

Statistics consortium helps advance research

From improving the flavor of wine to monitoring dolphin behavior, WSU's new Consortium for Interdisciplinary Statistical Education and Research (CISER) can help faculty and graduate student researchers get results.

Currently located in Abelson 221 on the Pullman campus, CISER provides WSU researchers in any discipline a place to go for expert statistical analysis, training, and guidance on setting up experiments and analyzing data.



Jan Dasgupta

"Whether you are doing research in the humanities or social or natural sciences, you have to ask the right questions to get useful results," said **Nairanjana "Jan" Dasgupta**, professor of mathematics and statistics and director of CISER. "The affiliate faculty in CISER conduct statistical research with applications in virtually every discipline on campus and can help the scholarly colleagues set up experiments or studies in a way that will maximize the impact of their work."

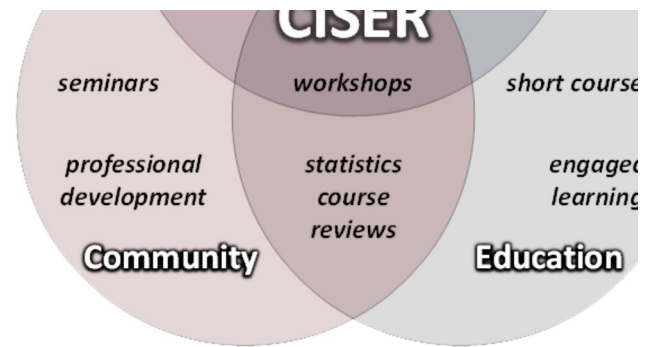
CISER's threefold mission is to train graduate students and faculty in statistical methods, to improve the quality of statistical analysis in WSU publications, and to promote interdisciplinary, collaborative statistical research. The WSU consortium is modeled after successful statistics centers at other leading universities.

Todd Coffey, clinical assistant professor of mathematics and statistics, is among experts hired by CISER to help faculty and graduate students integrate statistics into the design and analysis of their work.

"The idea is that, if your department or college



has membership in CISER, you can come in and get support when you need it," Dasgupta said. "We encourage graduate students who want assistance with a paper to come in as early as possible. We can help you tailor a research question to the data you already have, or design a research question that will be straightforward to support."



Workshops, seminars, best practices

Future CISER-led workshops, seminars, and brown bag lunches will facilitate statistical training and research and will help promote best practices for statistics-focused courses. Graduate students will have opportunities for engaged learning, and support will be available for those needing guidance in quantitative analysis for their research.

Faculty with interest in statistical methods are invited to join CISER as affiliate faculty. One of major benefits of affiliate membership is access to research collaborations with colleagues from different departments, Dasgupta said.

"Often statisticians in disciplines as seemingly unrelated as horticulture and education are working on the same kind of problem or analyzing similar data sets," said **Marc Evans**, CISER co-founder and a professor of mathematics and statistics. "Bringing statisticians across campus together under one umbrella will facilitate interaction and interdisciplinary research, and will help younger faculty find people to work with quickly."



Marc Evans

Requests for one-on-one appointments with CISER statisticians can be sent to CISER.info@wsu.edu. Individuals, departments, and schools interested in subscribing to CISER services should visit <http://ciser.wsu.edu> or contact Dasgupta at 509-335-3736 or CISER office manager **Tim Neumann** at 509-335-1201.

Core support for CISER is currently provided by the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Agriculture, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of Research.

—By Will Fer

