



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Online university debuts at annual meeting

by Kelly Mayo

SOA Public Relations Coordinator

An online “actuarial university” will be unveiled at this year’s SOA annual meeting in New York City, Oct. 18-21.

Called the Actuarial Learning Center, this newest venture linking continuing education and information technology will provide an online collection of self-study programs complete with virtual courses, seminars, and interactive conference centers. This innovative concept allows participants to continue their actuarial education by participating in courses through the Web at their convenience.

Before starting a course, students can take a tour of the campus’ icons. Students can register at the admissions office as well as meet the university’s

faculty. An online catalog will list the level of competencies needed for each course. Once registered, students can do research or study at the online library.

The first program, based on the SOA book *The Actuary’s Career Planner*, will feature two chapters from the publication (see “Coming soon: a guide for your future,” *The Actuary*, September 1997). Future programs include topics from practice areas, seminar and meeting content, and emerging actuarial topics. The Actuarial Learning Center also provides an opportunity for students to exchange comments through an interactive meeting center.

The Actuarial Learning Center evolved after two years of research into

online educational programs, growing member needs, and technology issues. The Society has chosen Centrax Corporation in Chicago to handle the development of the site during its preliminary stages.

At the annual meeting, the Actuarial Learning Center will be showcased at the registration desk. After Oct. 21, the online university can be accessed through the Society’s Web site (www.soa.org).

For more information, contact Barbara Choyke, SOA director of continuing education, or Jim Weiss, SOA director of information technology, at the Society office (phone: 847/706-3500; fax: 847/706-3599; e-mail: bchoyke@soa.org, jweiss@soa.org).

Management and Personal Development Section formed

by Michael M. Braunstein

Two hundred eighty-one and counting. That’s the number of actuaries who signed up by Sept. 1 for the Society of Actuaries’ newest section, the SOA Management and Personal Development Section. At its meeting last March, the SOA Board of Governors approved the formation of the Section, being organized by the committee of the same name.

In making its case for this change, the committee argued that its activities from its inception and for the last several years have been consistent with Section activities. The committee had successfully sponsored sessions for SOA meetings. Members regularly published pertinent articles under “The Complete Actuary” heading in *The Actuary*. Most recently, the committee was instrumental in creating a workbook on personal development, *The Actuary’s Career Planner*. Based on the history and the demonstrated commitment of this committee, Section status was both

appropriate and deserved. Given the opportunity to work with a budget and the added representation at SOA meeting planning sessions, even more could be accomplished as a Section.

An article and registration form in the May edition of *The Actuary* and promotion during the Society’s two spring meetings in Hawaii resulted in a quick response from Society members. By July 24, the required 200 members had enlisted. In September, elections were held for a Section council with all members of record on Sept. 3, 1998, being eligible to vote for up to nine of the 12 nominees. (Election results were to be known in early October and so were not available at press time.) The nine-person council’s first official meeting was scheduled for Oct. 18, when officers, terms of office, and appointments will be determined.

The Section will put its emphasis where one would expect — on management and personal development issues

— and will work to provide its members with valuable information, resources, workshops, seminars, and more. If you want to take advantage of all the new Section will offer, we welcome members number 282 and beyond. A membership form is available on the SOA Web site (go to www.soa.org, then *Special Interest Sections*) and from Lois Chinnock, Society of Actuaries, 475 N. Martingale Road, Schaumburg, IL 60173 (phone: 847/706-3524; fax: 847/706-3599; e-mail: lchinnock@soa.org).

Michael M. Braunstein, president and owner, An Actuarial Recruiter, West Hartford, Conn., is outgoing chair of the SOA Committee on Management and Personal Development and a member of the new Section’s organizing committee. His e-mail address is aar@home.net.