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By Elizabeth Foste

The University of Wisconsin–Madison's Actuarial Science, Risk Management and Insurance Department was awarded a \$300,000 grant through the SOA's Centers of Actuarial Excellence program. The grant is being used to support the "Technology Enhanced Learning in Actuarial Science Classes" project. [Full article >>](#)

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#### 46TH ARC AT UCONN

By James Bridgeman and Emiliano A. Valdez

The 46th Actuarial Research Conference will be hosted by the University of Connecticut. James Bridgeman and Emiliano Valdez provide more details on this year's conference. [Full article >>](#)

#### 47TH ARC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

By Jeffrey Pai

Mark your calendar for the 47th Actuarial Research Conference, which will be hosted by the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Read on for more information. [Full article >>](#)

#### SOLICITATION FOR HOSTS OF ACTUARIAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE (ARC) FOR 2014 AND LATER

Schools interested in applying to host the Actuarial Research Conference in future years should read these new guidelines. [Full article >>](#)

#### **SOA NEWS TODAY HAS A NEW LOOK! IMPROVED NAVIGATION!**

We've redesigned *SOA News Today*. We've changed the masthead, organized material for an easy read and improved overall navigation. Take a look! [Full article >>](#)

#### LIFE & ANNUITY SYMPOSIUM PLUS SEMINARS—MAY 16-18

More than 40 sessions in four tracks—product, risk, financial and management/professionalism. Participate in sessions to expand your technical knowledge and enhance your business smarts. Make new connections with expanded networking ops. Plus three in-depth seminars post symposium: Predictive Analytics for Life Insurance; Preparing for Change under PBA; Insights into the Pricing of Policyholder-Related

Assumptions.

## SOA 2011 HEALTH MEETING

Explore topical issues and get solutions to challenges health actuaries are facing at this June 13-15 meeting. Delve into important areas—health reform, mental health parity—and learn how to handle the everyday challenges associated with managing your business. Sessions cover the information you need to know to do your job on a day-to-day basis, and dig deeply into headline topics you and your peers have been discussing. There will also be a networking E&R section breakfast at this meeting. Register today!



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## CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

By Ron Gebhardtsbauer

I know you are all busy, so I'll keep this article short. First, I must thank Joan Barrett for chairing the Education and Research (E&R) Section Council last year. While we presented her with a plaque at the October SOA meeting in New York City, she's still doing great work for us. Joan just created a survey that we will be sending to you soon, to get your input on what we should be doing for our mission of supporting actuarial education and research. We kept the survey short too.

Second, we are excited to tell you that we awarded the 2013 Actuarial Research Conference (ARC) to Temple University, and formalized our [criteria for hosting future ARC meetings](#) (now up on our website). Please consider holding a future ARC meeting at your school or venue! The 2012 ARC is at University of Manitoba, so Temple nicely continues our tradition of spreading our conferences around the continent.

The upcoming 2011 ARC is at UCONN. We hope to see you all there, and encourage you to make a presentation of your research. As in the past, we are encouraging grad students (our lifeblood for future professors) by providing awards for the best presentations, and travel grants for them to attend the conference. [Details on the awards and travel grants](#) can be found on our website, including (for the first time) our criteria for assessing their presentations.

As you can see, we are putting more of our work on our website, so that you can find out what is going on. If you have any suggested improvements, please email our webmaster, [Jacques Rioux](#).

Third, we created a liaison position to the Preliminary Exams Curriculum Committee, so that we are more involved when the SOA considers changes to exams in the topics we teach in our schools. Gary Parker (of Simon Fraser University outside Vancouver) will be our liaison, and Mark Maxwell

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(from UT at Austin) will be his backup.

Fourth, we are continuing to encourage research through our funding and work with CKER (the SOA's Committee on Knowledge Extension Research, which funds research, headed up by council friend [Curtis Huntington](#)) and the Halmstad Prize Selection Committee (headed up by council member [Sheldon Lin](#)). If you would like to work with either of these committees, I encourage you to email them. We also encourage continuing education through providing sessions at SOA meetings. Please email [annual meeting rep Tom Herzog](#); [health meeting reps Chuck Fuhrer and Vinny Kane](#); and [life meeting rep Tom Edwalds](#), if you have any suggestions for meeting topics, particularly if you would like to present.

Lastly, I want to thank all the current members of the council for giving their time every month to spearhead our efforts for you. Without them, nothing would get done. Please feel free to contact us when you think of something you'd like us to do. You can access our names and emails from the list below.

*Ron Gebhardtsbauer, FSA, FCA, MAAA, is the head of the actuarial program at Penn State University. He can be reached at [rug16@psu.edu](mailto:rug16@psu.edu) on any topic having to do with the E&R Section Council.*

The purpose of the E&R Section Council is to

- Facilitate expanding the knowledge base of the actuarial profession
- Promote ties among
  - business actuaries
  - academic actuaries
  - actuarial educators
- Seek ways to support and encourage actuarial education and research.

Education and Research Section Council Members

[Joan Barrett](#), Council Member & Basic Education Liaison, UnitedHealthcare  
[Sarah Christiansen](#), Council Member & Backup Secretary, SMC Actuarial Consultants

[Tom Edwalds](#), Vice Chair & Life/Annuity Symposium Rep, Munich Re  
[Ron Gebhardtsbauer](#), Section Chair, Penn State University

[Tom Herzog](#), Council Member & 2011 Annual Meeting Rep, NAIC

[Sheldon Lin](#), Council Member & Halmstad Committee Chair, University of Toronto

[Kristen Moore](#), Secretary, University of Michigan

[Gary Parker](#), Council Member, Treasurer & Liaison to CKER & Prelim.  
Education Curriculum Committee, Simon Fraser University

[Jacques Rioux](#), Council Member & Webmaster, SAS Institute Inc.

Meg Weber, Staff Partner, Society of Actuaries

Sue Martz, Staff Support, Society of Actuaries



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

By Mark Maxwell

I want to thank the contributors for the contents of this issue of *Expanding Horizons*. Many of the articles are in the form of announcements—reporting education and research activities to section membership.

We want to encourage articles from you. Are you involved in some interesting activity from which others might benefit? What are your thoughts on the examination process? What suggestions do you have for the section leadership or membership? Please send your comments, suggestions or job postings to [expandinghorizonseditor@soa.org](mailto:expandinghorizonseditor@soa.org).

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## EDUCATION AND RESEARCH SECTION COUNCIL SYNOPSIS OF RECENT ACTIVITY

By Kristen Moore

*The purpose of the Education and Research (E&R) Section is to facilitate expanding the knowledge base of the actuarial profession, promote ties between business actuaries, academic actuaries and actuarial educators, and seek ways to support and encourage actuarial education and research.*

Here is a brief update on the recent activities of the E&R Section Council.

### Meeting Updates

- We recognized the service of our past Section Council Chairs Chuck Fuhrer, Margie Rosenberg and Joan Barrett with plaques at the E&R Section breakfast at the 2010 Annual Meeting in October.
- There are three E&R sessions scheduled at the Health Meeting in Boston in June 2011.

### Actuarial Research Conference (ARC)

The 2011, 2012 and 2013 ARCs will be held at University of Connecticut, University of Manitoba and Temple University, respectively. The theme of the 2011 ARC is to encourage the connection between theory and practice: academics providing theory to solve real-life problems and practitioners presenting some of the issues they face and how they approach solutions to these issues. We encourage you to attend.

### Membership Survey

Joan Barrett is drafting a survey of our membership; we would like your feedback on how the section meets your needs and serves our mission.

### Outreach

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- The council appointed liaisons between the E&R Section and the SOA's Preliminary Education Curriculum Committee.
- The council reached out to the academic community to encourage them to join the E&R Section. You can join the Listserv or edit your information [here](#).
- The Halmstad Prize Selection Committee has added a member from The Actuarial Foundation and is moving ahead for next year's review of papers.

#### Financial Update

- E&R Section dues will not increase in 2011; they will remain at \$20.
- The section gave another \$5,000 to The Committee on Knowledge Extension Research (CKER).

We value your feedback and ideas on section activities. If you would like to share a comment or suggestion with us, please contact Ron Gebhardtsbauer at [rug16@psu.edu](mailto:rug16@psu.edu).

*Kristen Moore, ASA, PhD, is an associate professor in the department of mathematics at the University of Michigan. She can be reached at [ksmoore@umich.edu](mailto:ksmoore@umich.edu).*

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## THE WISCONSIN TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING PROJECT

By Elizabeth Foste

The Society of Actuaries (SOA) is a strong supporter of education and through its Centers of Actuarial Excellence (CAE) program has been making major commitments to universities across the United States and Canada. Shortly after receiving its CAE designation, the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Actuarial Science, Risk Management and Insurance Department was awarded a \$300,000 grant. The grant is being used to support the "Technology Enhanced Learning in Actuarial Science Classes" project, which includes the development of new Web-based modules designed to help students with actuarial exam practice problems. There are also modules created to help students learn software, theory, applications and historical vignettes in actuarial science.

"Technology enhanced learning tools provide a new way for students to master classroom material from anywhere and at anytime," said the project's director Edward W. (Jed) Frees, Ph.D., FSA. A major goal of the project is to develop learning modules that can be accessed by students and the general public. A team of actuarial science students has been working hard to create these modules. The team has already developed several six-minute videos that explain step by step how to solve problems from actuarial exams.

Senior Hillary Ladwig has been working on the project for several months: "Sometimes talking to another student about a problem can really help me understand a concept or make connections. This project gives students a convenient way to learn from each other and get more explanation for topics they find particularly challenging." Exam modules are currently being piloted [here](#). More will be added during the summer months, with a goal of having 100 modules for each of the five technical exams within three years.

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Work has also begun on developing introductions to the statistical package "R." The format of these instruction modules is similar to the exam modules and includes voice and screen captures to provide detailed tutorials to students. You can access the "R" modules [here](#).

More information about the project will be presented at the 46th Annual Actuarial Research Conference (ARC) at the University of Connecticut, Aug. 11–13, 2011. The team will provide an update, share its thoughts on the project and take questions. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

*Elizabeth Foste is the outreach specialist in the Department of Actuarial Science, Risk Management and Insurance at the Wisconsin School of Business. She can be reached at [efoste@bus.wisc.edu](mailto:efoste@bus.wisc.edu).*

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## FROM INDUSTRY TO ACADEMIA

By David Hudak

I am an actuary who made the transition from industry to academia and would like to think of my move as successful. My industrial experience includes seven years at Mercer Human Resource Consulting and Towers Perrin (now Towers Watson). During this time, I worked in the area of pension consulting. I am now in my eighth year as an actuarial science faculty member at Robert Morris University (RMU) near Pittsburgh, Pa. Currently, I am the director of the actuarial science program at RMU.

I have enjoyed my time tremendously at RMU although I also look favorably on my time at the above-mentioned consulting firms. Academia certainly offers time flexibility. My work days are typically scheduled around three classes I teach during the week. However, individuals from industry thinking of academia should know that there are other very fulfilling activities outside of teaching classes. What I enjoy more than anything else is interacting with and mentoring students. At RMU, we are very active not only in recruiting high school students but also in educating them about the actuarial profession. Other examples of activities include interacting with industry, examining/reviewing curriculum, public relations and, even in some cases, fundraising for scholarships.

Years ago, research may not have been a requirement for someone wishing to obtain an academic position in actuarial science, but it is now becoming more the rule rather than the exception. At RMU, it is certainly a requirement, although the volume of research varies from school to school.

Experience in industry has helped me in various areas in academia. The number of actuarial firms is relatively small, especially in an area like Pittsburgh. I have developed personal relationships with various actuaries through my years working in industry. This has been extremely helpful in academia. Another example is the opportunity I was given at RMU to teach

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a course in pensions. I found this particularly gratifying because I was able to give students a broad foundation on pensions before they entered the workforce. Actuarial science students at RMU in our honors program are required to write a thesis, and I've had the chance to direct students in topics that maybe I did not have time to examine while working in industry.

Requirements for employment as an actuarial science faculty member vary among institutions. I have a Ph.D. and an ASA. When I applied to RMU, the main requirement was a Ph.D. in actuarial science or a related field with significant progress toward an ASA. RMU will now accept applications from candidates with an FSA and a master's degree in a related field.

There are definitely trade-offs. The compensation will generally not be as high at a university but the stress level will also be less. Industry offers the excitement of daily hands-on work in dealing with client needs. Academia has a major focus on student development.

Someone might ask me, with my experience, whether I would recommend switching from industry to academia. My answer is: it depends on the individual. For someone who wants to do it only to have a reduced workload, I would not recommend it. On the other hand, for someone who likes all aspects of working with students and who might be interested in pursuing some research projects of interest, I would say this would be a good choice. It certainly was for me.

*David Hudak, ASA, Ph.D, is associate professor, actuarial science at Robert Morris University in Moon Township, Penn. He can be reached at [Hudak@rmu.edu](mailto:Hudak@rmu.edu).*

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## THE 15TH INSURANCE: MATHEMATICS AND ECONOMICS (IME) ANNOUNCEMENT

The 15th INSURANCE: MATHEMATICS AND ECONOMICS (IME)  
Congress will be held in Trieste, Italy, June 14–17, 2011.

The IME Congress is an important forum for researchers to focus on the latest advances, trends and developments in the area of actuarial science and insurance and financial modeling. The aim is to bring together scientists, academicians and insurance professionals from all over the world. The theory and methods of actuarial science, and its applications in insurance, finance and risk management, will be the core of the presentations at the Congress.

The congress was created by the editorial board of the Elsevier journal *Insurance: Mathematics and Economics*. The journal began publication in 1982 and has developed into one of the leading journals in the field of actuarial science, life and non-life insurance and financial risks.

The first IME Congress was held in 1997 in Amsterdam, and since then the annual congresses have been held in major cities of Europe, North America and Asia. It is a great honor to be chosen to host the 2011 Congress in Trieste.

Trieste offers a suitable venue for an IME Congress. A number of insurance companies were established here during the 19th century: among these, Assicurazioni Generali and Riunione Adriatica di Sicurt. Since then, the insurance industry has played a major role in the local economy. Trieste now hosts the headquarters of two leading companies, Assicurazioni Generali and Allianz S.p.A. Important academic institutions in the field of actuarial and insurance studies witness the local vocation for working and teaching in this sector.

The organizers are delighted to invite you to attend the 15th IME Congress

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in Trieste.

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–Ermanno Pitacco of the University of Trieste

*Editor's note: IME 2012 will be held July 19–21, 2012.*

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## THE 46TH ACTUARIAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE AT UCONN

By James Bridgeman and Emiliano A. Valdez

The Actuarial Program in the Department of Mathematics of the University of Connecticut (UConn) is pleased to host the 46th Actuarial Research Conference (ARC) in 2011. As usual, the conference will span two-and-one-half days of scientific and professional sessions commencing on the morning of Thursday, Aug. 11, 2011 and ending midday on Saturday, Aug. 13, 2011. A reception on Wednesday evening, Aug. 10, 2011 will welcome travelers to the conference. The university is located at Storrs in the northeastern part of Connecticut, strategically placed between Boston and New York City. It is 28 miles from Hartford—headquarters and regional headquarters to so many insurance firms and branch offices of major actuarial consulting firms—and not far from the growing insurance presence in Rhode Island. The choice of very reasonably priced dormitory facilities or discounted hotel rates right on campus offer accommodations at walking distance from the conference facility.

We chose the theme "Connecting Theory and Practice" for the conference, highlighting our strong relationships with the insurance industry and with practicing actuaries in the surrounding area. To supplement the usual participation of academic actuaries in these conferences, we encourage active participation from practicing actuaries in industry for an exchange of theoretical and practical views. We hope that practicing actuaries learn about the current state-of-the-art theoretical work from academics and that at the same time academics learn about the practical problems faced by practicing actuaries. We look for a good mix of presentations from both academics and practicing actuaries. We are also delighted that the local Hartford/Boston Actuaries Club has joined the effort to promote the conference and encourage industry participation, to assist in the administrative organization of the conference, and to put together a scientific program that will benefit both academics and practitioners.

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For the 2011 ARC we also hope to achieve a greater participation from Casualty Actuarial Society (CAS) members than at past conferences. To encourage this, Liberty Mutual, the major Boston-based P&C insurer, has provided principal sponsorship for the conference, including generous funding. We still welcome additional sponsors and contributors to further drive down the cost to participate in the conference, especially for the academics and graduate students who have always been a big part of past ARCs. Donations made out to "University of Connecticut-46th Actuarial Research Conference" can be mailed to James Bridgeman, Department of Mathematics, 196 Auditorium Road U3009, Storrs, CT 06269-3009.

Our university: The university is the state of Connecticut's flagship university and is New England's top-ranked public research institution of higher learning. Founded in 1881, today UConn encompasses 17 schools and colleges, and enrolls more than 29,000 students representing every state in the nation and more than 90 countries. For more information about the university, please visit the [website](#).

Our actuarial program: The UConn actuarial program, which started in 1976 under the leadership of now Professor Emeritus Charles Vinsonhaler, has since evolved into a total enrollment of more than 280 students: 235 undergraduates, 40 professional master's students and eight Ph.D. candidates. The Society of Actuaries recognized the program in the first wave of the Centers of Actuarial Excellence (CAE) designations. Today, one of its first graduates, James Trimble, directs the program following a 30-year career with Hartford Life, including service as its chief international actuary, chief actuary and chief risk officer. The affiliated Janet and Mark L. Goldenson Center for Actuarial Research provides applied research for the insurance and financial services industries and offers students practical exposure to industry issues. Please [click here](#) to learn more about our program.

More information about the conference: In addition to scientific and professional sessions, conference social events will highlight Connecticut's historic role at the foundations of the country's insurance and financial businesses. Please [check here](#). Additional details about accommodations, important dates, instructions for submission of abstracts, and registration will be updated on this site as they become available. For additional inquiries, please feel free to email Jim Bridgeman ([bridgeman@math.uconn.edu](mailto:bridgeman@math.uconn.edu)). We look forward to your attendance at the conference.

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## 47TH ARC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

By Jeffrey Pai

We are pleased to invite you to the Actuarial Research Conference (ARC), which will be hosted by the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba from Aug. 1, 2012 through Aug. 4, 2012 inclusive. These dates were selected to provide a meeting in early August that meshes with adjacent meetings of interest (Joint Statistical Meeting (San Diego, July 28–Aug. 2) and the American Risk and Insurance Meeting (Minneapolis, Aug. 5–8)).

The 47th ARC will be open to all areas of actuarial practice. We expect to have representation from the Casualty Actuarial Society (CAS) and the Canadian Institute of Actuaries (CIA). Soon you will see a call for the contributed papers, which will comprise the bulk of the conference program. Further information regarding the conference will be posted on the Warren Centre's [website](#).

The ARC will be sited in the I.H. Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba campus. The city of Winnipeg will be at its best during the conference—descriptive material can be accessed at [Travelmanitoba.com](#). The program will be first-class, and we would encourage you to make plans to attend. Stay tuned to the SOA website for ongoing news.

We'll see you in Winnipeg in 2012!

*Jeffrey Pai, ASA, Ph.D., is LAH Warren Professor at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, MB. He can be reached at [jpai@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:jpai@cc.umanitoba.ca).*

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## SOLICITATION FOR HOSTS OF ACTUARIAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE (ARC) FOR 2014 AND LATER

Schools interested in applying should include a formal proposal that details the following:

1. Suggested dates, considering ARIA, ASA, IME, UK and Australian Actuarial Academic meetings, etc.
2. Location of conference, city, state/province, including accessibility by air and sample costs.
  1. Will the meeting location be able to attract enough academic actuaries?
3. Facilities available for the conference (meetings and meals).
4. Budget, possible sponsors and estimated registration fees.
  1. The SOA will be happy to help with registration, but Web support will be necessary from your school.
5. Lodging options, including both inexpensive dorm-like residences and full-service hotels.
  1. Provide cost estimates as well as availability of transportation (if needed) to the meeting sites.
6. Attendance by faculty from institution at recent (or upcoming) ARC meetings.
7. Recent conferences of a similar nature hosted by applicant, if applicable, that can show you can put on a good conference.

We encourage including the following items as part of the conference:

- Use of poster sessions as an add-on to the usual formal presentations.
- Sessions to address the professionalism CE requirement (three hours needed for SOA and Academy).
- Sessions to encourage the development of partnerships between industry and academics.

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Please submit your proposals to the E&R Section Council by Dec. 31, 2011 (for the 2014 ARC), via Sue Martz, [smartz@soa.org](mailto:smartz@soa.org) at the SOA. Proposals received by Dec. 31, 2011 will receive equal consideration.

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