Dear Colleagues:

Attached please find a proposal for a new Graduate Certificate in Statistics at the University of Arizona. The proposal takes advantage of recent efforts to organize a Graduate Interdisciplinary Program (GIDP) in Statistics, which came to fruition in Spring 2006. The GIDP already offers a Ph.D. and M.S. in Statistics, along with a Ph.D. minor. We feel, however, that the addition of a Graduate Certificate to this ensemble would enhance existing opportunities for students wishing to obtain a firm foundation in statistical methodology, inference, and practice. Such statistical expertise has become a critical requirement in modern scholarly and scientific discourse. Although a number of the University’s existing programs provide introductory courses in statistics geared toward their specific discipline, many students find that their data-analytic training requires greater depth of focus. Thus a need exists to tailor selection(s) of courses that meet students’ individual research, professional interests, and instructional requirements. The proposed Certificate provides a prescribed format for such study, while also allowing for a flexible curriculum that addresses this need over a wide variety of disciplines.

Since the GIDP does not offer its own courses, the Certificate curriculum collects together pertinent, advanced, statistics courses from across the campus’ offerings. Depending on the student’s selection of elective courses, expertise may be gained in statistical practice, theory, and/or applications in specialized areas such as biometry, econometrics, psychometrics, etc. The proposal gives a selection of “sample tracks” towards this end, although the Certificate is also designed to allow for overall flexibility in a student’s final choice of courses.

Memos of support have been collected from the Department Heads offering the various courses named in the Certificate, along with approvals from the associated College Deans. These are also included in this proposal package. Although the courses represent resources the University must provide to support the Certificate, these are relatively minor in scope; the primary (and majority) resource required for successful administration of the new program will involve the time and energy of the new GIDP Chair, whose duties have been amended by action of the GIDP Executive Committee to include this responsibility.

I hope you will find this proposal to represent a worthwhile, yet relatively resource-efficient addition to the University’s graduate offerings. I am happy to answer any questions that may arise during your deliberations.

Sincerely yours,

Walter W. Piegorsch, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Mathematics