

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF BIostatISTICS

Professor Thomas A. Louis
410-614-7838, 410-955-0958 fax
tlouis@jhsph.edu

BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

615 North Wolfe Street
Baltimore, MD 21205

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TO: Professor Dr. Clarice G.B. Demtrio, ESALQ, Piracicaba, SP, Brazil

FROM: Professor Thomas A. Louis. International Biometrics Society President, 2006-2007

RE: 52nd meeting of the Brazilian Region and 12th meeting of SEAGRO
Santa Maria, Brazil, 23-27 July 2007

Dear Professor Demtrio,

It was an honor and a pleasure to attend and participate in the 52nd Meeting in Santa Maria of the Brazilian Region of the International Biometric Society (IBS). In advance of the meeting, I had the good fortune to visit Piracicaba, hosted by you; Curitiba, hosted by Paulo Ribeiro, and Florianópolis, hosted by Dalton Andrade. In Florianópolis, we toured the conference site for the 2010 International Biometrics Conference and set the conference dates. At the conference in Santa Maria I had the opportunity to give the Opening Address and to offer a short course on Bayesian Methods. I was especially heartened by the good attendance at the course, especially since I was speaking in English.

The oral and poster presentations at the meeting were first rate in form and content. The social events were excellent, serving to create and solidify interpersonal connections. “Obrigado” to Alessandro and his local arrangements committee for an excellent conference. It was wonderful to have seen so many participating the meeting who are young in their career. Clearly, Biometry in Brazil has a very bright future. Indeed, it has a distinguished past as one of the oldest regions in the IBS. It was formed almost immediately after the inception of the Society at the inaugural Biometric Conference in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, USA, in 1947.

The IBS Presidents who have attended highlight the international standing of the RBras meetings. Sir Ronald Aylmer Fisher, first IBS President Karl Pearson, founder of our profession made the first visit and almost all recent IBS Presidents have attended. These include Professor Lynne Billard (University of Georgia, USA), Professor Nanny Wermuth (at the time of her visit at the University of Mainz, Germany), Professor Norman Breslow (University of Washington at Seattle, USA), and Professor Geert Molenberghs (University of Hasselt, Belgium).

As one of the approximately 50 Regions and Groups in the IBS, your annual meetings are very important in creating and maintaining a local and regional presence. Approximately 350 biometricians were in Santa Maria, a location that required most to travel extensively. This participation is testimony to the importance of your meetings. I applaud your Region’s practice of holding meetings in a wide variety of locations so that Biometry, RBras and the IBS all become better known. For example, this year’s conference was a signature event for biometricians at the Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, and has further elevated their standing in the university community.

The quality of the science at the meeting prompts me to encourage your colleagues to submit their work to the leading biometric, biostatistical and applications-area journals. Senior biometricians should especially encourage students and young professionals to do so. It is most definitely the case that these leading journals accept only about 25 percent of submissions, so there is no guarantee of a positive decision. However, not submitted guarantees that your work won't appear in these leading journals. With timely and informative reviews, the waiting time is reasonable and, for rejected manuscripts the feedback is very helpful. To remove one of the principal barriers to publication, I have initiated an IBS volunteer editor program. Volunteers are available to help IBS members polish up the prose in a manuscript that they intend to submit for publication. The target journal need not be *Biometrics* or *JABES*; our goal is to increase the publication success rate for IBS members irrespective of the intended journal.

I am now back in the U.S. and will report on my visit to Benilton Carvalho and Samara Kiihl, doctoral students in Biostatistics at Johns Hopkins who each earned their Master of Science degree at the State University of Campinas. I have returned with many fond memories, new friends and an appreciation for what can be done with intelligence, hard work and mutual respect. RBras sets the standard for these in our profession.

I thank you for your invitation to visit Brazil and for the dedication of yourself, the organizers of the meeting, and the RBras Board and Council. Visits like this one are one of the joys and benefits of working with the IBS. I look forward to seeing you, Paulo and Dalton in Dublin in 2008 and many, many RBras members in Florianópolis in 2010.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas A. Louis".

Thomas A. Louis, PhD
IBS President