

THE STATA NEWS

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www.stata.com



20th anniversary

Stata celebrates the 20th anniversary of its first release this January. Stata 1.0 was released in January 1985 with 44 commands and 175 pages of ring-bound documentation. In the ensuing 20 years, Stata has grown to over 600 commands and a shelf-bending 4,652 pages of documentation.

The editors of the Stata Journal, Joseph H. Newton of Texas A&M University and Nicholas J. Cox of the University of Durham, UK, have prepared a special section of the first-quarter 2005 Journal to commemorate the anniversary. The section opens with an interview by Joe Newton of William Gould, Stata's founder and President of StataCorp. Bill gives his thoughts on how Stata began, the principles behind its development, and what software development was like in the early years. Several long-time users and early developers have also contributed reminiscences and observations about Stata through the years.

Beyond the special section, the first-quarter Stata Journal includes its typical fare of columns and reviewed articles about statistics, data analysis, and effective use of Stata. If you are not a Journal subscriber, we recommend that you subscribe. You can purchase a one-, two-, or three-year subscription using the enclosed order form or using the online form at www.stata.com/bookstore/sj.html. Your subscription will begin with the Stata Journal, Volume 5, Number 1 issue. If you want a bit of nostalgia, the first-quarter 2005 issue can be purchased individually using the enclosed order form.

Whether you have been with us for all 20 years or are receiving your first Stata News, we appreciate your contribution to 20 successful and fulfilling years.

NetCourseNow™

There is now a more flexible way to take a NetCourse—a way that better fits your schedule—NetCourseNow. With NetCourseNow, you choose when to begin, and you can take the course at your own pace and at convenient times. Finish the course in days, or fit it between other commitments over months; it is up to you. With NetCourseNow, you get a personal instructor to answer your questions and help guide your study.

NetCourseNow lectures are based on the same materials as the scheduled NetCourses—materials that have taught Stata concepts to over 5,000 NetCourse participants and have benefitted from the questions and comments of those participants.

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Enrollment information

- Enroll in a NetCourse (see page 2 for latest schedule)
 - use the enclosed form
 - visit www.stata.com/netcourse/enrollment.html
- Enroll in a NetCourseNow
 - visit www.stata.com/netcourse/ncnow.html

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THE STATA NEWS is published four times a year and is free to all registered users of Stata.

LATEST NETCOURSE™ SCHEDULE

Stata NetCourses™ teach you how to exploit the full power of Stata. They are web-based training courses for Stata users of all experience levels, from beginner to advanced. The courses cover topics ranging from getting started and data management to bootstrapping and simulation. A brief summary of upcoming NetCourses is listed below. For more details on how NetCourses work and for course syllabi, visit www.stata.com/netcourse/.

NC-101. Introduction to Stata

NC-101 is designed to take smart, knowledgeable people and turn them into proficient interactive Stata users. The course covers not just the obvious, such as getting data into Stata, but also covers detailed techniques and tricks to make you a powerful Stata user. Many of Stata's key concepts are explored, from web update features and match-merging to using `by` groups and explicit subscribing.

Prerequisites
Stata 8
Dates offered
January 21 – March 4
Course Leaders
Kevin Crow, Kerry Kammire, and Derek Wagner
Enrollment Deadline
January 20
Price
\$95

NC-151. Introduction to Stata programming

NC-151 is intended for all Stata users. Through a combination of lectures, example applications, and carefully chosen exercises, the course addresses the full range of methods and techniques necessary for you to be most productive in the Stata environment. Beginning with effective ways to organize both simple and complicated analyses in Stata, NetCourse 151 then moves into programming elements that can be used to help you work more efficiently. Key programming topics include macro processing, program flow of control, using `do`-files, programming `ado`-files, Monte Carlo simulations, and bootstrapped standard errors.

Prerequisites
Stata 8; basic knowledge of using Stata interactively
Dates offered
January 21 – March 4
Course Leaders
Kevin Crow, Kerry Kammire, and Derek Wagner
Enrollment Deadline
January 20
Price
\$125

FROM THE STATA BOOKSTORE



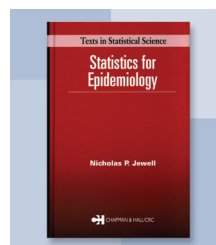
Title: *Event History Modeling*
 Authors: J. Box–Steffensmeier, B. Jones
 Publisher: Cambridge University Press
 Copyright: 2004
 Pages: 232; paperback
 ISBN: 0-521-54673-7
 Price: \$23.50

Event History Modeling

Event History Modeling: A Guide for Social Scientists by Janet M. Box–Steffensmeier and Bradford S. Jones provides an excellent introduction to the field of survival (duration) analysis for the social scientist. The mathematics are kept to a bare minimum, with more emphasis on the substantive issues behind the methods being demonstrated. Indeed, the authors are very adept at relating even the most mathematical and technical concepts through well-worded, descriptive text. Examples from the social sciences (e.g., a duration analysis of U.N. peacekeeping missions) are distributed throughout the text.

This text also provides an excellent survey of the current state of the art in survival analysis, regardless of field of application. Beginning with the basics—hazards and survival functions, parametric models, etc.—the discussion then extends towards advanced topics, such as models for correlated data (frailty models) and models for multiple events, e.g., competing risks. In fact, we highly recommend this book to researchers who are exploring advanced topics in survival analysis for the first time, as this text does a good job of mapping out the available methods and distinguishing between alternative new methods for analyzing the same types of data. The bibliography is also quite thorough.

A complete table of contents and online ordering information can be found at www.stata.com/bookstore/ehm.html. You can also order the book using the enclosed bookstore order form.



Title: *Statistics for Epidemiology*
 Authors: N. Jewell
 Publisher: Chapman & Hall/CRC
 Copyright: 2004
 Pages: 333; hardcover
 ISBN: 1-58488-433-9
 Price: \$59.00

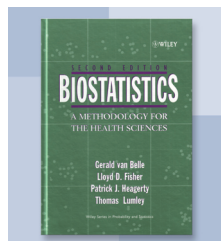
Statistics for Epidemiology

Statistics for Epidemiology by Nicholas P. Jewell is the latest in a long line of texts that provide the basis for a course in statistical epidemiology aimed at graduate students in the medical professions. Given the target audience, such texts must strike a delicate balance so as to not be too theoretical while also providing enough statistical background to avoid producing a cookbook for a “plug-and-chug” course. This text very much succeeds in this regard.

Covered topics include some basic probability (including discussion of conditional probability and Berkson's bias), measures of risk,

study designs, analysis of tables, interaction, regression models for binary outcomes, advanced logistic regression, matching, and Cox regression.

A complete table of contents and online ordering information can be found at www.stata.com/bookstore/sfe.html. You can also order the book using the enclosed bookstore order form.



Title: *Biostatistics*, 2nd ed
 Authors: G. van Belle, L. Fisher,
 P. Heagerty, T. Lumley
 Publisher: Wiley
 Copyright: 2004
 Pages: 871; hardcover
 ISBN: 0-471-03185-2
 Price: \$109.00

Biostatistics, 2nd ed

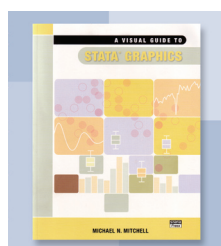
Biostatistics: A Methodology for the Health Sciences by Gerald van Belle, Lloyd D. Fisher, Patrick J. Heagerty, and Thomas Lumley provides an interesting mixture. Some will find it useful as an introductory statistics text, some as an advanced biostatistics text for a graduate course or for professional self-study, and some as an encyclopedia of biostatistics and a valuable desk reference. At almost 900 pages, it can easily serve in these three roles.

For the novice, some chapters of the text are similar to what you would find in an introductory statistics textbook, including an overview of the role that statistics plays in biomedical science, descriptive statistics, the normal distribution, one- and two-sample inference of means and proportions, issues associated with random sampling, contingency tables, linear models, and ANOVA, among others.

For those needing an advanced statistics text or a first course in biostatistics, there are chapters devoted to discrimination and classification, PCA and factor analysis, epidemiological tables, analysis of panel data, survival analysis, and randomized clinical trials, to name a few. Each chapter also contains a large number of exercises, making it ideal for use in the classroom, as well as for self-study.

Finally, the authors have invested considerable effort in forming a bibliography so complete that it may be used by advanced researchers wishing to track down current literature. Since the bibliography is organized by chapter, the reader has instant access to a reference list for any subfield of biostatistics currently under study.

A complete table of contents and online ordering information can be found at www.stata.com/bookstore/biostat.html. You can also order the book using the enclosed bookstore order form.



Title: *A Visual Guide to Stata Graphics*
 Authors: M. Mitchell
 Publisher: Stata Press
 Copyright: 2004
 Pages: 395; paperback
 ISBN: 1-881228-85-1
 Price: \$49.75

A Visual Guide to Stata Graphics

A Visual Guide to Stata Graphics gives you a detailed guide to Stata's graphics capabilities in an easy-to-use format. From beginning to end, author Michael Mitchell demonstrates through step-by-step examples the most efficient methods to create even the most complicated graphs. It will be the first book you pick up when you want to create a specific type of graph using Stata.

Virtually every page contains full-color examples of Stata graphs, with most pages showing three graphs. You will probably find the kind of graph you need by simply thumbing through the pages. Along with each graph is the command that produces it, a brief description, and the name of its associated files. These files can be downloaded from the Stata web site.

In the right margin is a "Visual Table of Contents" to help you quickly navigate to a particular section for immediate results and obtain in-depth information to take your graphics skills to the next level.

The first chapter provides an excellent introduction to Stata graphics and provides tips for using the book effectively. Each available type of graph is discussed in its own chapter. The most commonly used options are then discussed, followed by a chapter discussing options that are available to all graphs. The final chapter discusses options that change the style of graph elements, such as color, line pattern, and text size. The appendix gives an overview of several topics, such as statistical graph commands, saving and combining graphs, common mistakes and schemes.

A complete table of contents and online ordering information can be found at www.stata.com/bookstore/vgsg.html. You can also order the book using the enclosed bookstore order form.

STATA USERS GROUP MEETINGS

We are pleased to announce the dates for the following 2005 Stata Users Group meetings. The organizers of each meeting would like to invite you to contact them regarding presentation offers or to discuss the suitability of a potential contribution.

Presentations are sought on topics that include but are not limited to

- user-written Stata programs
- case studies of research or teaching using Stata
- discussions of data-management problems
- reviews of analytical issues
- surveys or critiques of Stata facilities in specific fields, etc.
- tutorials showing how Stata is used to solve specific problems

Please email the organizers by the specified deadline if you are interested in giving a presentation, indicating whether you wish to give a 20-minute talk (followed by 10 minutes of discussion), a 10-minute talk (followed by 5 minutes of discussion), or a longer review or tutorial.

The Stata web site will be updated with cost and registration details as the information becomes available.

3rd German Stata Users Group meeting

Date: Friday, April 8, 2005
 Venue: Berlin
 Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (WZB)
 Reichpietschufer 50
 Organizers: Johannes Giesecke, Humboldt Univ. Berlin
johannes.giesecke@rz.hu-berlin.de
 Ulrich Kohler, WZB
kohler@wz-berlin.de
 Willi F. Sauerbrei, Univ. of Freiburg
wfs@imbi.uni-freiburg.de
 Deadline: February 28, 2005
 Sponsored by Dittrich and Partner Consulting GmbH
www.dpc.de
sales@dpc.de

Additional details will follow at www.stata.com/berlin05.

11th UK Stata Users Group meeting

Date: May 17–18, 2005
 Venue: London
 Centre for Econometric Analysis
 Cass Business School
 106 Bunhill Row
 Organizers: Bianca De Stavola, Univ. of London
bianca.destavola@lshtm.ac.uk
 Stephen Jenkins, Univ. of Essex
stephenj@essex.ac.uk
 Deadline: January 31, 2005
 Sponsored by Timberlake Consultants LTD
www.timberlake.co.uk
info@timberlake.co.uk

Additional details will follow at www.stata.com/london05.

4th Boston Stata Users Group meeting

Date: July 11–12, 2005
 Venue: Boston, Massachusetts
 Longwood Galleria Conference Center
 342 Longwood Avenue
 Organizers: Rich Goldstein, consultant
richgold@ix.netcom.com
 Elizabeth Allred, Harvard Univ.
lizard@hsph.harvard.edu
 Kit Baum, Boston College
baum@bc.edu
 Deadline: March 31, 2005

Additional details will follow at www.stata.com/boston05.

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