30am-12:20pm, Bayesian Spatial and Temporal Modeling
- Wednesday (8/4), 10:30am-12:20pm, Topics in Bayesian Statistics
- Wednesday (8/4), 2:00pm-3:50pm, Bayesian Model Selection, Variable Selection, and Longitudinal Data
- Thursday (8/5), 10:30am-12:20pm, Bayesian Applications with Complex Data

Co-Sponsored Contributed (4 Total)

- Monday (8/2), 8:30am-10:20am, Bayesian Analysis of Clinical Trial Data
- Monday (8/2), 8:30am-10:20am, Survey Models for Causal Estimation, Calibration, and Bayesian Estimation
- Monday (8/2), 10:30am-12:20pm, Latent Variable Modeling using Survey Data: Methods and Application
- Tuesday (8/3), 10:30am-12:20pm, MCMC and Bayesian Modeling

Posters

- Monday (8/2), 10:30am-12:20pm
- Wednesday (8/4), 10:30am-12:20pm

Attachment 3: SBSS Awards

1. Award of 2010 SBSS Student Paper Travel Awards for JSM – Vanja Dukic, Committee Chair.
 - K. Sham Bhat, Penn State. "Inferring likelihoods and climate system characteristics from climate models and multiple tracers"
 - Chenguang Wang, University of Florida. "A Bayesian shrinkage model for incomplete longitudinal binary data with application to the breast cancer prevention trial"
 - Matt Heaton, Duke University. "Spatial regression using kernel averaged predictors"
 - Jennifer Tom, UCLA. "Reuse, reweigh, recycle: Combating influenza through efficient Bayesian computation for massive data"
 - Laura Hatfield, U of Minnesota. "Multilevel Bayesian models of zero-inflated longitudinal outcomes and survival times in mesothelioma"
 - Dhiman Bhadra, University of Florida. "Bayesian semiparametric analysis of case-control studies with time varying exposures"

2. Awards made for ISBA10/Valencia 9 in Spain, June 2010: Savage Awards – Fabrizio Ruggeri, Committee Chair.

Made each year and awarded to *two* individuals for outstanding doctoral dissertations.

- The 2009 Savage Award : Theory & Methods
 - *WINNER*: James Scott, *Bayesian Adjustment for Multiplicity*, Duke University
 - *HONORABLE MENTION*: Ryan Adams, *Kernel Methods for Nonparametric Bayesian Inference of Probability Densities and Point Processes*, U Cambridge
- The 2009 Savage Award : Applied Methodology
 - *WINNER*: Emily Fox, *Bayesian Nonparametric Learning of Complex Dynamical Phenomena*, MIT
 - *HONORABLE MENTION*: Matt Taddy *Bayesian Nonparametric Analysis of Conditional Distributions and Inference for Poisson Point Processes*, UC Santa Cruz

3. Other awards co-sponsored by SBSS, announced at the ISBA10 World Meeting in June.

- The 2009 DeGroot Prize – Sylvia Richardson, Committee Chair.
Awarded to the authors of an outstanding book. This year, *jointly* awarded to:
 - Giovanni Parmigiani and Lurdes Inoue (2009), *Decision Theory: Principles and Approaches*, John Wiley and Sons.
 - Carl Rasmussen and Chris Williams (2006), *Gaussian Processes for Machine Learning*, The MIT Press.
- The 2009 Mitchell Prize – Ed George, Committee Chair.
Awarded in recognition of an outstanding paper that describes how a Bayesian analysis has solved an important applied problem – is awarded to
 - Ricardo Lemos and Bruno Sanso, *A Spatio-Temporal Model for Mean, Anomaly and Trend Fields of North Atlantic Sea Surface Temperature*, JASA 2009

Award Committee Members:

Thanks to the several committees – listed below and see SBSS and/or ISBA web sites – and especially to the chairs.

2010 SBSS Student Travel Awards: Vanja Dukic, Chair

Kate Calder

Murali Haran

Bhramar Mukherjee

John Fricks

Lurdes Inoue

Ken Rice

Chris Hans

Shane Jensen

Matt Taddy

2009 DeGroot Prize:

Sylvia Richardson, Chair

Alicia Carriquiry

Sylvia Frühwirth-Schnatter

Sonia Petrone

Guido Consonni

Peter Green

Stephen Walker

David Draper

Stefan Lauritzen

Robert Wolpert

2009 Savage Awards:

Fabrizio Ruggeri, Chair

Jim Griffin

Chris Holmes

Adrian Raftery

Paul Gustafson

Steve McEachern

Peter Hoff

Raquel Prado

2009 Mitchell Prize:

Ed George, Chair

Mike Daniels

Nicolas Chopin

Liang Feng

Hal Stern

Kerrie Mengersen

Jun Liu

Jaeyong Lee

Attachment 4: ISBA/SBSS Educational Activities Report

The ad-hoc committee was asked to:

1. Make an overall recommendation whether ISBA and SBSS should pursue collaboration on CE courses. Is it in the interest of both societies? Assuming a positive response
2. One of the main activities might be the joint organization of short courses at JSM and other ISBA sponsored meetings. Please suggest specific policies for such collaborations.
3. Identify possible other activities that could be of interest for both societies.
4. Possible implications on funding and the use of related revenues. Please identify possible additional funding sources that could be pursued.
5. Strategies to keep a possible agreement open for other national statistics societies (for ISBA) and for other ASA sections (for SBSS) to join.
6. Any recommendations should of course be compatible with ISBA bylaws and be acceptable to ASA central admin.

The committee was asked for a short report that could be forwarded to the ISBA Board of Directors and SBSS Executive Committee for consideration and approval. The committee was asked to treat this as an open, non-confidential discourse, with full freedom to get input from members and officers of the two societies, making sure it is understood that this discussion is purely exploratory.

The committee responded with the report below, submitted to both ISBA and SBSS in late Spring 2010.

Report from the ad-hoc ISBA/SBSS educational activities committee, 4/27/2010

The joint SBSS/ISBA committee on collaboration in educational activities met on Apr 27, 2010. The committee members – each a members of both SBSS and ISBA – were:

- Vanja Dukic (SBSS program chair elect), chair
- Wes Johnson (SBSS pres elect)
- Raquel Prado (for ISBA)
- Peter Hoff (for ISBA)
- Alex Schmidt (ISBA program chair)

The committee's overall recommendation was as follows:

It was unanimously agreed that ISBA and SBSS should develop a systematic collaboration and organize courses at various locations and multiple times each year. The courses would be aimed at junior researchers and students. They would generally be offered by members at academic institutions as satellites to major conferences (JSM, ENAR, WNAR, IMS, MCMSki, BISP, ISBA, ICSA, Pharma/Clinical Trials)

It is understood that the primary purpose of such course offerings would be meeting ISBA and SBSS educational goals, and raising the visibility of the two societies. The secondary purpose would be fund raising for support of students research activities and travel.

The committee suggested creating an additional 2-year board position to serve as a liaison between ISBA and SBSS, who would attend meetings of both societies and oversee the educational activities.

The committee has also identified possible other activities that could be of interest for both societies:

While the main activity is the joint organization of short courses at JSM and ISBA sponsored meetings, additional activities of interest might be:

1. Development of a joint ISBA and SBSS educational web site:
 - (a) Listing of all past and future courses
 - (b) Listing of existing free (open source) books and resources
2. Development of a monograph/book series
3. Offering local Bayesian courses “on demand” (for CE credits)
4. Outreach: high school teachers and students (courses taught by graduate students)
5. Summer schools and workshops for graduate students (possibly joint with other institutes, such as SAMSI or NCAR)

The committee also discussed possible implications on funding and the use of related revenues, and has the following specific recommendations:

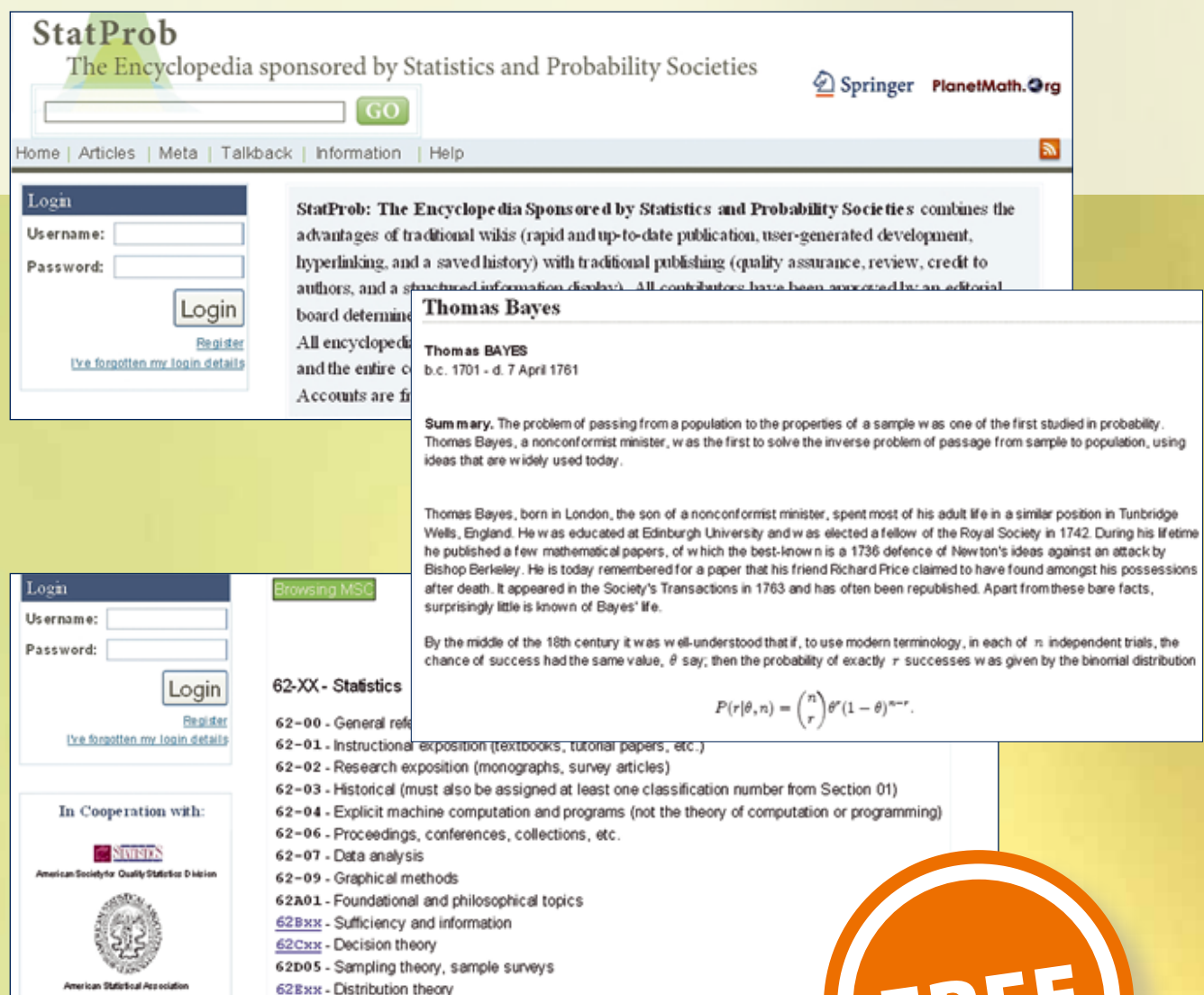
- Additional funding could come from funding agencies (NSF, NIH), and institutes such as SAMSI or NCAR.
- The revenues from these educational activities should be used by both societies to promote and support future educational efforts and further increase the visibility of the two societies. In particular, support for student travel to present research at conferences and workshops should be of highest priority.

Finally, the committee discussed strategies to keep a possible agreement open for other national statistics societies (for ISBA) and for other ASA sections (for SBSS) to join: Cross-sponsorship and co-teaching of courses with other societies and sections should be possible. The policies could follow those for section co-sponsorship already implemented at JSM: both sections (or societies) agree to jointly organize, support and advertise the events. All activities should be compatible with ISBA and ASA bylaws.

Attachment 5: StatProb - Probability and Statistics Online

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Thomas Bayes

Thomas BAYES
b.c. 1701 - d. 7 April 1761

Summary. The problem of passing from a population to the properties of a sample was one of the first studied in probability. Thomas Bayes, a nonconformist minister, was the first to solve the inverse problem of passage from sample to population, using ideas that are widely used today.



Thomas Bayes, born in London, the son of a nonconformist minister, spent most of his adult life in a similar position in Tunbridge Wells, England. He was educated at Edinburgh University and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1742. During his lifetime he published a few mathematical papers, of which the best-known is a 1736 defence of Newton's ideas against an attack by Bishop Berkeley. He is today remembered for a paper that his friend Richard Price claimed to have found amongst his possessions after death. It appeared in the Society's Transactions in 1763 and has often been republished. Apart from these bare facts, surprisingly little is known of Bayes' life.

By the middle of the 18th century it was well-understood that if, to use modern terminology, in each of n independent trials, the chance of success had the same value, θ say, then the probability of exactly r successes was given by the binomial distribution

$$P(r|\theta, n) = \binom{n}{r} \theta^r (1 - \theta)^{n-r}.$$

62-XX - Statistics

- 62-00 - General reference
- 62-01 - Instructional exposition (textbooks, tutorial papers, etc.)
- 62-02 - Research exposition (monographs, survey articles)
- 62-03 - Historical (must also be assigned at least one classification number from Section 01)
- 62-04 - Explicit machine computation and programs (not the theory of computation or programming)
- 62-06 - Proceedings, conferences, collections, etc.
- 62-07 - Data analysis
- 62-09 - Graphical methods
- 62A01 - Foundational and philosophical topics
- 62Bxx - Sufficiency and information
- 62Cxx - Decision theory
- 62D05 - Sampling theory, sample surveys
- 62Exx - Distribution theory

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