

EDITORIAL

The new year has brought transitions to SERJ. Flavia Jolliffe and Chris Reading have ended their terms as Co-editor and Assistant Editor, respectively. We are pleased to report that both have agreed to continue to share their expertise with the statistics education research community as SERJ associate editors. Thanks to both of them for their tireless work to promote SERJ and ensure the highest standards of quality in peer review and publication. Flavia deserves special thanks for shepherding the articles that appear in this issue of SERJ through the review process.

We welcome Beth Chance from California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo as the new SERJ Assistant Editor. Beth will work with the editors and authors to prepare the SERJ articles and announcements for publication. We are very grateful that Beth is willing to share her time and technical expertise.

We also welcome Peter Petocz as a new SERJ Associate Editor. Peter is currently a faculty member at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. We are eager to provide opportunities for Peter to share his extensive knowledge and experience within the SERJ manuscript review process and in guiding the policies and procedures of SERJ through service on the editorial board.

SERJ has already received 15 original manuscripts in the first five months of 2006. This is an increase over past years, and represents the growing awareness of and respect for peer reviewed statistics education research. We will continue to work to foster growth both in the number and quality of SERJ submissions.

We hope that the upcoming International Conference on Teaching Statistics (ICOTS-7) to be held in Salvador (Bahia), July 2-7, 2006, will provide researchers with not only the opportunity to present their work and publish in the conference proceedings, but to also submit a more elaborate report to SERJ. We encourage interested authors to consult our author guidelines, and also attend to the advice there regarding needed differences between Proceedings papers and more elaborate papers submitted for SERJ review, in order to avoid duplicate publishing.

Several SERJ activities are being planned for ICOTS-7. A lunchtime workshop on July 7th is designed for prospective authors; it focuses on writing and publishing research papers in peer-reviewed journals such as SERJ and on ways to avoid common problems found in manuscripts being submitted for review. Another lunchtime workshop on July 3rd is designed for current and future referees of papers submitted for review; it will examine the role of a referee in the scientific review process, and make suggestions for improving referees' work in light of what is sought in high-quality papers and the 'critical yet supportive' spirit expected in a referee report. If you intend to attend ICOTS and consider publishing research papers or helping as a journal referee, make sure to include these events in your planning.

The current issue of SERJ represents the first issue in the fifth year of the journal's existence. We feature three articles on a variety of topics. The article by Boyd Enders and Diener-West illustrates how a randomized trial can be used in education research, specifically to demonstrate that active learning can enhance student learning in an introductory biostatistics course. Lecoutre, Rovira, Lecoutre, and Poitevineau present empirical results to compare the understanding of randomness between teenagers, psychology researchers, and mathematics researchers. They found that in all three groups there were differences in understanding depending on whether the example was "real,"

that is, associated with a realistic context, or “stochastic,” which means that the context involved traditional devices such as coins and dice. With an article about pre-service elementary school teachers’ conceptions about variability, Canada provides a natural follow-up to the Fall 2004 theme issue of SERJ on “Research on Reasoning about Variability.” The population of pre-service teachers provides fertile ground for further statistics education research. Alldredge and Brown use a non-randomized experiment to explore the effects of technology and student gender on pre-course beliefs and student learning. The surprising result is that the association between beliefs and learning evolved throughout the course. We hope that these articles will inspire others to ask “I wonder ...” questions and initiate their own research agendas.

In November 2006 we anticipate the publication of a Special Issue on Reasoning about Distributions, with guest editors Chris Reading and Maxine Pfannkuch.

Thanks to our readers, authors, Editorial Board members, reviewers, and IASE and ISI leadership for your enthusiastic support for SERJ!

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