

Astrostatistics Interest Group Annual Meeting

Aug 3, 1pm-2:30pm EDT

Met via Zoom (attendance >25)

Agenda

1. Overview

AIG was formed with a 3-point agenda: expose statisticians to astronomical data and analysis and foster cross-disciplinary collaborations; advertise and promote astrostatistics via conferences, workshops, schools, awards, and other events; and coordinate with with related groups to promote astrostatistics.

1. Current office bearers roll call

Program Chair: Gwen Eadie (UToronto)

Program Chair Elect: Sara Algeri (UMinnesota)

Past Chair: Chad Schafer (CMU)

Chair Elect: Peter Freeman (CMU)

Secretary: Bo Ning (thru 2021) (Yale)

Webmaster: Luis Campos (Etsy)

Chair: Vinay Kashyap (CfA)

COSGB Vice Chair responsible for AIG: Elizabeth Slate (FSU)

2. Census

Report from Bo Ning:

Since Feb 5, we made a significant change to manage memberships: transferred the old google sheets system to mailchimp (see mailchimp.org; it is free as long as the number of members is <2000)

As of Aug 1, we had 106 members (11 new since Feb 5).

At least 82 are ASA members.

We have also started collecting AAS membership info. So far there are four, three of whom are members of both AAS and ASA. Future expansion of AIG should focus on bringing more astronomers to join the group.

Members come from not only the US (72%), but across the world (Canada (7), Asia (5; Japan, Korea, China, India, UAE), Europe (13), South Africa (2), Brazil (1)).

Titles are missing from many members' profiles, but majority appear to be faculty members.

Some information is outdated. We must remind people to update their information on a regular basis.

2. Charter

https://astrostat.org/about_us.html#charter

1. Amendments to the Charter

1. Language fixes

1. **Amend** Article IV from "... by mail and/or email." to "... through electronic media or teleconferences."

Agreed to 20-0

2. **Amend** Article V para 3 from "...at the annual change of officers,..." to "at the change of officers,..."

Agreed to 19-0

3. **Amend** Article VIII from "...proposed by the six officers..." to "...proposed by any of the six officers..."

Agreed to 19-0

4. **Amend** Article II.3 from "...internationally, such as with the International Astrostatistics Association (IAA), and including an affiliation with the Astrostatistics and Astroinformatics Portal (ASAIP)." to **either (a)** "... internationally." **or (b)** "...internationally, such as the International Astrostatistics Association (IAA), the Working Group on Astrostatistics and Astroinformatics of the American Astronomical Association (AAS-WGAA), the Astrostatistics and Astroinformatics Portal (ASAIP), etc."

This led to several additional suggestions for changes. New phrasing of Article II.3 to read:

Establish and maintain connections with related working groups in the U.S., Canada, and internationally.

Agreed to 17-0 for phrasing changes, and 16-0 to remove references to specific groups.

2. Term of the Program Chair

Discussion Item: The term of the Program Chair is for one year. Members have previously expressed interest in making that a two-year term. We will discuss the pros and cons and vote on whether to modify it.¹

Strong consensus to keep term as is. The burden of a learning curve has been alleviated by a well documented transition guide; it is unrealistic to require a typical junior faculty to attend 3 JSMs in a row; and a 1+2 year term implies there is a backup gap in the second year. Additionally, a caution was sounded to not take on too many responsibilities — a Program Chair facilitates and supports session proposals by members, but is *not responsible* for them.

Motion to change the term to 2 years *rejected* 0-14.

¹ If so decided, Article V para 1 will be modified from "... Terms of all the officers shall be one year except for the Secretary which shall be two years." to "... Terms of the officers shall be one year except for the Secretary and Program Chair which shall be two years."

3. Webmaster

Discussion Item: The role of Webmaster was created ad hoc two years ago. It involves oversight on all outward facing activities, including web presence, social media, information dissemination, technical infrastructure, etc. It ought to be formalized within the Charter.²

It was agreed to formalize the role of the Webmaster within the charter, with a 2-year elected term starting next year. The nominating committee will include this position in their search.

Various terms were bandied about for what to call this office (e.g., "WebSupremo"). Suggestions from the membership are welcome.

2. Elections

Call for nominations for the following positions:

Chair Elect, Program Chair, Webmaster

The nominating committee is comprised of Chad Schafer, David Stenning, and Aneta Siemiginowska.

3. Section vs Interest Group

Discussion Item: What is the path towards converting AIG into an AmStat Section? Should we even try to do this?

Article IV of <https://www.amstat.org/asa/files/pdfs/ABT-COSCharter.pdf> describes the process of becoming a Section.

Pros: Can sponsor invited sessions, can charge dues to raise funds, greater access to AmStat infrastructure and resources

Cons: Members must be ASA members, must have at least 200 dues paying members to match the current allocation of \$1000

Another related issue is, how strong is the support for AIG? What is the engagement among JSM attendees with the various sessions? Can ASA tell us what the attendance was during each session?

We cannot sustain a Section at this point, as it requires dues-paying memberships that exceed 200 members for 2 continuous years. We will not rule this out as an option to consider in future years.

3. Activities

1. Invited and Topic-Contributed Sessions

We have had a bumper crop of sessions during this JSM (<https://astrostat.org/jsm2020/>), organized by Gwen Eadie (#11, #265), Eric Feigelson (#539), Hyungsuk Tak (#253), Vinay Kashyap (#431), as well as the Student Paper Award session (#401).

² This will require a change to Article V para 1, and will insert *Webmaster* as an additional officer of the IG, and a change to Article VIII to increase the number of office bearers from six to seven.

2. Student Paper Award

For the past two years, we have sent out a call for student-led papers in astrostatistics and awarded a cash prize to the best of the submissions. The five finalists from this year's contest (Josh Speagle, Collin Politsch, Matthew Ho, Oliver Philcox, and Richard Feder) will speak about their work at the AIG's Topic-Contributed session on Wednesday, Aug 5, at 1pm (<https://astrostat.org/jsm2020/index.html#session-401>)

[Report by Peter Freeman] (https://astrostat.org/jsm2020/AIG_Student_Paper.pdf)

There was an increase in the number of submissions from 8 to 12. The review was carried out double blinded. Nevertheless, a lack of significant diversity was noted amongst the finalists, and almost all come from well-known programs. It was agreed that the remedy is to cast a wider net for submissions.

A new call for paper submissions for the 2021 award will go out again in late August/early September.

Award rules will be similar to last year's. (http://astrostat.org/comp_rules.html)

3. AIG Virtual Table

<https://amstat-jsm.conferencecontent.net/exhibitors/88>

4. AIG Mixer

In lieu of an AIG social dinner, we will be hosting a virtual mixer on Wednesday August 5, 5-6:30pm ET. We will create breakout rooms in the zoom call and give everyone the ability to join/leave breakout rooms so people can mingle virtually. Family and pets welcome!

For connection details, see Slack channel #jsm2020 at <https://astrostatistidzq6013.slack.com/archives/C011GJMLLET>

5. Session proposals for JSM 2021 (Seattle)

Discussion Item: In order to coordinate proposal submissions, Sara Algeri has set up a google doc at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1L2QQuUqAYxvSv2OISRIYtsvk0vdO8iDa3gLQHk6lS3k/edit>

6. Other events

Discussion Item: If there are things that the AIG or AmStat can help you with in your organization of Seminars, Tutorials, Workshops, Webinars, etc., let us know.

7. Budget

We have access to a maximum of \$1000 from COSGB. We don't have dues, don't have a bank account, so expenses must go through AmStat. Our largest expenses are related to the best student paper contest, and sundry expenses related to maintaining a web presence.

4. Coordination

Discussion Item: What things can we do as a group to coordinate with sister organizations?

1. AAS/WGAA

2. Other AmStat Sections/IGs

There are several avenues to explore, and more time is needed to discuss our options. VLK will set up a zoom telecon within the next month so an action plan can be chalked out.

5. Web presence

1. <https://astrostat.org/>, mail exploder and contact email: aigamstat@gmail.com
2. Slack Workspace astrostatisti-dzq6013.slack.com
3. Twitter, etc.
4. We need a logo. We are using a placeholder right now. If you have design chops and want to get involved, please contact Gwen Eadie and Vinay Kashyap.

