

ZMATH 2011c.00347

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Service-learning for graduate students through a student-run consulting program.

J. Stat. Educ. 15, No. 2 (2007).

Summary: Statistics in the Community (STATCOM) is a student-run statistical consulting program that has been serving its local community since 2001. Directed and staffed by graduate students from Purdue University's Department of Statistics, it provides professional consulting services to governmental and non-profit groups free of charge. Students work in teams to help community clients address specific problems and needs. Past clients include school corporations, libraries, community assistance programs, and the city of West Lafayette. Participation in STATCOM allows students to apply statistical concepts and classroom material to solve real problems. It also develops skills in leadership, management, and written and oral communication of results to the general public. Though important for any future career in statistics, these skills are not typically emphasized in graduate courses, research, or the on-campus academic consulting service. The university and academic department also benefit through increased interaction and visibility in the local community. STATCOM can serve as a model for integrating service learning into graduate statistical education at other colleges and universities. (ERIC)

Classification: D45

Keywords: graduate students; speech communication; service learning; instructional materials; corporations; statistics; consultants; leadership training; management development; communication skills; skill development; program descriptions