



Notes from the Outgoing Chair

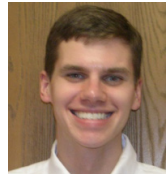
By Thomas Wakefield

What interesting and trying times! I hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones well. Clearly, the importance of education and research is highlighted in this current period. The mission of the Education and Research Section is to promote timely actuarial scholarship and education endeavors. We are grateful to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for virtually hosting the 55th Actuarial Research Conference (ARC) in early August. If you have not attended an ARC in the past, I encourage you to consider attending the 2021 ARC at Université Laval in Quebec City. It is a tremendous opportunity to share cutting-edge actuarial research, network with colleagues, and celebrate and recognize actuarial research, especially in the academic setting.

I encourage you to frequently visit our [website](#).

to find tips and advice for teaching remotely, links to our past and upcoming webcasts, and other relevant content and resources. We are striving to provide content that is relevant to our members and important to the education and professional development of current and future actuaries. Thank you to Diana Skrzydlo and Runhuan Feng for recent webcasts. Please also look for us on LinkedIn.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as chair of the E&R Section Council this year. I also express my thanks to Colin Ramsay and Hal Tepfer for their service on the E&R Council for the past three years. I look forward to the direction and ideas of the incoming council under the leadership of Runhuan Feng. During this past year, the council has sought to increase the value to our members by sponsoring three webcasts and a session at the annual meeting. We hope to continue to develop and provide beneficial and impactful content. Please reach out to the council to provide feedback and ideas for council initiatives. ■



Thomas P. Wakefield, FSA, Ph.D., is Professor and chair in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Youngstown State University (YSU). He can be contacted at tomwakefield@gmail.com.





Notes From the Incoming Chair

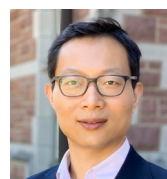
By Runhuan Feng

Let me echo with Tom that it has been a challenging but interesting time for all with the COVID-19 pandemic. As the SOA's award-winning slogan goes, risk is opportunity. The ongoing pandemic has provided actuarial educators and researchers with ample opportunities for new discoveries. I encourage all E&R section members to share with us your thoughts and scholarship on related topics.

I am really excited about this upcoming year. The E&R section council has been working on a number of new initiatives which aim to better serve and engage with our member community. Stay tuned, as we roll out these new activities over the next few months.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank Tom, Colin and Hal for their tremendous contributions to the E&R Section Council. We greatly appreciate Tom's leadership in the council that led us to explore many initiatives and new directions. Congratulations should go to Colin for the success of *Expanding Horizons* under his editorship over the past few years. Last but not least, we should thank Hal for serving as the secretary and representative of the E&R council at annual meetings. He has been instrumental to promote E&R produced content in many conferences.

I look forward to working with the new E&R council and members of our tight community. ■



Runhuan Feng, FSA, CERA, is a Professor of Mathematics, Statistics and Industrial Engineering, the director of Actuarial Science, and the State Farm Companies Foundation Scholar at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He can be contacted at rfeng@illinois.edu.



SOCIETY OF
ACTUARIES

EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH SECTION

From the Editor: Looking Beyond the Challenging Year of 2020

By Tianyang Wang

I am honored and excited to be serving as the incoming *Expanding Horizons* editor. I am very grateful to Colin Ramsay for his serving as the outgoing editor. Colin has certainly set a high standard and been a role model with his editorial leadership in providing insightful articles on actuarial education and research for the past few years.

We have all together witnessed a very challenging year in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic, economic lockdown, and many unprecedented events including the [SOA 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting & Exhibit, Oct. 26–29](#). Looking beyond these challenges, we believe we can move forward and keep on growing with the spirit of “innovation, long-term development, and diversity of thought and approaches.”

We are also grateful for the contribution of the outgoing council chair Dr. Thomas Wakefield and the incoming council chair Dr. Runhuan Feng. In this issue, we have articles from both Thomas and Runhuan on their reflective thoughts and expectations of the Actuarial Education and Research Council. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me, Runhuan or other council members.



As the presocratic Greek philosopher Thales famously said, “The past is certain, the future obscure.” In this year that has been full of uncertainty, it is a good time to be expanding horizons and looking above into the twinkling stars. ■



Tianyang Wang, ASA, CFA, FRM, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Finance and Real Estate at Colorado State University. He can be contacted at Tianyang.Wang@colostate.edu.