# Mini-Conference on Making Statistics More Effective in Schools and Business (MSMESB)

Following on the inaugural MSMESB mini-conference at Baltimore in 2008, the New Orleans meetings proved a most successful encore. Five sessions were held in all, four of which were back-to-back on the Monday. The sessions stimulated considerable interest, and averaged more than 25 attendees.

Since its inception in 1986, MSMESB’s objective has to improve the teaching and practice of statistics in schools and business. More specifically, the aim is to encourage interaction between business faculty and others involved in teaching business statistics with professionals from industry and government, with publishers, and with software vendors and the sessions were designed with this focus in mind.

The sessions and participants are listed below. As is evident from the descriptions of each session the panelists initiated discussions which lead to lively audience participation.

Planning for the third MSMESB mini-conference in San Diego is underway, and anyone who would like to participate is urged to send proposals to the co-ordinators: Robert Andrews (Virginia Commonwealth University, randrews@vcu.edu), Keith Ord (Georgetown University, ordk@georgetown.edu) and John McKenzie (Babson College, mckenzie@babson.edu).

**Learning Issues in the Business School Introduction to Statistics Course: Are We Engaging Our**

**Students to Apply Their Knowledge Learned in this Course?**

Hope M. Baker (Kennesaw State University), Barbara A. Price (Georgia Southern University),

Norean R. Sharpe (Georgetown University) and Barry A. Wray (University of North Carolina at Wilmington),

The challenge facing Business Schools is to engage students to better comprehend and apply what they have learned in the Introduction to Statistics course and to retain this understanding in other coursework and throughout their careers. This panel discussed causes, concerns, issues, and solutions to this challenge.

**Putting a Quart into a Pint Pot**

Mark Berenson (Montclair State University), John McKenzie (Babson College) and Keith Ord (Georgetown University)

The time available for statistics in the modern B-School curriculum seems to get less and less, yet the demands for topical coverage continually increase. This session discussed what should be in the curriculum that would be of long term value and how to get students to obtain and retain statistical thinking rather than just memorize mechanics.

**Today's Statistics Curriculum**

Heather Haskin (Miami University of Ohio), Tim Krehbiel (Miami University of Ohio), John McKenzie (Babson College) and Keith Ord (Georgetown University)

The results of a survey of the statistics curriculum from all of the 2009 Business Week top 50 undergraduate business programs were presented and discussed.

**Technology: Opportunities and Challenges for Statistics Education**

 Robert Andrews (Virginia Commonwealth University), Mark Berenson (Montclair State University), Kellie Keeling (University of Denver) and Kim Melton (North Georgia College & State University)

Discussions focused on the use of technology including computational software, automated homework systems, automated response systems and course management systems. The challenge is to keep the focus on statistical thinking and not on teaching the use of the technology.

**Business Analytics**

Robert Andrews (Virginia Commonwealth University), Richard De Veaux (Williams College), Paul Dwyer (Willamette University) and Curt Hinrichs (SAS Institute, Inc.)

There was a general discussion of business analytics relative to statistics instruction. Business analytics has developed in response to the existence of tremendous amounts of data yielding extremely large sample sizes. Speakers explored how this development might and should affect the teaching of business statistics.