

Middle Tennessee State University

Actuarial Science Program Newsletter (Spring 2019)

Presented by the Actuarial Mathematics Student Association (AMSA)

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Faculty

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Actuarial Science Polo

Program Facts

- The MTSU Actuarial Science program was established in 1987. Dr. J.C. Hankins was the founding director of the Program.
- MTSU has the only program in Tennessee that offers actuarial science coursework for both undergraduate and graduate programs.
- The concentration in actuarial science for the MS degree of Professional Sciences (MSPS) was set up in 2010.
- Based on the successes under the concentration in actuarial science of BS in Mathematics, the stand-alone BS degree in Actuarial Science was established in 2015.
- MTSU Actuarial Science program is a UCAP-AC school (University/College Actuarial Program with Advanced Curriculum) recognized by the Society of Actuaries (SOA).
- MTSU Actuarial Science program has been nominated for the University Award of the Casualty Actuarial Society (CAS) in the years of 2016-2018.
- Currently enrolled students and recent alumni from the MSPS actuarial science concentration include graduates from Dartmouth, Notre Dame, UC-Berkeley, UCLA, UIUC, UT-Knoxville, U Alabama, Washington University, etc. and from all over the US as well as other countries including Bangladesh, Cameroon, China, Ghana, India, Kenya, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand.

Letter from Program Coordinator

Dear Students, Alumni, Faculty, and Friends,

Happy 2019! As we think about the progress of the program in recent years, the achievements that students achieved, the support we've received from alumni, students, faculty, administration, and friends, as well as partner schools, actuarial societies, and regional actuarial organizations including Casualty Actuaries of Southeast (CASE) and the southeast actuarial conference (SEAC), we tend to be more thankful about what a wonderful place we work at and an excellent program we serve for. In the fall semester of 2018, the enrollment in MTSU actuarial science program for BS in actuarial science studies reached a new high of over 80 students. The actuarial science graduate students enrolled in MSPS or MS-Math has exceeded 40 in total. In AY2017-18, 29 students passed actuarial Exam-P/1, 26 passed Exam-FM/2, 18 passed MFE/3F, 7 passed C/4 and 2 students passed Exam-MLC. Most impressively, Brent Capenetti and Yiting Dong passed all exams to achieved ASA designation (Associate of the Society of Actuaries) before graduation from the program for their MSPS studies in December 2017 and August 2018, respectively. We appreciate all of you who have supported and made contributions to the program. The MTSU actuarial science program cannot continue to thrive without your support. I am looking forward to hearing more good news from alumni and students. Wish all of you a very prosperous new year of 2019! Sincerely, Don Hong

Program News

(1) The MTSU Actuarial Science Program currently has over 120 students in the program. Among 25 graduates in May 2018 for BS in Actuarial Science, 16 of them received admissions for graduate studies from schools including Columbia University, the University of Toronto, Boston University, UIUC, U Iowa, U of Manchester, Australian National University, and MTSU in addition to those received industrial job offers.

(2) Two students in MSPS program, Brent Carpenetti and Yiting Dong achieved the Associate of the SOA designation (ASA) before graduation from MTSU. 18 alumni have achieved ASA or ACAS designations; while 9 alumni went on to obtain FSA or FCAS designations.

(3) Students in this program have been able to pass many actuarial exams in the past two years. Up to date since F2017, 61 students passed Exam-P/1 from the Society of Actuaries (SOA) or the Casualty Actuarial Society (CAS); 56 students passed Exam-FM/2; 25 students passed Exam-MFE/3F; 8 students passed Exam-C/4; 2 student passed Exam-MLC/LTAM.

(4) Dr. Don Hong received \$1500 Casualty Actuaries of Southeast (CASE) 2017 Actuarial Program Grant for enhancing MTSU actuarial science program in June 2017.

(5) Yiting Dong and Ye Fang received 2017 Scholarship of \$1,000 each from the Southeast Actuarial Conference (SEAC), Yiting Dong received 2017 Scholarship of \$1,500 from the Casualty Actuaries of the Southeast (CASE).

(6) The following students, currently enrolled in or graduated after May 2018 from the MTSU actuarial science program, have passed more than three actuarial exams: Yiting Dong(P, FM, MFE, MLC, C, FAP), Ziren Chen (P, FM, MFE, C), Lin Feng(P, FM, MFE, C), Chuanlong Zhang(P, FM, MFE, C), Ye Fang (P, FM, MFE, C), Ruoqing Fang (P, FM, MFE, C), Chunlan Jia (P, FM, MFE, C), Rui Wang(P, FM, MFE, C), Zhenyang Wang (P, FM, MFE, C), Gaojie Zhang (P, FM, IFM, C), Alexander Boehm(P, FM, MFE), Ryan Clark(P, FM, C), Xuxin Jiang (P, FM, IFM), Junyu Chen (P, FM, IFM), Haifu Li (P, FM, MFE), Hongli Li (P, FM, MFE), David Phillips (P, FM, MFE), Wanqi Wang (P, FM, MFE), Zefan Wu(P, FM, MFE), Honglan Xu(P, FM, MFE).

(7) Several of the graduates received job offers before graduation from Willis-Towers-Watson at Memphis, Greenwich Transportation Underwriters in Brentwood of Tennessee, and Lincoln Financial Groups at Greensboro of North Carolina, as well as insurance companies in China including Sino-Korea Life Insurance, Sino-Dutch Insurance, Metlife at Hangzhou-China, AIG at Shanghai-China, PingAn Insurance, and Sunshine Insurance, etc.

(8) Research Presentations at the 2017 Actuarial Research Conference, Atlanta, GA:

Two presentations were presented by MTSU students and faculty at the 2017 ARC:

- Stephen Henderson & Ye Fang, entitled "Predicting Ticket Sales for Air Shows".
- Kimberly Page, entitled "What about Park Factors?-Park Factors and their Impact on Minor League Baseball Pitchers".

(9) Dr. Qiang Wu, Dr. Songjing Wang, Alexander Boehm, Wanrong Cai, Yiting Dong, Ye Fang, Holden French, Rui Wang, Wanqi Wang, Guanxiong Xue, and Chuanlong Zhang attended the Casualty Actuary of the Southeast (CASE) conference in Atlanta on September 18, 2017. Kristin Wood participated the CASE Spring Meeting in Charlotte, NC on Monday, March 12, 2018.

(10) Dr. Lu Xiong joined MTSU as assistant professor of actuarial science starting on August 1, 2018.

(11) Actuarial Science got listed on the six unique graduate programs at MTSU: <https://mtsunews.com/6-unique-graduate-programs-at-mtsu/>.

(12) "MTSU On the Record" radio program producer Gina Logue hosted Dr. Hong on August 14, 2018 to discuss managing global risk with actuarial science degree tracks:

<https://mtsunews.com/hong-on-the-record-aug2018/>

AMSA Meetings

- Mr. Adam French, actuarial analyst for Willis Towers Watson in Nashville, TN, alumnus of MTSU and former president of AMSA, spoke to actuarial students about his experience in the program and gave advice to current AMSA members about entering the actuarial field. In particular, Mr. French emphasized the importance of passing exams and working on soft skills in order to put the best foot forward when searching for a job.
- Ms. Tara Wozniak of Willis Towers Watson in Memphis, TN spoke to the AMSA members about their company on 11/8/17.
- Mr. Joseph Flaks and Mr. Michael Gillespie of Wakely Insurance in Atlanta, GA, working in the Risk Adjustment department focusing on Medicare Advantage, discussed some of the work they do at Wakely and gave some background on actuarial work in the medical field on Oct. 3, 2017. Following a similar theme, the presenters emphasized the importance of developing useful skills, especially communication skills, before entering the actuarial field.
- Dr. Tianxiang Shi, FSA, Assistant Professor of Fox School of Business at Temple University, gave a talk on Pension De-Risking: Buy-ins and Buy-outs to AMSA students on 10/26/2017.
- Ms. Michelle Bradley, ACSA, and Mr. Tony King of SIGMA Actuarial Consulting Group talked to AMSA members about the actuarial field and what it is like to work at SIGMA.
- Mr. David A. Craig, ASA, the former AMSA president, currently working at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee, shared his experience to AMSA members on April 11, 2018.
- Mr. Matthew Bravo and Mr. Stephen Henderson from Acruff & Associates spoke to actuarial students, as well as interviewed candidates for internships on November 14, 2018.
- Dr. Lu Xiong and a group of students participated the Society of Actuaries Annual Meeting in Nashville held on October 8, 2018.



Students' experience

I'm Allison Logan, and I'm a senior actuarial science major, insurance minor. Currently, I am an actuarial intern at DXC Technology in Nashville. The transition from classroom to the workplace has been nearly seamless. My courses in actuarial science prepared me for the day-to-day activities, and my insurance classes gave me a strong understanding of the terminology regularly used in my job. In addition to classes and exams, I'm an officer for AMSA and Gamma Iota Sigma Professional Insurance and Actuarial Science Fraternity (GIS). AMSA provides great opportunities to learn about what's going on in the actuarial field, and GIS has given me chances to network with people in all areas of the insurance industry and become more aware of how the insurance mechanism works as a whole. Overall, my experience here has been very positive. My professors in both my major and minor have been great and ensured that I could succeed inside and outside the classroom.

Students' experience

I'm Alexander Boehm. My experience as a graduate student in the Actuarial Science concentration in the Master of Science in Professional Science program has been overwhelmingly positive. My Actuarial Science classes have prepared me to pass two exams, and the Business core has helped me hone skills that will serve me in the workplace.

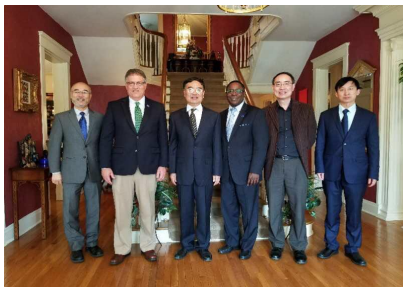
I have been able to arrange my schedule so that the downside of commuting from Nashville has been minimized. I have also enjoyed reduced tuition and a monthly stipend in exchange for my tutoring work in the library for 10 hours per week as a half-graduate assistantship recipient. Coming to MTSU's Actuarial Science program after attending Notre Dame as an undergraduate student majoring in math has been extremely beneficial for my outlook in this career path.

Students' experience

Hi, I am Zefan. This fall I came to Middle Tennessee State University for further study. It is the first time that I study abroad. That is definitely a challenge to fit in well! The food, the weather, the traffic... I really feel a sense of culture shock around everything. Although living without the comforts I'm used to is kind of difficult, studying at MTSU is more enjoyable than I thought. The university is unique. Every week I can learn something new in the class—thanks for the help of my professors. I can always go to my professors. And I do love the James E. Walker Library. It owns useful resources and it seems to be the best study space for me.

Life outside school is quite interesting as well. I had lots of fun in the Dragon Boat Festival held in Nashville two month ago. When the fall break came, I traveled to Atlanta with my friends. There are always exciting activities for which I can go in. I really do feel like it is my home away from home.

International Connections



MTSU actuarial science program has established exchange programs with North China University of Technology (NCUT), Ningbo University (NBU), and Guangxi University (GXU) in China. MTSU has an agreement with NCUT and GXU for a so-called 3+1+1 program that senior students of these schools come to MTSU to complete their last year study in actuarial science and continue one more year graduate study for an MS degree. Students from NBU are under a 2+2 program who complete 2-year studies in NBU and continue another 2-year study in actuarial science at MTSU to receive a BS degree from both universities.

Picture on left (above): NCUT delegation visited at MTSU on April 11, 2018 and received warm welcome at the home of the President McPhee.



Picture on left (below): MTSU President McPhee, left, and Dr. Shao, vice president of Ningbo University in China, sign papers that renew the academic partnership between the two institutions on July 20, 2018. Behind them is a portrait of the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, inscribing on a scroll the name of Ningbo University at its founding in 1986. (MTSU photo by Andrew Oppmann)

Student Activities



AY2017-18 and AY2018-19 AMSA Officers

AY2017-18: Holden French, MSPS student and Yiting Dong, MSPS student of Actuarial Science were elected as co-president for AMSA, Alexander Boehm, Allison Logan, and Bowen Jiang were selected as vice-president for AMSA in September 2017.

AY2018-19 AMSA officers are: David Phillips and Bowen Jiang, co-president; Courtney DeClerk, VP for graduate affairs; Chuanlong Zhang, VP for undergraduate affairs, and Chunlan Jia, treasurer and secretary.

