Information Regarding the Establishment of a North American Regional Section (NARS) of IASC

Please read the invitation letter from Jim Harner, the Chairman of the Interface Foundation of North America (IFNA) to join the Organizing Committee for a new regional IASC section in North America:

IASC members,

Juergen Symanzik, President of IASC, and I feel the time is right to establish a North American Regional Section (NARS) of IASC. This has been an ongoing discussion for several years, particularly in the context of several Interface Foundation of North America Board meetings. Currently, there are 67 IASC members in North America, defined for our purposes as the United States of America (USA) and Canada.

I am writing to request your support in establishing NARS. As you know, the IASC has three regional sections—Asian, European, and Latin American. Several Board members of the Interface Foundation of North American (IFNA) are spearheading this drive to establish NARS much like IFNA partnered with ASA to establish the Symposium on Data Science and Statistics (SDSS) in 2016/17. The Interface Foundation has a long history with IASC, including three IASC Presidents who were also IFNA Board officers.

The intent of NARS is not to compete with ASA, but to complement their activities. Specifically, the NARS Organizing Committee is exploring research and training programs and workshops among other activities to foster data science and statistics. These programs and workshops will be inexpensive and accessible—perhaps in a hybrid format to allow both on-site and distance training and presentations. Although these programs and workshops would be open to everyone, we plan to focus on students in statistics and related disciplines and young researchers and professionals.

Please consider assisting in this effort. We need several more members to fill-out the NARS Organizing Committee and others to provide feedback as we develop our bylaws and statutes. Or perhaps you just want to stay informed as we progress through the approval process. If you are interested, please send an email to: Jim Harner (ejharner@gmail.com) and copy Juergen Symanzik (juergen.symanzik@usu.edu).

I look forward to hearing from you,

Jim Harner

Professor Emeritus of Statistics
Adjunct Professor of Business Data Analytics
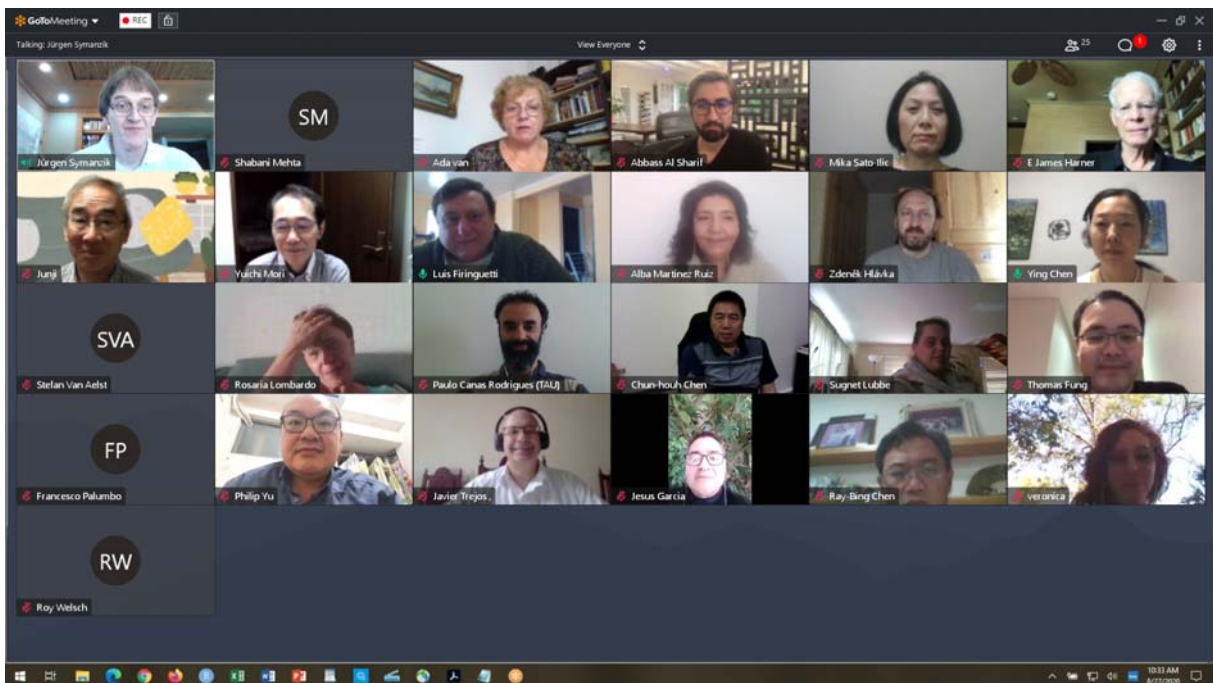West Virginia University

Chairman
Interface Foundation of North America

News from the IASC Executive Committee (September 2020)

The IASC held its first ever virtual Executive Committee (EC) meeting on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, and its first ever virtual General Assembly (GA) on Thursday, August 27, 2020. This format became necessary due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and it was made possible due to temporary changes in European laws that allowed virtual GAs during the pandemic. Both meetings had very good attendances, with about 18 of the IASC EC members participating at the EC meeting and about 34 IASC members participating at the GA.

At both meetings, IASC activities, including reports from the three regional sections and the financial report, were discussed. The GA approved the IASC Annual Report for 2019 unanimously (34 Yes and 0 No votes).

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the ISI WSC conference in 2021 was switched to a virtual conference (see a previous news issue). This implies that it is impossible to hold an in-person EC meeting and GA in July 2021 at the venue of the WSC. At this time, it was not clear whether there will be an extension of the temporary law that would allow another virtual GA in 2021. To be on the safe side and keep IASC operational in 2021 (and in case of other future emergencies that might prohibit holding in-person meetings), the following extension of Article 5.6 of the IASC Statutes (http://iasc-isi.org/statutes/) has been discussed: "*The General Assembly meeting may be held virtually. In the case of a virtual meeting, members are given the opportunity to participate online and vote.*" This was approved unanimously by the IASC EC members (18 Yes and 0 No votes) and also by the IASC GA (33 Yes and 0 No votes). This will allow us to hold a virtual EC meeting and a virtual GA again in July 2021.

Participants towards the end of the Virtual IASC GA on August 27, 2020.

Some other noteworthy highlights from the EC meeting and GA are the planned formation of a North American Regional Section (NARS) of the IASC (see the separate news item in this issue), the 2021 Data Analysis Competition (see the call for this competition in this issue), and the termination of the IASC Committee on Computational Statistics & Data Mining for Knowledge Discovery (CS-DM&KD) (originally established in 2012, see http://iasc-isi.org/committees/) to better focus on current IASC activities such as the DSSV conferences and the JDSSV journal (see recent news issues). We would like to thank everyone who served on the CS-DM&KD Committee during the past nine years. IASC members with an interest in the topics covered by this outgoing committee are encouraged to use the same ways to propose invited sessions, (summer) schools, workshops, webinars, etc. that are open to all other IASC members with interests in the various areas of computational statistics and data science that are covered by IASC. Watch for announcements and calls for session proposals.

The IASC EC also discussed future webinars, with two webinars currently in the process of being implemented. See one news item in this issue and watch for further announcements on the IASC web site at http://iasc-isi.org/. More thoughts on webinars will follow in a future news issue.

New ISI-Elected Members from IASC (June 2020)

The IASC-ISI Nomination Committee is glad to announce that IASC members Eric J Beh (Australia), Salvatore Ingrassia (Italy), Masahiro Kuroda (Japan), Niel Le Roux (South Africa) and Hiroyuki Minami (Japan) have been nominated ISI elected members on June 1st, 2020. Our congratulations on reaching this membership status to all of them. To know the benefits to be an ISI elected member, please look at https://www.isi-web.org/index.php/membership/benefits#elected.

Call of the Data Analysis Competition 2021

The International Association for Statistical Computing (IASC) announces the Data Analysis Competition 2021. The theme of this edition of the competition is around the analysis of quality-of-life related data and the submission should clearly describe the significance of your findings either for individuals or for the society. There are currently many data sets related to the spread of COVID-19 but we encourage you to investigate also any other quality-of-life related issues such as health, education, environment, social inequalities, etc. In your analysis, you may concentrate on individuals, a single region, or even the entire world. Your entry must be submitted as a poster in PDF format before 30-th April 2021. More information, including the description of awards, may be found at http://iasc-isi.org/data-analysis-competition/.

Call for Short Courses – ISI WSC 2021

The ISI Short Course Committee for ISI WSC 2021 (SCC) [https://www.isi-web.org/index.php/community/standing-and-operational-committees/standing-and-operational-committees?id=8688] is inviting members of the ISI and its Associations to submit proposals to deliver *online* short courses.

The SCC is developing an online short course programme to be delivered over the summer months of June and July 2021 surrounding the 63rd ISI World Statistics Congress (WSC) [https://www.isi2021.org/]. The short courses will be scheduled in a 3 hour session each day at a time chosen to accommodate learners in many time zones. A short course can be scheduled for 1 day (3 hours total), 2 days (6 hours total) or 3 days (9 hours total).

The proposals for short courses received from members and other sources will be reviewed by the SCC who will recommend a proposed short course programme to be approved by the ISI Executive Committee. The scheduling and management of the delivery of the selected short courses will be arranged through the ISI Permanent Office.

The short courses should meet the needs of the Associations and Special Interest Groups and in particular, the needs of Young Statisticians, Continuing Professional Development and Statistical Capacity Building.

Up to two instructors per course will be reimbursed for the WSC registration. It is hoped that instructors will view this activity as a service to the international statistical community and a contribution to professional development and statistical capacity building for ISI members and the larger community.

Please complete the form [https://www.isi-web.org/index.php/component/rsform/form/102-online-short-course-proposal-form] and submit your proposal by 15 October 2020.

Forthcoming Event: IASC-LARS Webinar on Computational Statistics and Data Science

The Latin American Regional Section of the IASC, the IASC-LARS School on Computational Statistics and Data Science, the IASC and the ISI are pleased to invite postgraduate and undergraduate students to attend the IASC-LARS Webinar Course "Statistical Inference in Markov Processes". The course will be team-taught by Professors Verónica González-López and Jesús E. García from the University of Campinas, Brazil.

The course will be held virtually using the platform **GoToWebinar** from **November 23-26, 2020**. The deadline for early registration is **October 20, 2020**. To attend this virtual course, please complete the IASC-LARS Webinar Registration Form and sent it to lacsc.lars.iasc@gmail.com. All information is available at https://iasc-isi.org/.

New Board of Directors of the European Regional Section of IASC for 2020-2024

The European Regional Section (ERS) has elected a new Board of Directors for the period 2020-2024. The new elected members of the Board of Directors for the period 2020-2024 are:

- Chairman Elect: Maria Brigida Ferraro (Italy)
- Scientific Secretary: Sara Taskinen (Finland)
- Massimiliano Caporin (Italy)
- Karel Hron (Czech Republic)
- Myriam Maumy-Bertrand (France)
- Stefan van Aelst (Belgium)

The full list of members on the Board of Directors with terms is available at: http://iasc-isi.org/ers-board-of-directors/

The 2020 COMO Spring Course Postponed to 17-21 May 2021

The 2020 Spring Course on "Robust Statistics: Foundations and Recent Developments" organized by Francesca Greselin, Lake Como School of Advanced Studies (Como, Italy), was rescheduled to 17-21 May 2021 (postponed initially from May 2020, and thereafter from October 2020). For further details see: https://rsfd.lakecomoschool.org/

Forthcoming Event: LACSC 2021 5th Latin American Conference on Statistical Computing

ITAM - Río Hondo 2012

The **5th Latin American Conference on Statistical Computing LACSC 2021** will be held in Ciudad de México, México, from **April 19 to April 21, 2021**. This international conference is jointly organized by the Department of Statistics and the Department of Industrial & Operations Engineering of the Instituto Autónomo de México (ITAM), the Latin American Regional Section of the International Association for Statistical Computing (LARS-IASC) and the International Statistical Institute (ISI). The theme of this year is "**Statistical Computing for Intelligent Decision Making**" and the **Keynote Speakers**,

- Wendy L. Martínez, Bureau of Labor Statistics, USA
- Daniel Russo, Columbia University, USA
- Enrique Sucar, Inst. Nacional de Astrofísica, Óptima y Electrónica, México
- Renato Assunção, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Brazil
- Antonietta Mira, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland

LACSC 2021 invites to submit papers, contributed paper sessions and invited paper sessions before **January 11, 2021**. The call of papers and all the information is available at http://lacsc2020.itam.mx

The aim of LACSC is to foster the progress of the theory, methods and practice of statistical computing in Latin America, and to become the main meeting point of the statistical computing scientific community in LA. This year, the call of papers of the conference gives an account of the interest of academics, scientists and professionals in methodological aspects of statistical computing and relevant applications for the Latin American community.

Zócalo (Plaza de la Constitución)   Aztec calendar in green ceramic

You cannot miss LACSC 2021! The Local Organizing Committee is also organizing an interesting social program. Mexico City is the capital of the United Mexican States (official name of the country). Originally this city was built on an islet where some natives found an eagle devouring a snake and was called Tenochtitlan. Chinampas for agriculture were built around it and became the capital of the Aztec Empire. With the arrival of the Spaniards in 1521, Mexico City fell under its dominance and became the center of the economic activity of the power of New Spain. Its outstanding colonial architecture earned it recognition as the City of Palaces. Currently, Mexico City stands in a valley surrounded by volcanoes, proud of its heritage, the product of the fusion of two cultures. It is the largest and most populous city in Latin America and one of the most dynamic capitals in the world; It has a large number of museums, theaters, concert halls, archaeological ruins, theme parks and recreational parks. Also, it offers a great gastronomic variety typical of all regions of Mexico and the world. Please see more information on the following links: https://www.visitmexico.com/en/ and https://www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico/mexico-city

Forthcoming Event: 3rd LARS-IASC School on Computational Statistics and Data Science

The **Third LARS-IASC School on Computational Statistics and Data Science** will be held in Ciudad de México, México, from **April 17 to April 18, 2021**. This is a satellite event of the 5th Latin American Conference on Statistical Computing, LACSC 2021, jointly organized by the Instituto Autónomo de México (ITAM), the Latin American Regional Section of the International Association for Statistical Computing (LARS-IASC) and the International Statistical Institute (ISI).

Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)

This year the school theme is **Stochastic Simulation and Reinforcement Learning** (http://lacsc2020.itam.mx) and the **instructors**,

- Enrique Sucar, Inst. Nacional de Astrofísica, Óptica y Electrónica, México
  - "Probabilistic Graphical Models: Principles and Applications"

- David Muñoz-Negrón, Instituto Tecnológico de México (ITAM)
  - "Stochastic Simulation: Output Analysis and Applications"

- Eduardo F. Morales, Inst. Nacional de Astrofísica, Óptica y Electrónica, México
  - "Reinforcement Learning"

The main purpose of the school is to spread the knowledge base and advances in Statistical Computing in Latin American countries and to increase the quantity of researchers and data scientists in the field. The program is organized around three axes: knowledge base and advances, software and data science applications and it is oriented to postgraduate students, researchers and practitioners in statistics and data science. For LARS-IASC students, the IASC will provide (a) up to **10 scholarships** – 100% waiver in registration fee for people living in developing countries (low income countries https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/low-income and lower middle income countries https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/lower-middle-income); (b) 1 full scholarship that includes registration fee, travel, and stay expenses. To apply for these scholarships, the candidates must,

- Be a member of the International Association for Statistical Computing (IASC). More information on how to become a member can be found here: http://iasc-isi.org/become-a-member/
- At the time of the application and of the events be living and working/studying in a developing country.

Palace of Fine Arts   Teotihuacan   Xochimilco

ITAM's mission is to contribute to the individual's comprehensive education and to develop a freer, more just, and prosperous society. In order to achieve its research, teaching, and outgrowth endeavors, ITAM aims to reach the highest levels of academic excellence in an environment promoting the plurality of ideas and respectful of ethnic, cultural, and religious differences. Our institution's goal is to prepare and educate women and men that are capable of acting in an informed, rational, responsible, critical way, and committed to creating, managing, and shaping public opinion, institutions, as well as further works. It also intends that these women and men be capable of creating and transmitting knowledge of the highest ethical, scientific, technological, and professional levels, allowing society to become aware of its problems and contributing to their understanding and solutions https://www.itam.mx/en.