

Biostatistics Newsletter

2018

NEWSLETTER DATE: DECEMBER 2018

Special Points of Interest

- **Greetings from the Chair**
- **Faculty and Staff**
- **Accomplishments and Awards**
- **In the Spotlight**
- **2018 Seminar Series**
- **Contributions and Gifts**
- **Acknowledgements**
- **Post Doc/ Visiting Scholars**
- **Recent Graduates**

Peihua Qiu, Professor and Founding Chair

PHHP Newsletter: Message from the Chair

I would like to begin by thanking our faculty, staff and students for your hard work and dedication this past year. I would also like to thank our alumni and friends for your continued support. Although this year presented its fair share of challenges, the department had a very successful year. First, our department got its first-ever ranking by *US News & World Report* this year, and we were ranked #20 among all biostatistical programs in the nation (#10 among the biostatistical programs of the AAU public universities). For a new department with less than 10 years history, this is a great achievement. Without your hard work, help, and support, it is impossible for our department to reach that level within a short period of time. This ranking information also implies that there is still much room for our department to improve in the future.

In regards to our methodological and collaborative research, our faculty and students produced more than 120 research publications, of which many have been published in top journals such as *Biometrics*, *The Lancet*, *PNAS* and *Nature Genetics*. To help with our research, the department received \$10.76 million in extramural research funding this past year. Together with the Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), the department established a new Data Coordinating Center in February 2018, with the department associate chair in research Dr. Sam Wu as the inaugural director of the center. This center will provide clinical trial design, study protocol development, secure and efficient data collection, subject randomization, data quality and trial progress monitoring, and other related collaborations and services for all research projects across the campus. It will also conduct methodological research, construct software platform, enable medical data sharing, and facilitate collection of sensitive information. The department also helped UF Health Cancer Center (UFHCC) in successfully recruiting Dr. Ji-Hyun Lee to become the director of the new UFHCC's Division of Quantitative Sciences. After joining UF in July 2018, Dr. Lee has organized an excellent team for the UFHCC's Biostatistics & Quantitative Sciences Shared Resource.

It is our constant goal to develop top-notch graduate programs and provide high-quality courses and other educational programs. This year, we offered two new service courses titled "Biostatistical Literacy" and "Survey of Biostatistical Methods," mainly for students in other units of the UF Heal Science Center, and one new elective course titled "Multivariate Statistical Methods," mainly for our own graduate students. The department also applied for new course numbers or cross-listing with the UF statistics department for another 5-6 courses, and all these applications are at the late stages of the approval process. By using the department foundation money and some funding from the dean's office, the department established 4 student travel awards to support 4 graduate students each year to present their research at national or international conferences. Several other awards were also established for outstanding performance of our graduate students, faculty and staff members. For the 2018-2019 academic year, we successfully recruited 5 Ph.D., and 8 on-campus M.S., and 11 online M.S. students, while also hiring an additional 5 faculty members (see their introduction in this newsletter). For the 2018 academic year, the department graduated 1 Ph.D. and 12 M.S. students. Of these graduates, all found good jobs immediately after graduation.

The department is currently filling two teacher-scholar positions provided by the university's "Faculty 500" initiative, and another 4-5 regular tenure-track faculty positions. In the near future, I am sure that the department will reach a new level in both size and quality.

Please enjoy this newsletter about this year's wonderful accomplishments and moments. I look forward to this upcoming year and your continued support in the future. Thank you, and have a wonderful holiday season!



Faculty



Left to Right Front: Arlene Naranjo, Yueh-Yun Chi, Natalie Dean, Ji-Hyun Lee, Meenakshi Devidas, Babette Brumback, Sue McGorray, Ira Longini, Rhonda Bacher, Yichao Yu, Baiming Zou
Back: Somnath Datta, John Kairalla, Robert Parker, Subharup Guha, Zhiguang Huo, Steven Foti, Susmita Datta, Peihua Qiu, Yang Yang, Sam Wu, Zhigang Li

Administrative Staff



Left to Right: Renee Douglass (Fiscal Assistant), Melissa Stabel (Assistant to the Chair), Deana Nance (Business Manager), Melissa Layne (Administrative Assistant), Kristen Cason (Academic Assistant)

Dr. Rhonda Bacher



Dr. Rhonda Bacher joined the department on January 3, 2018 as Assistant Professor. She earned her Ph.D. in Statistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in July 2017. Dr. Bacher is excited to trade in her snow shovel for sunblock and return to the University of Florida where she earned a BS in Mathematics and a BS in Statistics. Her research involves the development of statistical methods and computational tools for analyzing genetics and genomics data. Dr. Bacher has collaborated with numerous scientists including experts studying stem cells, yeast cells, and pancreatic islets. She is enthusiastic to work alongside scientists of varying disciplines and extend research to translational projects. Dr. Bacher is passionate about statistical genomics and the potential discoveries that can be unlocked through collaborative research.

Renee Douglass

Renee Douglass joined the department on January 22, 2018 as Fiscal Assistant II. Renee is a native Floridian and a die-hard Gator fan. She's been in office and fiscal administration and accounting for more than 5 years and in customer service more than 10 years. She earned an AA and AS from Lake City Community College. She loves traveling, bike riding, and gardening.



Dr. Subharup Guha



Dr. Subharup Guha joined the department on January 1, 2018 as Associate Professor. He received his Ph.D. in Statistics from Ohio State University in 2004. From there, he worked as a postdoctoral researcher with Professors Louise Ryan and Yi Li in the Department of Biostatistics at Harvard School of Public Health. From 2007 - 2017, he was a faculty member in the Department of Statistics at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Dr. Guha's methodological research interests include statistical computing, nonparametric Bayesian methods, high dimensional inference, and computational methods for Big Data. His collaborative research has been in the areas of epidemiology, health surveillance, neuroscience and cancer genomics.

Melissa Layne

Melissa Layne joined the department on February 12, 2018 as Administrative Assistant II. Melissa was born and raised in Florida. She has been working in administration for the past 5 years and in customer service for more than 8 years. Her previous employment was working as the Administrative Manager at O2B Kids here in Gainesville. She is a self-proclaimed book nerd and enjoys sharing book recommendations with fellow readers.



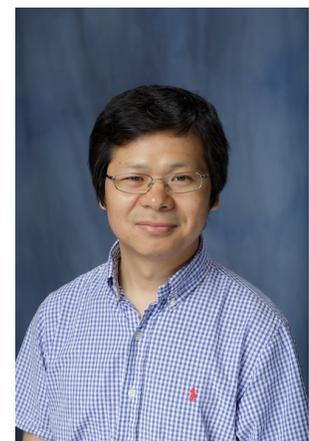
Dr. Ji-Hyun Lee



Dr. Ji-Hyun Lee joined the department on July 1, 2018 as Professor. Additionally, Dr. Lee will take the role as Director of the Division of Quantitative Sciences and the Biostatistics Shared Resource of the UF Health Cancer Center. Prior to joining the department, Dr. Lee was Director of the Biostatistics Shared Resource at the University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center (UNMCCC) for 4 years and a Full member of Biostatistics at the Moffitt Cancer Center for 11 years. Dr. Lee earned her Ph.D. in Biostatistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2003. Her research interests include clinical trials, group randomized trials based on communities, methods for repeated measurements, Bayesian approach and best statistical practices. Dr. Lee's training and extensive experience have given her an excellent working knowledge of P30 Cancer Center Support Grants and the biostatistical needs of NCI-Designated Cancer Centers. This will enable her to successfully serve as the Director of the UFHCC Biostatistics Shared Resource as well as the senior biostatistician for the UFHCC Clinical Components and the Research Programs.

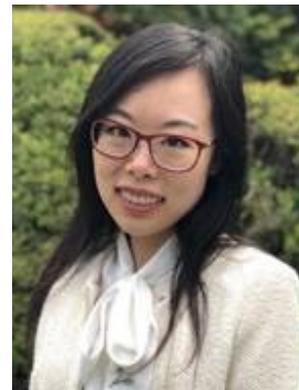
Dr. Zhigang Li

Dr. Zhigang Li joined the department on August 1, 2018 as Associate Professor. Prior to joining the department, Dr. Li was associate professor in the departments of Biomedical Data Science, Epidemiology, Community and Family Medicine and the Norris Cotton Cancer Center at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College. Dr. Li earned his Ph.D. in Biostatistics from Columbia University in 2010. His research interests include microbiome data analysis, high-dimensional data analysis, longitudinal data analysis, survival analysis, joint modeling of longitudinal data and survival in palliative care research. Dr. Li has been PI of multiple NIH grants including his ongoing R01 project "Mediation analysis methods for modeling human microbiome mediating disease-leading causal pathways in children".



Dr. Yichao Yu

Dr. Yichao Yu joins the Department of Biostatistics as Clinical Assistant Professor. She received her PhD in Pharmaceutics from the University of Florida in August 2018. While pursuing her doctorate degree, in 2017 she also obtained her MS in Statistics from the University of Florida. During her last year of PhD, Dr. Yu completed a one-year fellowship with the Division of Pharmacometrics in the Office of Clinical Pharmacology at US Food and Drug Administration. Dr. Yu is excited to bring her clinical pharmacology knowledge into the Department of Biostatistics through the application of statistical methodologies to clinical investigations in drug development programs. Welcome, Dr. Yu!



Melissa Stabel



Melissa Stabel joined the department on August 6, 2018 as our new Chair Assistant. She was born and raised in the Gainesville area. She has been working in administration for the past 5 years and in accounting for more than 7 years. Her most recent position was the Program Specialist for a grant at Santa Fe College here in Gainesville. In her spare time, she loves spending time with her husband and little boy and enjoys reading. She loves being on the water, it doesn't matter if it is the springs, lake or the beach.

Acknowledgements

Special acknowledgements to the following departing staff:

- Susan Conway (pictured right with Dr. Devidas)
- Lisa Kozak
- Selom Agbobli Nuwoaty
- Matthew Robinson
- Ashley Spink
- Jason Talbert



Dr. Diana Rojas Recognized by UF International Center

Diana Rojas Alvarez, M.D., Ph.D., was honored by the University of Florida International Center. The International Student Awards Ceremony recognizes students who have exemplary academic records and a wide range of other accomplishments.

A Colombia native, Dr. Alvarez graduated with a doctoral degree from the department of epidemiology in August 2017 and is currently working as a postdoctoral associate at the Center for Statistics and Quantitative

Infectious Diseases in the [department of biostatistics](#). Her doctoral research explored the epidemiology and transmission dynamics of mosquito borne viruses, such as Dengue and Zika, in Latin America and evaluation of interventions that help to prevent these diseases, including vaccines and vector control. She serves on two World Health Organization technical working groups and is part of the Zika group of the Models of Infectious Disease Agent Study, or MIDAS, network of the National Institutes of Health.

She was also a student member of PHHP's Curriculum Committee. Ira M. Longini, Ph.D., a professor of biostatistics, was Rojas Alvarez's advisor and Robert Cook, M.D., M.P.H., a professor of epidemiology and medicine,



Celebrating 10 Years of Service to UF

Drs. **Yueh-Yun Chi** and **John Kairalla**, both Research Associate Professors in the Department of Biostatistics, were recognized for their 10 years of service to the University of Florida. The recognition took place at the College of Public Health and Health Professions' Faculty and Staff Appreciation Luncheon that was held on December 7, 2017 at the Reitz Union building.

Dr. Chi received her Ph.D. in Biostatistics in 2005 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel

Hill, followed by postdoctoral training in Biostatistics at the University of Washington, Seattle. She came to the University of Florida in 2007 as Assistant Professor with the department of Epidemiology and Health Policy Research of the College of Medicine. In 2010, she joined the department of Biostatistics of the College of Medicine and College of Public Health and Health Professions.

Dr. Kairalla received his Ph.D. in Biostatistics in 2007 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He came to the University of Florida in 2007 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Health Policy Research of the College of Medicine. He joined the Department of Biostatistics in 2010. Dr. Kairalla is also a Senior Statistician for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) clinical trials for the Children's Oncology Group.

Thank you to Drs. Chi and Kairalla for your dedication to the University of Florida!



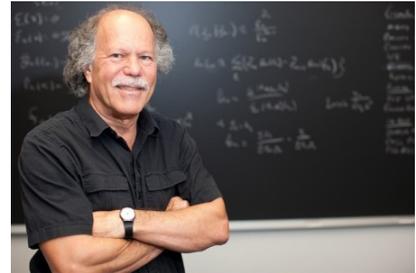
Dr. Chi and Dr. Kairalla pictured above, 3rd from left and 4th from left respectively

Dr. Qiu and Dr. Longini COM Term Professorship



Dr. Peihua Qiu, Professor and Founding Chair, and **Dr. Ira Longini**, Professor, were named University of Florida College of Medicine’s 2018-2019 Term Professors. Each award lasts three years.

Candidates must have a distinguished career that places them amount the leaders in their discipline. This is measured over the most recent five academic years. This standing must be demonstrated by objective measures of performance that are appropriate to their discipline and so recognized by their peers. Congratulations, Drs. Qiu and Longini!

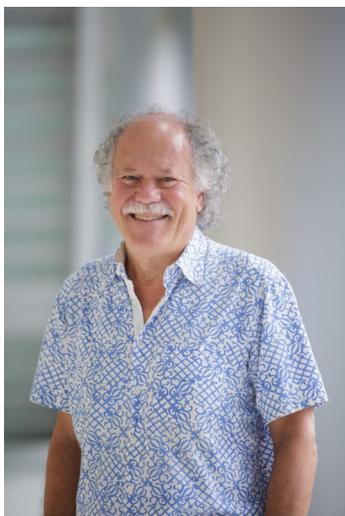


Dr. Samuel S. Wu received Dean’s Citation Paper Award

Dr. Samuel S. Wu received the Dean’s Citation Paper Award for the Department of Biostatistics. The paper is titled “A new data collection technique for preserving privacy.” It was published in *Journal of Privacy and Confidentiality*. Volume 7, Issue 3, Article 5.

The Dean’s Citation Paper Award acknowledge innovation and excellence in research. Each department in the College of Public Health & Health Professions selected an awardee, totaling eight awards. The award certificates were presented by Dean Perri at the State of the College Faculty-Staff Meeting on August 31, 2018.

Congratulations, Dr. Wu!



High Ranking Scientific Paper, Dr. Longini

Altmetric ranks the top 100 scientific papers of the year. **Dr. Ira Longini’s** paper titled “Efficacy and effectiveness of an rVSV-vectored vaccine in preventing Ebola virus disease: final results from the Guinea ring vaccination, open-label, cluster-randomized trial” was the 9th ranked scientific paper in the world for 2017.

Congratulations, Dr. Ira Longini!

To read more: <https://www.altmetric.com/top100/2017/#list&article=14949611>

Dr. Lee Elected as ASA Fellow



Dr. Ji-Hyun Lee, Professor in the Department of Biostatistics and Director of UF Health's Cancer Center's, Division of Quantitative Sciences, recently received news from the American Statistical Association that she has been elected as ASA Fellow. ASA Fellows are nominated by their ASA- member peers and must have outstanding contributions to statistical science through publications, position held with their employer, ASA activities, memberships and accomplishments and other professional activities. Being an ASA Fellow is a high honor as only one-third of one percent of the total association memberships are elected as Fellow.

Dr. Lee was honored at an award ceremony held at the Joint Statistical Meetings in Vancouver, Canada this summer. Congratulations, Dr. Lee!

Dr. Susmita Datta selected for NSF-CMBS Advisory Board

Dr. Susmita Datta, Professor in the Department of Biostatistics, was recently selected to serve on the National Science Foundation's Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences Regional Conference Series. Her term is for five years and will begin immediately. These conference series consist of five-day conferences each of which features a distinguished lecturer delivering ten lectures on a topic of important current research in one sharply focused area of the mathematical sciences. Board members will suggest possible speakers, suggest possible venues, help in refining proposals and provide feedback on the major changes to the program solicitation for this conference series.

Congratulations, Dr. Datta!



Ph.D. Student, Kai Yang, Receives Young Investigator Award



Kai Yang, second year Ph.D. student under the supervision of Dr. Peihua Qiu, was selected to receive one of the ASA's section on Statistics in Epidemiology Young Investigator Awards. The award is presented to honor the best papers by young investigators in statistics in epidemiology. As a winner, Kai received travel compensation to present his paper on monitoring disease incidence rates at the 2018 JSM conference, July 28- August 2, 2018, in Vancouver, Canada.

Dr. Brumback PPHP Term Professorship

Dr. Babette Brumback, Professor and Associate Chair for Education, received University of Florida College of Public Health & Health Professions' 2018 Preeminence Term Professorship award. Each award lasts three years.

Awards are based on an assessment of academic accomplishment. Faculty advisory Committees and department chairs provide input, and the Dean makes the final determination.

Congratulations, Dr. Brumback!



Biostatistics and PPHP Dean's PhD Travel Awards

Congratulations to the following recipients who presented research posters at important events, including the 2018 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM)

- “Amanda” Tong Kang
- Yeonil Kim
- Guanhong Miao
- Rachel Zahigian

Ph.D. Student, Tyler Grimes, Receives Travel Award

Tyler Grimes, Ph.D. student in the department of biostatistics, was given a travel award for Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology (ISMB) and Critical Assessment of Massive Data Analysis (CAMDA) 2018. This award provided the funding to present a poster at the 2018 ISMB/CAMDA in Chicago, Illinois in July 2018. He received travel support covering all of his costs.

Tyler gave a forty-five minute talk at the conference titled “An exploratory approach for identifying novel biomarkers in subgroups of cancer patients from RNA-seq data”

Congratulations, Tyler!



Ph.D. Student, Kai Yang, Wins Student Paper Award



Kai Yang, Ph.D. student supervised by Dr. Peihua Qiu in the department of biostatistics, was awarded the Best Student Paper Award in Applied Statistics at the IISA 2018 Conference. This conference was held in Gainesville, Florida from May 17th through the 20th, 2018. Eligibility to participate in the student paper competition were limited to those who are enrolled in a M.S./Ph.D. (or equivalent) program in Statistics or related fields at the time of the conference.

During a conference session, Kai presented his work in front of a panel of judges as well as fellow conference attendees.

The competition winners were selected based on the quality and content of their presentations. An award subcommittee selected by the IISA Executive Committee determined the winners. Winners were announced and recognized at the conference banquet on Friday, May 18, 2018 at the University of Florida's Straughn Center. Winners received certificates and cash awards.

Ph.D. Student, Rachel Zahigian, Receives Travel Award

Rachel Zahigian, Ph.D. student in the department of biostatistics, was awarded the Biopharm-Deming Student Scholar Award. This award will provide the funding to present a poster at the 2018 Deming conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey. She received travel support covering all of her costs. This conference will be held in the first week of December.

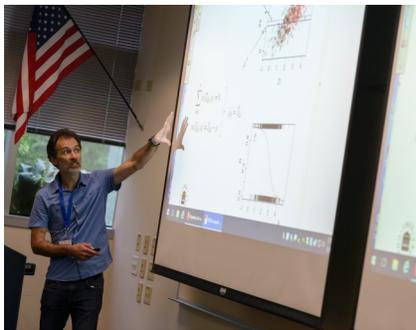
Rachel will present Response adaptive clinical trials allow treatment allocation probabilities to change throughout the study at interim periods based on prior observed treatment outcomes, thereby increasing the probability of giving a high-risk individual the most beneficial treatment. However, statisticians need the necessary time to plan the study and conduct extensive simulations in order to satisfy logistical issues or regulatory concerns. The purpose of this poster is to present a case study of a currently enrolling two-stage response adaptive clinical trial using an enriched sample on two interventions meant to alleviate chronic pain. In simulation studies, various statistical parameters, including p-value combination methods, weights, and outcome rate patterns, are changed in order to optimize the study design.

Congratulations, Rachel!



Department Hosts The IISA 2018 Conference

The department of biostatistics hosted the International Indian Statistical Association's annual meeting. This four day conference was held May 17, 2018 through May 20, 2018 at the HPNP Complex at the University of Florida. The conference attracted 300 participants from around the world to discuss and foster the cutting-edge developments of statistical theory, methods and tools for making accurate inference from complex to noisy data. These participants were encouraged to participate in and attend a variety of the 201 invited session talks, eight special invited talks, three plenary talks and a bahadur lecture. For students, the conference provided numerous opportunities such as the student paper competition and contributed poster competition. The conference was hailed as very successful. IISA 2019 is scheduled to take place in Mumbai, India.



Department Favorably Ranked by U.S. News & World Report

The Department of Biostatistics, was favorably ranked by the U.S. News & World Report as one of the best statistical graduate programs. The rating was set on a scale of one to five, with one representing a marginal rating and five representing an outstanding rating. This rating was based on a survey by academic peer institutions. Questionnaires were sent to department heads and directors of graduate studies at each program. In order for a program to qualify for a score, programs needed a minimum of ten ratings and had to have awarded a minimum of five doctoral degrees for the years 2011-2015. Of the more than 100 statistical pro-

grams that were ranked, our program ranked 55th with a score of 2.9. Among all biostatistics programs, the department ranked 20th in the nation.



BSO Hosts Networking Workshop

The **Biostatistics Student Organization**, BSO, teamed up with the Career Resource Center, and hosted a networking workshop. The goal of the workshop was to gather graduate students from the health sciences and connect them with CRC and provide general knowledge regards to the resources and services that are offered to students. Ashley Jacobs, Assistant Director for Career and Industry Engagement, was the invited speaker and she was able to provide career planning strategies as well as reiterate CRC services. Students found this workshop to be very helpful.



Dr. Steven Foti's Tip for Twitter Published in AMSTAT News

Dr. Steven Foti, Clinical Assistant Professor, authored the article titled, *Academic Twitter- Statistics Education*. This article was recently published in the AMSTAT News. The focus of the article is the use of



Twitter in academics as a professional resource. Twitter presents the opportunity to create a professional social media network which creates a favorable environment for items such as information sharing, advertising, academic/ professional opportunities, career advice, etc...

For the full article, please visit <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2018/06/01/academic-twitter-statistics-education/>

Dr. Somnath Datta awarded NIH NIDCR grant

The Department of Biostatistics wishes to congratulate **Dr. Somnath Datta** on his recent award from the National Institute of Health NIDCR. The project, "A Novel Analysis Plan for the Caries and Fluorosis Data from the Iowa Fluoride Study", is a 2-3 year study that will be led by Dr. Datta with co-investigators from the Universities of Louisville and Iowa. A brief abstract follows: The overall goal of this proposal is to undertake a comprehensive secondary statistical analysis of data obtained from the Iowa Fluoride Study. In the United States, dental caries is a major chronic childhood disease. Nevertheless, our understanding of various risk factors is limited. The proposed research will integrate multi-year caries and fluorosis data to uncover new information that are undetectable using the simpler approaches previously undertaken for the IFS data. This research provides a greater understanding of the risk and preventative factors of dental caries and fluorosis. Last but not least, this work will enrich biostatistics methodological research in Bayesian approaches to statistical regression models for count data.



For the full article, please visit <http://biostat.ufl.edu/2018/08/09/dr-somnath-datta-awarded-nih-nidcr-grant/>

Dr. Natalie Dean awarded NIH NIAID R01 grant

The Department of Biostatistics wishes to congratulate **Dr. Natalie Dean** on her recent award from NIH/NIAID. The project, “Design and Analysis of Vaccine Trials for Emerging Infectious Disease Threats”, is a 5 year study that will be led by Dr. Dean with collaborators from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and Northeastern University. A brief abstract follows:

The purpose of this grant is to develop innovative study designs and analytical methods to estimate vaccine efficacy and effectiveness. Our research focuses on emerging infectious diseases, such as Ebola, Lassa fever, MERS, and pandemic influenza.



Department Summer Picnic 2018

On April 21, 2018, the department hosted its annual picnic. All department faculty, staff, students, visitors and their families were invited to attend, and the attendance was great!

The picnic was held at Lake Wauburg, and everyone enjoyed the beautiful weather playing in the water.

The fellowship was wonderful and everyone was able to mingle with each other’s families.



January

Dr. Ying Wing Chen

Full Member of Biostatistics, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

- Title: *Statistical Design and Methods for a Scientific Breakthrough Study in HIV/AIDS Research*

February

Dr. Lei Liu

Professor, Division of Biostatistics, Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

- Title: *Variable Selection for Random Effects of Two-part Models*

March

Dr. Bin Huang

Professor, Division of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Cincinnati Children's Hospital

- Title: *Comparative Effectiveness Research Using Electronic Health Records: A Bayesian's Approach with Covariates Matching*

April

Dr. Julia Crook

Assistant Professor of Biostatistics, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine

- Title: *The Problem with Ordinal Covariates*

July

Dr. Bradley Efron

Professor of Statistics and Biomedical Data Science, Stanford University

- Title: *The Automatic Construction of Bootstrap Confidence Intervals*

Dr. Nikolay Bliznyuk

Associate Professor with UF Department of Agriculture & Biological Engineering, Biostatistics, and Statistics

- Title: *Intrinsic Bayesian Analysis for Occupancy Models*

August

Dr. Kasper Hansen

Assistant Professor of Biostatistics, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

- Title: *Analyzing bisulfite sequencing data from human brain regions*

September

Dr. Limin Peng

Professor, Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Emory University

- Title: *Trajectory Quantile Regression for Longitudinal Data*

October

Dr. Vasyl Pihur

Privacy/Security Engineering Manager, Snapchat, Inc.

- Title: *Theory and Practice of Differential Privacy*

November

Dr. Joseph Antonelli

Assistant Professor of Statistics, University of Florida

- Title: *Estimating the health effects of environmental mixtures using Bayesian semiparametric regression and sparsity inducing priors.*

POSTDOC

Arrivals

Dr. Janaka Liyanage joined the department on September 25, 2018 as a Post Doc Associate to Dr. Zhigang Li. Dr. Liyanage was awarded a Ph.D. degree from University of Nebraska-Lincoln in August 2018. His dissertation title was *Threshold Selection for High Dimensional Adaptive Thresholding Covariance Estimator*.

Departures

Alejandro Riveros Walker joined the department on September 1, 2016 as a Post Doc Associate to Dr. Somnath Datta and Dr. Susmita Datta. Dr. Walker was awarded a Ph.D. degree from the University of Florida in August 2014.

VISITING SCHOLARS RESEARCH PROGRAM

THE DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED A VISITING RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM IN 2015
Commenced

- **Hao Chen**, invited by Dr. Sam Wu, a 12 month visitor from Tianjin, China, Tianjin University of Finance and Economics
- **Zhimin Duan**, invited by Dr. Sam Wu, a 12 month visitor from Tianjin, China, Tianjin University of Finance and Economics
- **Li Xue**, invited by Dr. Peihua Qiu, a 12 month visitor from Kaifeng, China, Zhengzhou University of Aeronautics
- **Qin Zhou**, invited by Dr. Peihua Qiu, a 12 month visitor from Xuzhou, China, Jiangsu Normal University

Concluded

- **Wendong Li**, invited by Dr. Peihua Qiu, a 12 month visitor from Shanghai, China, East China Normal University.

Doctor of Philosophy

Bochao Jia—Ph.D. Mentor—Faming Liang, Ph.D.

Thesis Dissertation: *Learning Graphical Models for Multiple Types of Biomedical Data*

Master of Science

Piyush Chaudhari, M.S.—Mentor: John Kairalla, Ph.D.

Xiaoqing Fu, M.S.—Mentor: Baiming Zou, Ph.D.

Mengmeng Li, M.S.—Mentor: Rhonda Bacher, Ph.D.

Medha Mazumdar, M.S.—Mentor: Yang Yang, Ph.D.

Candice Sammons, M.S.—Mentor: Somnath Datta, Ph.D.

Tao Xiang M.S.—Mentor: Qinglin Pei, Ph.D.

Yu Xiao, M.S.—Mentor: Susmita Datta, Ph.D.

Chen Yeh, M.S.—Mentor: Qinglin Pei, Ph.D.

Qiao Yu, M.S.—Mentor: Meenakshi Devidas, Ph.D.

Jiayue Zhang, M.S.—Mentor: Baiming Zou, Ph.D.



Ph.D. graduate, Bochao Jia, pictured with Dr. Sam Wu

Master of Public Health

Xinran Liu, MPH—Mentor: Steven Foti

Christa Ochoa, MPH—Mentor: Steven Foti

Yitang Sun, MPH—Mentor: Yueh-Yun Chi

Yi Zheng, MPH—Mentor: Yueh-Yun Chi

Gifts to the **Department of Biostatistics** greatly enhance student support. If you have any questions or would like to talk to someone about making a difference in the Department of Biostatistics, please contact Sam Wagner, Associate Director of Development and Alumni Affairs by calling (352) 273-6540 or emailing Samuel.wagner@ufl.edu. You can also follow the links below if you are interested in being a part of our growing department and future successes:

[Biostatistics Support Fund \(004783\): College of Public Health and Health Professions](#)

[Biostatistics Educational Enhancement Fund \(020757\): College of Public Health and Health Professions](#)

For tax purposes, receipts for charitable contributions will be issued from the University of Florida Foundation.

THANK YOU to the following supporters who made gifts to the department in 2018!

\$0-\$500

**Babette Brumback
Kuei-Hsun Chiu
Meenakshi Devidas
John Kairalla
Qihong Li
Huiyin Lu
Sue McGorray
Guanhong Miao**

**Arlene Naranjo
Meng Shen
Samuel Wu
Suwa Xu
Hui Zeng
Yan Zhao
Baiming Zou
Fei Zou**

\$500 and above

**James and Debra Bologonese
Somnath Datta
Susmita Datta**

**Peihua Qiu
Huisheng Xie**

**Your gifts are greatly appreciated!
We look forward to thank you in our next newsletter.**

We invite you to visit our department website at: <http://biostat.ufl.edu>