

ASSESSMENT OF THE MASTERS PROGRAM IN STATISTICS
Summer 2007

EXIT INTERVIEW: We did not have an exit interview in 2007, as all of the second-year graduate students elected to complete their program in the summer. The students will be sent the exit questionnaire after they have completed their projects. We did informally ask the graduate students for comments about the program. The graduate students are all quite happy with their education at UAF. One student did note that the core graduate statistics courses are offered at the same time as Real Analysis (MATH641, 642) course, which is of interest to students who plan on going on to a Ph.D. in Statistics. Of the four summer graduates, two applied to enter Ph.D. programs. One of them was accepted to Iowa State University (Actuarial Science) one was accepted to Texas A&M University. A recent graduate who worked as a biometrician was also accepted to the Statistics Ph.D. program at the University of Washington. We received one complete UAF MS Program Graduate Survey from a student who graduated in 2005 (student comments in italics)—see Appendix One.

POST-GRADUATE INTERVIEW: Dana Thomas has a long conversation with three Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game biometricians, one of which was an alumni of our program. Their suggestions as to how to improve the program follow:

1. They think the only weakness in the Statistics core (STAT651, 652, 653, 654) is the Linear Models course (STAT653). They think that the course is not rigorous enough. They suggested that we look at the course as taught at Montana State University. RESPONSE: We are looking into ways of increasing the rigor of STAT653 (see curriculum, below).
2. They suggested that we create a one-year survey course at the graduate level for science students (not statistics graduate students), supplemented with 1 credit targeted courses (such as Nonlinear Regression). This would allow the statistics graduate courses (Spatial Statistics, Time Series, Bayesian Statistics in particular) to have an audience primarily of statistics graduate students, so that the course could be made more rigorous.
3. Consulting practice (which is now constrained to STAT654, a second-year course) should be started in the first year, where students observe consulting sessions between biometricians and biologists. They also suggested that we video consulting sessions between clients (biologists) and the graduate students, and then have faculty critique the sessions.

EMPLOYER INTERVIEW: We had many informal discussions with several biometricians at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. They continue to be happy with our graduate students. Specific comments about the program from one of the discussions were included in the Post-Graduate Interview section.

APPENDIX 2 Comprehensive exam results

Spring 2006 MS Comprehensive (and PhD Qualifying) Exams: Takers and Results

	EXAM:	real an.	topology	complex an.	algebra	math phys	PDE
	DATE:	Mon. 3/20	Tues. 3/21	Wed. 3/22	Thurs 3/23	Thurs 3/23	Thurs 3/23
STUDENT							
Valeriy Groshev (MS)		X P		X F P2		X P	
Elchin Jafarov (PhD)		X F	X F			X F	
Jed Kallen-Brown (MS)		X P	X P	X F P2			
Amy Keith (MAT)			X F				
Robert Luz (MS)		X P	X P		X P		
Victor Mikhaylov (PhD)		X P		X F P2			X P

KEY: X = taken, P = pass first time, F = fail first time, P2 = successfully retaken, F2 = failed second time

Fall 2005 MS Comprehensive Exams: Takers and Results

	EXAM:	topology	real analysis	math phys
	DATE:	Mon 8/22	Wed 8/24	Thurs 8/25
STUDENT				
Jacob Stroh (MS)		X F P2	X P	X P

KEY: X = taken, P = pass first time, F = fail first time, P2 = successfully retaken, F2 = failed second time