

Statistical Leadership in Academia

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Do we have a leadership problem?

The reason for having this panel is, presumably, that there is a perception among some that we do.

What do we mean by a leader? As a researcher? As an advocate?

- Someone who carves out a new path that others follow?
- Someone who guides and directs others?
- Someone who is a strong advocate for the field, who has the vision to create and anticipate new opportunities and the ability to unite others?

Under the first two definitions, we have leaders in terms of research (and that is important!)

Leaders under the last definition are a rare breed (not just in statistics)

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What can we do?

Are leaders born? Or does nurture also play a role?

A leadership role is not for everyone; but we can all become more effective spokespersons within our natural constraints

Mentoring of junior faculty is important (UGA)

- They must be advised to focus on research excellence ...
- They should be encouraged to contribute to discussions at an early stage, e.g. on committees and faculty meetings (True story: Are you tenured?)
- They should be encouraged to serve on committees in professional societies
- Emphasize the importance of leadership roles for the discipline (have a seat at the table; be the innovators rather than an afterthought)
- Rewards of leadership roles

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Additional thoughts

We must attract the best and the brightest to the discipline ...

- AP Statistics?
- Revision of undergraduate introductory statistics courses?

Training: Communication is a key for success, and has an increasingly prominent role in our curricula (writing intensive courses; project oriented assignments; capstone courses; interdisciplinary collaborations; meeting with clients and report writing as part of consulting)

Faculty demographics have changed dramatically over the past decades; there are “born leaders” in every part of the world, but nurture starts in the society we grow up in

Are we not already on an upward trajectory?

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