

**Cormier, J. Briggs**

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**From:** Elliot Slotnick [slotnick.1@gradsch.ohio-state.edu]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 11, 2008 4:47 PM  
**To:** Doug Wolfe  
**Cc:** murray.419@osu.edu; Stanley Lemeshow; stasny.1@osu.edu; Dena Myers; Smith, Randy; Matt Platz; Tim Watson; Shari Breckenridge; Cormier, J. Briggs  
**Subject:** RE:

Dear Doug et al,

Our Curriculum Review Committee met earlier today and has now endorsed your proposal regarding the modification of the existing doctoral program in Biostatistics. As you know, since this program is an already authorized Ph.D in the world of the Ohio Board of Regents, all of the approval processes for your changes necessitate only internal action through OSU's processes in order to be implemented. With that in mind I have copied this e-mail (which contains the Curriculum Review Committee's initial response to you proposal and your reply) to Randy Smith and Briggs Cormier as part of the proposal's submission for CAA review. I will also forward your original proposal to Randy and Briggs, completing the documentation that will be required for CAA consideration. Thus, your future correspondence regarding this proposal and any further questions that you might receive on it will be coming from Randy, Briggs and/or a CAA subcommittee in the future. Congratulations on reaching this next stage in the approval process.

Best,  
 elliot

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**From:** Doug Wolfe [mailto:daw@stat.osu.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 23, 2008 11:54 AM  
**To:** Elliot Slotnick  
**Cc:** murray.419@osu.edu; Stanley Lemeshow; stasny.1@osu.edu; Dena Myers; Randy Smith; Matt Platz; Tim Watson; Shari Breckenridge  
**Subject:** Re:

Dear Elliot and members of the Graduate School Curriculum Committee,

Thanks for your response to our request for approval of a modification to the existing doctoral program in Biostatistics. We appreciate the Curriculum Committee's willingness to extend their workload into the summer quarter to discuss our proposal. We will address the three curricular concerns expressed by the Committee in your response separately, although they are all somewhat intertwined in how we envisage this merged Ph.D. program operating most effectively.

First, you express the general overall concern that our "programmatic decisions appeared to be driven by budgetary considerations and imperatives and not, necessarily, by substantive concerns". This is probably a direct result of the emphasis that we placed on this aspect in the formal Memorandum of Understanding that was submitted with our request. We can assure you that the driving force for this merger is academic with the primary goal for creating a single Ph.D. program in Biostatistics that will be able to compete with the top biostatistics programs in the country. The reason for the emphasis on the budgetary considerations in the MOU is that we all feel it is important that we know how students who enter this merged program will be supported during their graduate studies. The general funding mechanism for supporting graduate students is quite different for the two entities involved in the proposed merger. Within the Department of Statistics, where the current Biostatistics Ph.D. program is housed, the principal funding for incoming graduate students if provided by either University Fellowship or Graduate Teaching Associate appointments. As students move through the current doctoral program, many will become Graduate Research Associates on externally funded projects that lead to their dissertations. However, some may stay as Graduate Teaching Associates throughout most of their doctoral studies. On the other hand, the primary form of financial support for entering graduate students in the College of Public Health is either a University Fellowship or appointment right away as a Graduate Research

7/15/2008

Associate. With these differing models for funding entering graduate students, we wanted to be very careful in providing a smooth and clear path for funding for students who will seek to enter the proposed merged Ph.D. program in Biostatistics. Thus the emphasis on budgetary considerations in the MOU is driven totally by a desire to make it clear to entering graduate students how their doctoral education will be funded. The detailed emphasis is provided solely for the protection of the students as they move through the proposed two track system.

Now, let us address your other two more specific concerns.

**>First, and most importantly, was the identification of the two tracks in the program (applied and >methodological) with the two units' faculties en masse (with the Methodological track and students >supported by Statistics and the Applied track and students supported by the Biostatistics division in the >College of Public Health). In the Committee's view this was oversimplistic and did not reflect the >possibility/likelihood that some "applied" work could be accomplished in the Statistics department and >some "theoretical/methodological" work could readily be associated with faculty in the Public Health domain.**

This is simply a misread by the Curriculum Committee. We fully acknowledge that any of the proposed faculty for the merged program could be working on dissertations with students in either the Methodological track or the Applied track. In fact, we expect that to happen quite regularly. Stan, for example, could and likely will advise Methodological track students and Dennis Pearl, for example, could and likely will advise Applied track students. The purpose of the two tracks is not to pigeonhole the eventual dissertation research undertaken by the Ph.D. students, but rather to direct the coursework for the students after successful completion of the common Qualifier I Examination. The coursework for the two tracks is quite different, but a student's eventual dissertation research is certainly not limited by selection of one track over the other. Individual advisers may or may not agree to work with students from one track or the other (no different than adviser prerogatives in any Ph.D. program), but there will be absolutely no limits placed on the type of dissertation a student can write based solely on the track selected. When all is said and done, the graduates from either track will have a Ph.D. in Biostatistics from Ohio State, without designation of the chosen track.

**>Similar concerns were raised about the approach to interacting with First Year Students outlined on page >3 of your MOU. It appears that, in the initial stages of the admissions process, a Graduate Studies >Committee across the program is making the base line decisions including fellowship nominations but >then, ultimately, funding decisions are farmed out to the track faculties to decide for "their" students. >Again, in the interest of maintaining an integrated program, should not these decisions be made by a >Committee that spans the breadth of the program's faculty including those who, ostensibly, are associated >with both tracks? Writ large, the Committee was concerned about the bifurcated nature of the MOU's >terms being so tightly identified to the two discrete faculties from Statistics and Public Health.**

We believe that this concern is addressed by our previous response to the different funding mechanisms that exist within MAPS and Public Health. The reason for the initial funding decisions being made differently from subsequent post-track-selection funding decisions is once again for the protection of the students. The Department of Statistics has a much larger source of funding available for entering graduate students via its pool of Graduate Teaching Associates and this can legitimately be used to fund new graduate students as they move through their common pre-track-selection coursework toward completion of the Qualifier I Examination. Once a student has passed the Qualifier I Examination, the funding most naturally moves toward the emphasis that the student wishes to place on his/her dissertation research. Again we expect that some students pursuing the Applied track will, in fact, be funded by faculty with primary appointments in the Department of Statistics and conversely that some students pursuing the Methodological track will, in fact, be funded by faculty with primary appointments in the College of Public Health. The intent of the MOU was to make it clear which unit was responsible for **guaranteeing (i.e., finding)** the necessary support for a post Qualifier I Examination student, not necessarily which unit would actually be **providing** the support.

We hope that this helps clarify the issues of concern for the Curriculum Committee. We would, of course, be most happy to meet with the Committee to discuss these matters more fully if they think that would be useful. Please let us know if that is of interest.

**>I know that the negotiations process over the creation of this MOU has been a lengthy one and it is not the >Committee's intention to pull asunder what has taken a good deal of time to agree on and create. Still, the >Committee would like to have these two matters addressed prior to any endorsement of your proposal and >sending it on to the Council on Academic Affairs for additional review.**

We fully understand and appreciate the concerns of the Curriculum Committee, but the negotiations that led to the creation of the MOU were, in fact, both lengthy and thorough and the eventual document is something that has unanimous support of both units. The merged Ph.D. program in Biostatistics has a very strong upside in terms of

competing for the very best doctoral applicants over the coming years and we are all quite anxious to have it become a reality. We look forward to working with you to make this happen.

Best Regards,

David, Doug, Elizabeth, and Stan

On Jun 18, 2008, at 3:26 PM, Elliot Slotnick wrote:

Dear David, Doug, Elizabeth and Stan,

At the end of the Spring Quarter we received a letter from you requesting approval for a modification of the existing doctoral program in Biostatistics along with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the funding model and two tracked approach that was proposed to be implemented for the program. While our Curriculum Review Committee had already completed its last meeting for the academic year, rather than let your proposal sit through the summer before it was addressed, we convened a meeting of the Curriculum Committee earlier this week. Your request included some facets that went beyond our traditional review function and, for which, I am unsure about the correct procedures for "making it so." Specifically, while our Committee had no objection to changing the locale for the 077 program code from the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences to more accurately reflect the inter-college nature of your interdisciplinary program, this is not something that falls within our standard curriculum functions and I will have to check with Randy Smith and members of our own staff to find out how such a change request should be proposed, tracked and vetted. When I have more information on that question, I shall let you know.

Regarding those aspects of your request that are more pointedly curricular in nature, I should note that the Committee was struck by how much programmatic decisions appeared to be driven by budgetary considerations and imperatives and not, necessarily, by substantive concerns. While some such matters remained outside of the Committee's appropriate domain of curriculum review there were a couple of areas where the Committee felt it was appropriate to seek what were, ostensibly, curriculum related changes in your agreement and/or greater for the approaches being taken in the proposal.

First, and most importantly, was the identification of the two tracks in the program (applied and methodological) with the two units' faculties en masse (with the Methodological track and students supported by Statistics and the Applied track and students supported by the Biostatistics division in the College of Public Health). In the Committee's view this was oversimplistic and did not reflect the possibility/likelihood that some "applied" work could be accomplished in the Statistics department and some "theoretical/methodological" work could readily be associated with faculty in the Public Health domain. Indeed, a Committee member pointed to Stan as a case in point, noting that an important statistical test, clearly a methodological contribution, bears his name. Isn't it possible that Stan could advise a Methodological track student and, by extension, many of your program faculty could be working with students across the two tracks? With that in mind, the Committee asks shouldn't the student tracks be driven by what, substantively, students are actually "doing" and not by where they register? At bottom, the call here is for a more fluid, student driven approach to what track specialization is granted and to which students.

Similar concerns were raised about the approach to interacting with First Year Students outlined on page 3 of your MOU. It appears that, in the initial stages of the admissions process, a Graduate Studies Committee across the program is making the base line decisions including fellowship nominations but then, ultimately, funding decisions are farmed out to the track faculties to decide for "their" students. Again, in the interest of maintaining an integrated program, should not these decisions be made by a Committee that spans the breadth of the program's faculty including those who, ostensibly, are associated with both tracks? Writ large, the Committee was concerned about the bifurcated nature of the MOU's terms being so tightly identified to the two discrete faculties from Statistics and Public Health.

I know that the negotiations process over the creation of this MOU has been a lengthy one and it is not the Committee's intention to pull asunder what has taken a good deal of time to agree on and create. Still, the Committee would like to have these two matters addressed prior to any endorsement of your proposal and sending it on to the Council on Academic Affairs for additional review.

Best,  
elliott

7/15/2008



May 29, 2008

Dr. Elliot E. Slotnick  
Graduate School  
250D University Hall  
230 North Oval Mall  
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dear Dean Slotnick:

This letter requests approval for a modification of the PhD program in Biostatistics. Currently, the Biostatistics PhD program, program number 077, is associated with the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and all Category P faculty associated with the program have the Department of Statistics as their TIU.

As described in the attached Memorandum of Understanding, the revised program will consist of two tracks, an Applied Track and a Methodological Track. The Category P faculty associated with the program will come from the Department of Statistics and from the Division of Biostatistics in the College of Public Health. These faculty, all having research interests in Biostatistics, will guide thesis work and perform all administrative functions including curriculum development, admissions, as well as providing for student financial support. Given this inter-college faculty participation, we ask that the 077 program number be disassociated from the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

The MOU provides additional administrative details. It has been signed by David Murray (Interim Chair, Division of Biostatistics in the College of Public Health) and Douglas Wolfe (Chair, Department of Statistics in the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences) and has the approval of Matt Platz, Dean of the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Murray".

David Murray  
Professor and Interim Chair  
Division of Biostatistics  
College of Public Health

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Douglas A. Wolfe".

Douglas Wolfe  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Statistics  
College of Mathematical & Physical Sciences

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth A. Stasny".

Elizabeth Stasny  
Professor and Graduate Studies Chair of Biostatistics  
Department of Statistics  
College of Mathematical & Physical Sciences

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING  
OF THE TWO-TRACK PH.D. PROGRAM IN BIOSTATISTICS**

The Biostatistics graduate faculties in the Department of Statistics in the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MAPS) and the Division of Biostatistics in the College of Public Health (PH) have reached agreement on a combined Ph.D. Program in Biostatistics with two tracks, Methodological and Applied. The structure of the combined Ph.D. Program in Biostatistics will be delineated in the formal proposal to be submitted to the Graduate School for their consideration and approval. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to delineate the way in which the two-track program will be administered and funded.

**Program Number and Specializations.** The joint program will continue to operate under the Graduate School program number 077. That program number will be separated from the Department of Statistics and the College of MAPS so that the joint program will operate as an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program independent of any Division, Department, or College. The two tracks will be identified in the Graduate School's database as specializations within the program. This will facilitate reports on the total number of doctoral students enrolled in the program as well as the number enrolled in each track.

**Graduate Studies Committee.** The Department of Statistics in MAPS and the Division of Biostatistics in PH will form a joint Graduate Studies Committee, including subcommittees for admissions and curriculum. The Graduate Studies Committee Chair shall be appointed by a joint agreement of the Chairs of the Department of Statistics in MAPS and the Division of Biostatistics in PH based on the recommendation of the Biostatistics graduate faculty. The Graduate Studies Committee Chair of the Department of Statistics will initially serve in this role through June 30, 2011.

**Graduate Faculty.** The Graduate Faculty of the existing Ph.D. program in Biostatistics will continue as members of the Graduate Faculty of the joint program. If they so choose, the graduate faculty of the existing Ph.D. program in Public Health with a concentration in Biostatistics will be reviewed for membership in the Graduate Faculty of the joint program. The criteria for membership will be 1) active participation in research on biostatistical methods or that involves application of biostatistical methods, 2) willingness to teach Biostatistics courses and advise Biostatistics PhD students, and 3) willingness to serve on committees and subcommittees for the Biostatistics Graduate Faculty or represent the Biostatistics Faculty on University committees. Any other faculty who wish to become members of the Graduate Faculty of the joint program will need to apply to the Graduate Studies Committee Chair and be approved based on the same criteria.

**Admissions Subcommittee.** The Admissions subcommittee will consist of two faculty representatives from the Department of Statistics in MAPS and two faculty

representatives from the Division of Biostatistics in PH. The Biostatistics graduate faculty in each of the two units will choose their two representatives by June 30 for the next academic year. This Admissions Subcommittee will make all admissions decisions for the Ph.D. Program in Biostatistics, with the stipulation that a majority of the Subcommittee must be in favor of admission in order for an applicant to be admitted. They will also be responsible for the selection of applicants to nominate for the University Fellowship competition and for preparing their fellowship nominations. The Graduate Studies Committee Chair will act on behalf of the Admissions Subcommittee with regard to all record-keeping and administrative aspects of the program. These duties will include collecting and maintaining the application materials for all applicants and serving as the official contact with the Admissions Office with respect to admissions decisions and with the Graduate School during the first academic year for those students who choose to enroll in the program. The Admissions Subcommittee can also authorize the Graduate Studies Committee Chair to act on their behalf on other matters of their choosing, such as automatic denial of applicants with inferior academic records and/or test scores. The Graduate Studies Committee Chair will provide a summary report to the Admissions Subcommittee of any such actions taken.

**Curriculum Subcommittee.** The Curriculum Subcommittee will consist of two faculty representatives from the Division of Biostatistics in PH and two faculty representatives from the Department of Statistics in MAPS. Each year the Biostatistics graduate faculty in each of the two units will choose their two representatives by June 30 for the next academic year. The Biostatistics Curriculum Subcommittee will elect one of their members to serve as Chair of the Curriculum Subcommittee for that academic year. Any new course proposal related to the Biostatistics Ph.D. Program shall be approved (majority vote in favor is required) by the Biostatistics Curriculum Subcommittee and then forwarded for consideration by all the graduate faculty members in the Program. If a majority of these faculty members also approve a new course proposal, then it will be submitted through the usual processes for University approval. When the subcommittee finds that there is demonstrated faculty interest in both units for developing a new course, it will be cross-listed as BIO-PH and BIO-ST, so that faculty in both units can develop and teach the course. When demonstrated faculty interest in both units does not exist, cross-listing of courses currently or subsequently developed by one unit is not required. If the two units agree to cross-list courses currently or subsequently offered in one unit or the other, the subcommittee will coordinate efforts to develop an outline of the content of each cross-listed course so that it can be agreed upon in writing before the cross-listing takes effect; moreover, both units will adhere to this content in future offerings of each cross-listed course unless a new content outline is agreed upon through the same process. Finally, during winter quarter it will be the duty of the Curriculum Subcommittee to work with the two units to coordinate the course offerings for the coming academic year, including teaching assignments for the courses to be offered.

**Course Enrollments/Graduate Subsidies.** To permit the University funding to flow properly under the current budget model, enrollment in cross-listed courses will be credited to the unit that is the home of the faculty member teaching the course. If a course is team-taught, enrollment will be divided between the two units in the same proportion as the material is divided among the instructors.

## **Financial Support for Graduate Students**

**Incoming First Year Students.** Once a new student has been admitted to the Biostatistics Ph.D. Program there will be three possible sources for funding that student's first year in the program. The first source of support comes from the University Fellowship competition. As noted previously, the Admissions Subcommittee will prepare the nomination materials for those Biostatistics applicants selected for nomination in this competition. The other two sources of first-year support are as Graduate Teaching Associates or Graduate Research Associates. The Admissions Subcommittee will prepare a list of all applicants who have been admitted to the Ph.D. Program in Biostatistics and forward that list to the Chair of the Division of Biostatistics in PH and to the Chair of the Department of Statistics in MAPS. In consultation with their faculties, the Chairs will then consider each of these admitted students for possible first-year financial support as either a Graduate Teaching Associate or a Graduate Research Associate. After discussion and coordination between the two units (to avoid duplicate offers and maintain a common list of students who are being provided first-year support), each unit will separately mail first-year financial support letters of offer to the students they select to send such offers. These first-year letters of offer must guarantee financial support by the unit for the first five quarters (not including summer support) of the student's graduate studies. The letters should also contain language that makes it clear that financial support beyond this time through the fifth year in our program is guaranteed by the unit supporting the track chosen by the student, as long as the student is making good progress toward completion of their degree and the unit has the necessary resources to provide that support.

**Second Year and Beyond.** Prior to the end of the quarter during which a student successfully completes the Qualifier I Examination (typically in the second year in the program), the student must select one of the two tracks, Applied or Methodological. At that time, any financial support to be provided for the student will become the sole responsibility of the unit supporting the selected track—the Statistics Department for the Methodological Track and The Division of Biostatistics for the Applied Track, recognizing that not all students will necessarily receive financial support. Students who have not selected a track by the beginning of Winter quarter of their second year are not guaranteed support for the following year. The above does not preclude students being supported by either the Division of Biostatistics or the Department of Statistics throughout their entire Ph.D. studies regardless of the track they choose for their program. This Memorandum of Understanding simply makes it explicit which unit is primarily responsible for continuing a graduate student's support, if it is to continue, including possible nominations for the Presidential Fellowship competition when appropriate, once they have selected a particular track.

## **Other Financial Issues**

**Administrative Support.** Until June 30, 2011, the Department of Statistics will be responsible for providing the administrative support necessary to maintain the student records (pre- and post-admission) for the Biostatistics Ph.D. Program. This issue will be reviewed annually beginning in Spring 2011, and depending on the growth of the program, the number of students in each track, and the TIU of the Graduate Studies

Committee Chair, an amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding may be needed.

**Recruiting Materials and Prospective Student Visits.** The Division of Biostatistics and the Department of Statistics will share in all expenses related to recruitment of graduate students identified by the Biostatistics Ph.D. admissions subcommittee in proportion to the number of students allocated to the two tracks and provided that the two units have resources available to pay for such expenses. This will include, but not be limited to, expenses associated with the development of appropriate recruiting materials for the program, funding individual campus visits by prospective students, and the expenses for Biostatistics applicants who attend the annual Graduate Information Day held in early January.

**First-Year Summer Support Program.** If an entering student in the Biostatistics Ph.D. Program chooses to participate in the First-Year Summer Support Program, all summer quarter expenses for the student will be shared by the two units in proportion to the number of students allocated to the two tracks and provided that the two units have resources available to pay for such expenses.

On behalf of our respective units, we agree to support the principles and operate within the structure provided in this Memorandum of Understanding for management of the combined Biostatistics Ph.D. Program:



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David M. Murray  
Professor and Interim Chair  
Division of Biostatistics  
College of Public Health

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Date

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Douglas A. Wolfe  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Statistics  
College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

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Date