

**ZMATH 2010c.00242**

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**Statistics? you must be joking: the application and evaluation of humor when teaching statistics.**

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Summary: Humor has been promoted as a teaching tool that enhances student engagement and learning. The present report traces the pathway from research to practice by reflecting upon various ways to incorporate humor into the face-to-face teaching of statistics. The use of humor in an introductory university statistics course was evaluated via interviews conducted with a random sample of 38 students. Responses indicated that humor aided teaching by providing amusement, breaking up content, bringing back attention, lightening the mood, increasing motivation, reducing monotony, and providing a mental break. Students that were already motivated and interested in statistics derived less benefit from humor, finding it at times irrelevant and distracting. The selective use of humor is recommended in teaching statistics, particularly for students that hold negative attitudes towards the subject. (Contains 2 tables.) (ERIC)

*Classification:* D45 C75

*Keywords:* student attitudes; negative attitudes; humor; statistics; interviews; learner engagement; classroom techniques; teaching-learning processes; effectiveness; introductory courses; teaching methods