

News



President's Message

Jonathan M. Samet



In June, the Congress of Epidemiology unites the major societies for epidemiologists in the United States and Canada. This is a long-needed opportunity for the field's diverse members to come together and to learn from each other about issues in epidemiologic research and practice. The sponsoring organizations, which include the American College of Epidemiology, are complementary but overlapping in the scope of their activities and their membership. The College is distinguished by its emphasis on practice and policy; the Society for Epidemiologic Research has long focused on research and methods; and the Epidemiology section of the American Public Health Association on translation and application. The Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics fosters research in these disciplines in Canada. The field generally benefits

from each of these organizations, which have proceeded independently but with some coordination at times. This joint meeting may serve as a model for further multi-organization, multi-national conferences for epidemiologists. Issues faced by epidemiologists transcend organizations and borders. We still need to join with colleagues from throughout the Americas.

The College's annual business meeting will be held in Toronto, as the Congress replaces the annual meeting. If in Toronto, I encourage you to come. One item to be considered is a possible dues increase to cover future increases for the *Annals of Epidemiology*.

Elsewhere in this issue, the new Associate Membership is described. This level of membership is intended to bring students training in epidemiology into the College. Many students in training programs have been attracted by the fields' link to policy formulation and other applications of epidemiologic evidence – the focus of the College. Already, we have 15 Associate Members, and I encourage you to bring this opportunity to the attention of potential Associate Members.

With the new Associate Membership, the College is planning to implement a Mentorship Program, an added benefit for Associate Members in which they will have the opportunity to tap into the expertise and experiences of the College's Members and Fellows. The goals and structure of the proposed Mentorship Program are described elsewhere in this issue.

I look forward to seeing you in Toronto in June, 2001, and in Albuquerque in September, 2002.

Nominating Committee Formed

The Nominating Committee for 2001 elections has been formed, with Robert Hiatt as Chair of the Committee. Committee members are Leslie Bernstein, Maurisio Trevisan and Nancy Krieger. Richard A. Kaslow is President Elect, and will take office as President in Fall of this year. There are four open board positions for three-year terms. Suggestions for nominees from the membership are welcome, and should be submitted to Robert Hiatt by May 15. Dr. Hiatt can be reached at hiattr@mail.nih.gov.

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Planning Begins for 2002 Meeting in Albuquerque

Patricia Hartge

It's not too soon to look ahead to the next annual meeting of the College, planned for September 22-24, 2002 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The meeting theme, **Ethnicity and Gender: Epidemiology Looks at Biology and Society**, fits the time and place. New Mexico is the quintessential multi-ethnic population; the growing diversity of the U.S. and the globalization of public health challenge the way epidemiology.

The American College of Epidemiology announces a one day pre-convention scientific meeting on the use of epidemiologic methods, practices and community partnership collaborations to reduce health disparities in racial/ethnic groups. This one day scientific meeting to be held in Albuquerque in collaboration with local partners will focus on the identification of epidemiologic methods, ethical and culturally sensitive research strategies for collaborative partnerships and highlight the status of knowledge and practices available for the elimination of health disparities with implications for specific American Indian/Native American and Latino populations.

The planning committee is interested in hearing from individuals with ideas for presentations, suggestions of partnerships with local community groups and with best practice recruitment, retention, partnership strategies and prevention models with American Indian/Native

American and Latinos. Please email pkralka@olsonmgmt.com.

Sunday **Workshops for Practitioners** are planned. These popular half-day and full-day workshops provide continuing education for the novice and the experienced epidemiologist. Suggestions welcome. Chair: Carol Burns.

Three **Panel Discussions** are under construction. Based on comments from attendees at the last meeting, the meeting planners are improving the format to emphasize the discussion feature. Following brief speaker presentations, the session leader poses questions to the panelists and moderates a lively exchange from the floor and among the panelists. **Gender and Health – How Gender Affects Health.** The panel will use case studies to illuminate the problems epidemiologists face

when they study gender and health. Case studies may include: gender and neurologic or immune disease; gender and clinical trials; men's health, an emerging concept. **Making Decisions When There are Big Gaps in the Epidemiologic Data.** Case studies might include: genetically modified foods, a radiation hazard such as fallout, arsenic, infectious agents, medications with multiple effects. Biologic and social constructs of race and ethnicity. This panel will use case studies of the associations between ethnicity and various diseases to examine how epidemiologists do and how they might study this multi-faceted risk predictor.

Ethics Debate – This perennial favorite of the annual meeting is sponsored by the ESOP Committee. Pass along your suggestions to them. Scientific posters sessions feature presentations on any epidemiologic topic.

Membership Opened to Future Epidemiologists

Nora Lee

Membership in ACE has evolved from certification of epidemiologists by examination to peer recognition of qualified training in and contributions to the field of epidemiology. Most recently, the College has expanded to include the new Associate Member category for epidemiologists-in-training. The continued growth of the field will ideally be reflected in the ideas and perspectives that this new group of members will bring to the College. By integrating epidemiologists-in-training into activities that guide epidemiologic practice and shape the profession, the College can better serve all its members in the future. Associate Members, in turn, can greatly benefit from participation in ACE activities in terms of professional growth and opportunities through interactions with Members and Fellows. Associates can also take advantage of the ACE Mentorship Program that is currently being developed specifically for this new group of members.

Since the Associate Member category was approved by the College Board of Directors last fall, 15 Associates have been accepted and another eight applications are pending for Board approval. Current Associate Members represent Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, the National Cancer Institute, University of Maryland and University of Texas. Active recruitment for new Associates, as well as new Members and Fellows, continues and is planned for the Congress of Epidemiology 2001 this summer. The criterion for Associate Membership is enrollment in training that, when completed satisfactorily, would qualify the applicant for admission into the College. Annual dues for Associate Members are \$25 without a subscription to the *Annals of Epidemiology and Infection* and \$85 with the journal. Members and Fellows should encourage any qualified epidemiologist-in-training they know who meet the criterion to apply for College membership.

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ACE to Sponsor Pre-meeting Workshops at Congress of Epidemiology 2001

Roseann McTyre

Please join us on June 13, 2001 in Toronto for what should be a wonderful educational pre-Congress experience. ACE will be sponsoring six pre-meeting workshops taught by excellent faculty and geared to continuing education in a variety of different subject areas. Don't forget to pre-register as space is limited.

Workshop 1 - Molecular Genetics for Epidemiologists: From the Basics to More Advanced Topics

Faculty:

Jack A. Taylor, M.D., Ph.D., Chief, Molecular and Genetic Epidemiology Section, Laboratory of Molecular Carcinogenesis and Senior Investigator, Epidemiology Branch, NIEHS, NIH.

Morning: 9 a.m. - 12 noon

Afternoon: 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

This will be a two-part workshop. The morning will consist of a review of molecular genetics designed to provide a background in the techniques of DNA analysis for epidemiologists. The workshop will provide a basic background for those who wish a more clear understanding of concepts and techniques used in molecular epidemiology, and a basis from which to move on to the afternoon course on advanced topics.

The afternoon will be an extension of the morning workshop and will cover selected advanced and emerging areas of genetics and genomics. The course will focus initially on topics related to DNA polymorphism, mutation and DNA repair, and discuss application of these issues to the study of disease etiology with a focus on cancer. DNA chips, expression arrays, and other technologies have gathered considerable interest within the epidemiology community, although they have seldom been applied in epidemiology studies. The course will provide the epidemiologist with a conceptual understanding of these technologies and the current limitations on their application. Finally, the workshop will

try to anticipate near and intermediate-term applications of emerging genomic technologies on epidemiology studies, and suggest practical aspects of tissue procurement and storage, and consent.

Goals of this workshop:

- Review selected technical DNA-related topics of interest to the epidemiologist including polymorphism discovery, spontaneous and induced mutation, DNA repair, and DNA as a lifetime dosimeter of exposure
- Describe the basis of emerging technologies for genetic analysis including DNA chips, expression arrays, and mass spectroscopy
- Discuss how such technologies and the field of genomics may be applied in epidemiology studies and tissue sample requirements

Workshop 2 - Epidemiologic Analysis of Complex Sample Surveys

Faculty:

Donna J. Brogan, Ph.D., Professor of Biostatistics, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Many epidemiologists conduct primary or secondary analyses of sample survey data. Specialized analytical software is usually needed because complex sample survey designs deviate from simple random sampling. Common deviations are clustering of elements, stratification, and unequal selection probabilities. This workshop explains the need for specialized statistical software and illustrates how to use and interpret results from one sample survey software package: SUDAAN.

Goals of this workshop are to provide participants with:

- A review of general concepts and terminology of sample surveys as a basis for using SUDAAN.

- A summary of the structure and design of the software package SUDAAN
- An explanation of the syntax for describing specific sample survey designs to SUDAAN. Illustrative examples will include NHANES-III, PRAMS, BRFSS and NHIS.
- Instruction for using and interpreting results from two PROCs for descriptive analyses: DESCRIPT and CROSSTAB. One modeling PROC is discussed: LOGISTIC regression. Datasets for illustrating these three PROCs primarily are NHANES-III and PRAMS.

The instructor will use SUDAAN live, but participants will not have hand-on computer experience. Handouts for participants include a copy of all PowerPoint slides and all SUDAAN programs/output illustrated in the workshop.

Prerequisites:

Basic or intermediate biostatistics, basic or intermediate epidemiology, and experience using a statistical analysis package.

Workshop 3 - Extreme Ethics: Core Issues and Difficult Challenges in Epidemiology and Public Health

Faculty:

Kenneth W. Goodman, Ph.D., University of Miami Bioethics Program

Arturo Brito, M.D., University of Miami Department of Pediatrics and National Bioethics Advisory Commission

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

This workshop will review foundations of ethics and epidemiology as well as address issues for which standard models of valid consent and scientific practice may be inadequate, and to which too little attention has been devoted in scholarly research and literature. Based in part on the NIH-sponsored course at the Univer-

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New ACE Mentorship Program Proposed

Nora Lee

Establishment of the new Associate Member category last fall will help broaden the College's foundation and move the College forward in addressing new issues relevant to the discipline and practice of epidemiology. The College also recognized that Associate Members could benefit from the varied expertise and experiences of the members of the College, both from other academic institutions as well as outside academia. In an effort to develop a way to tap this expertise for the benefit of Associate Members, the Membership Committee has proposed a Mentorship Program that is designed to provide intellectual resources to supplement the academic

advisement resources available to the Associates, not to replace academic advisors.

The goals of the proposed Program are to provide Associate Members with the opportunity to seek: 1) guidance and expertise in various research areas of epidemiology; 2) opportunities for networking with members; 3) advice on professional issues; and 4) support for professional development. Members of the College who volunteer to serve in the Program can be involved in several capacities, ranging from electronic mail support to being a long-term mentor for one or more Associates. A web-based database of volunteer members, with

password access by Associate Members, will be developed to help support the activity. Events to facilitate face-to-face interactions between volunteer mentors and Associates are being planned, including a reception at the Congress of Epidemiology 2001.

Members interested in volunteering as a mentor for the proposed Program should contact the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Mentoring for details: Bill Kohl (hkohl@ilsi.org), Pauline Mendola (mendola.pauline@epa.gov) or Nora Lee (nllee@jhsph.edu). Suggestions for the structure, implementation and evaluation of the Program are also welcome.

ACE to Sponsor Pre-meeting Workshops at Congress of Epidemiology 2001

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sity of Miami, the workshop will examine a variety of issues in research and practice, including the role of IRBs (many of which are unfamiliar with epidemiology and public health research), conflicts of interest, and molecular or genomic epidemiology. Other topics to be addressed include: issues in occupational and environmental health; computers, genomics and epidemiology; ethics and biostatistics; and scientists as advocates for social policies and the social goals of public health research. The workshop is designed to stimulate discussion and debate.

Goals of this workshop:

- Identify ethical issues in epidemiology and public health
- Provide ethically optimized solutions to difficult problems
- Articulate the importance of ongoing education and analysis in a comprehensive ethics program

Workshop 4 - Design and Analysis of Cluster Randomization Trials

Faculty:

Allan Donner, Ph.D., and Neil Klar, Ph.D., Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of Western Ontario, London, Canada

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The purpose of this course is to present a systematic and unified treatment of comparative trials which randomize intact social units, or clusters of individuals, to different intervention groups. Such trials have become particularly widespread in the evaluation of non-therapeutic interventions, including lifestyle modification, educational programs and innovations in the provision of health care. Their increasing popularity over the last two decades has led to an extensive body of methodology and a growing, but somewhat scattered, literature that cuts across several disciplines in the statistical, social and medical sciences.

This material will be integrated into a full-day course that emphasizes applications to health research. The overall prerequisite for the course is knowledge of the fundamentals of biostatistics and familiarity with the basic principles of design and analysis of clinical trials. The sequence of topics presented will be based on the recently published text entitled "Design and Analysis of Cluster Randomization Trials in Health Research" by Allan Donner and Neil Klar (Arnold Publishing Company, London, 2000).

Goals of this workshop:

- Introduce concepts involved in the design and analysis of cluster randomized trials
- Illustrate the use of this methodology in applications to health research

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Workshop 5 - Tools and Techniques for Effective Risk Communication

Faculty:

Tim L. Tinker, Ph.D., MPH, Executive Director, Research, Evaluation, and Risk Communication, Matthews Media Group, Inc., Maryland

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

This workshop will provide an overview of the role of risk communication as an integral component in a broader risk assessment and risk management program. Given the wide array of activities related to risk assessment and risk management, this workshop will explore strategies and tactics to improve the knowledge and skills of the epidemiologist.

Specifically the workshop will teach how to: (1) communicate complex, scientific, and technical information, (2) understand the public's perception of risk, (3) use risk comparisons appropriately, (4) develop mechanisms to bolster the credibility of epidemiological studies and findings; and (5) explain scientific uncertainty. The workshop will further examine the role of the media – traditional and new – as “they” continue to have an increased stake in risk situations and thus have a role in the development of public communications around risk issues.

An optimal combination of lecture, case examples, and participatory approaches will be employed. Groups of workshop participants will work together through message development and role play exercises. This environment creates an excellent opportunity to put all of the principles and techniques of risk communication into practice.

Goals of this workshop:

- Apply principles and strategies of risk communication to broader risk assessment and risk management concerns.
- Identify intended audiences and appropriate channels of communication to reach those audiences with risk information.
- Communicate health risks and epidemiological information to various target audiences.
- Develop effective risk communication messages.

Workshop 6 - Career Development: Uncovering How the System Works: A Focus on Grants and Publications

Facilitators:

Diana Buist, Ph.D., Center for Health Studies, Seattle

Mary Beth Terry, Ph.D., Columbia University

Shine Chang, Ph.D., MD Anderson Cancer Center

Amy Trentham-Dietz, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin

Mary Reid, Ph.D., University of New Mexico

Panel discussions led by senior members of ACE, SER, APHA, and CSEB

1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Part I: Behind Closed Doors: What Really Happens to Your Grant in NIH Study Section Review?

A panel of seasoned NIH study section members will address aspects of NIH grant review, focusing on the specific components of grant applications (e.g., abstract, preliminary studies, methods). Speakers will comment upon issues and limitations that are common to grant applications submitted by junior investigators and describe aspects and techniques that strengthen grant applications. Significant time will be allocated to audience questions.

Goals of this workshop:

- To describe the NIH grant review process (what happens to your proposal when it's reached its destination?)
- To describe what reviewers look for in proposals (what features can make or break a proposal?)

Part II: Getting Published: The How-To's

After addressing seminar attendees with brief introductory comments, two or three speakers will be asked to answer questions regarding publications in peer-reviewed journals. Speakers will be current or past editors of epidemiologic journals.

Goal of this workshop is for participants to learn:

- How to select a journal most suitable for a particular paper
- How to decide the order of the co-authors
- What to include in a cover letter
- How to interpret letters from the editor (i.e., knowing when to revise and resubmit)
- When to call to speak to the editor
- When to disagree with a reviewer's recommendations

Visit the
American College of
Epidemiology
Web site at:

www.acepidemiology.org



Congress of Epidemiology 2001 Announces Some Special Events:

In addition to 25 major plenaries and symposia, 900 posters and 120 contributed papers, Congress 2001 will have several special events, including: 1) a Forum on Neuroepidemiology will review the epidemiology of major disease areas covered by that discipline 2) the public release of data will be announced from what is probably the largest epidemiologic study ever conducted in a million urban and rural Chinese who have been studied with biochemistry to examine dietary and lifestyle risk factors for disease 3) the International Epidemiology Association will host a session on international collaborative research in cancer 4) and The International Life Sciences Institute is supporting a symposium examining the role of biomarkers of nutritional exposure in chronic disease.

For more details and to Register now, see the Congress web site: www.epi2001.org

Michael Bracken, for the Planning Committee

Social Epidemiology at the Crossroads

Plenary Session: Social Epidemiology at the Crossroads

The last decade has seen an explosion of interest in social epidemiology, the social determinants of health, and population health. For example, in the areas of social inequalities in health alone there has been an exponential increase in research. As the field matures it finds itself at a crossroads involving both conceptual and methodological choices: should there be a single-minded focus on upstream or downstream approaches or an attempt to bridge both; how will social epidemiology interface with emerging knowledge in human genetics, human development and other disciplines; do we need new methodological approaches; and, are clinical trials possible and desirable? This symposium will bring together thirteen researchers from Canada and the United States to address these issues.

The first part of the symposium will include presentations and discussants that consider three themes: the expanding interdisciplinary field that brings epidemiologists and human development researchers together to consider life course determinants of health and development and common biologic pathways; the social ecology of human disease with an emphasis on the role of human settlements in disease transmission; and, the links between social and economic policy and the health of individuals and populations.

The second half of the symposium will focus on three methodological themes: the use of multi-level analyses in studies of human development and health; a consideration of the logic of causal inference in social epidemiologic research and the possibility of clinical trials; and the need for an expanded consideration of the "environment" when studying gene-environment interactions.

Introduction: George A. Kaplan, University of Michigan and Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.

"Social Determinants of Biology, Development, and Health." Clyde Hertzman, University of BC and Canadian Institute for Advanced Research. *Commentator:* Nigel Paneth, Michigan State University.

"The Impact of Human Settlements on Disease Transmission." Mark Wilson, University of Michigan. *Commentator:* Trevor Hancock, York University.

"Social and Economic Equity and Population Health." John Lynch, University of Michigan. *Commentator:* Michael Wolfson, Statistics Canada.

Discussion of first three papers

"Is there a Need for Clinical Trials in Epidemiology?" Jay Kaufman, University of North Carolina. *Commentator:* Cam Mustard, University of Toronto.

"Capturing Multi-level Determinants of Health and Development." Ana Diez-Roux, Columbia University. *Commentator:* To be announced.

"Social Epidemiology in a World of Gene-Environment Interactions." Richard Cooper, Loyola University. *Commentator:* Patricia Baird, University of BC and Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.

Discussion of all papers.

CONGRESSES

Congress of Epidemiology 2001 Registration Form

June 13-16, 2001 • Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto, Ontario Canada (www.conferences.utah.edu/epi2001/)

You can register on line at www.epi2001.org

Name _____ Organization _____
 Street Address _____
 City _____ State/Province _____
 Postal Code _____ Country _____
 Telephone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Registration Fees (in US Dollars)

	By May 14	After May 14	
Member	\$300	\$350	\$ _____
Non-member	\$350	\$400	\$ _____
Student	\$200	\$250	\$ _____
Exhibit Booth (1 representative)	\$450	\$500	\$ _____
Additional Exhibitor Representatives	\$300	\$350	\$ _____
Guest Social ticket (# guest tickets _____)	\$25	\$25	\$ _____
Awards Luncheon (# of Tickets _____)	\$25	\$30	\$ _____

ACE Workshop (indicate choice below)

Member – Full day Course	\$145	\$195	\$ _____
Non-member – Full day Course	\$195	\$245	\$ _____
Student – Full-day Course	\$95	\$145	\$ _____
Member – Half-day (Molec. Genetics only)	\$95	\$145	\$ _____
Non-member – Half-day (Molec. Genetics only)	\$145	\$195	\$ _____
Student – Half-day (Molec. Genetics only)	\$55	\$105	\$ _____
Career Development Workshop	No Charge	No Charge	\$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

IMPORTANT – Please indicate first choice with “1st”, second choice with “2nd” and third choice with “3rd”

FULL DAY COURSES (Descriptions on www.ep2001.org)

	Choice
Molecular Genetics for Epidemiologists: From the Basics to More Advanced	_____
Epidemiologic Analysis of Complex Sample Surveys	_____
Extreme Ethics: Core Issues and Difficult Challenges in Epidemiology and Public Health	_____
Design and Analysis of Cluster Randomization Trials	_____
Tools and Techniques for Effective Risk Communication	_____

HALF-DAY COURSES

Molecular Genetics for Epidemiologists: Part 1 Basics	_____
Molecular Genetics for Epidemiologists: Part 2 Advanced	_____
Career Development: Uncovering How the System Works (1pm-5pm) NO CHARGE *	_____

* If you list any other workshops as possible choices, please include the registration fee. If you are assigned to the career development workshop, your course registration fee will be refunded.

Payment Method

Check enclosed (payable to the University of Utah – Tax ID 87-6000525)
 Bill my organization, attn: Purchase Order # _____
 Charge my credit card: MasterCard VISA
 Card # _____ Exp. _____ Signature _____

Special Needs

The Congress seeks to provide equal access for persons with special needs. Please note any dietary or other requirements in the space below or direct your requests to Meghan Webb by e-mail mwebb@guesthouse.utah.edu or by phone 801-587-2982.

Cancellation Policy

If cancellation of your registration is necessary, you must send written notice to University Conference Services by May 14, or call (801) 587-2980. Cancellations made by that date will be subject to a service charge of \$35. Confirmed registrants who do not attend the conference or who cancel after May 14 are responsible for the entire registration fee. Substitutions, however, may be made at any time. When calling, be sure to ask for and retain your cancellation number.

Additional Registration Information

University Conference Services, University of Utah Guest House, 110 So. Fort Douglas Boulevard, Salt Lake City, UT 84113-5036;
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