Statistics, B.A.

Modern statistics is an exciting subject that affects most aspects of modern living. It has been developed to deal rationally and objectively with the uncertainty that accompanies variation in phenomena as highly complex as the interplay of the many factors that affect our environment. It derives vitality in coping with practical problems arising in all fields of scientific activity, including the social, business, biological, agricultural, medical, natural, and engineering sciences. Investigators’ efforts to learn about a specific phenomenon, be it the response of a patient to a certain medical treatment or the effectiveness of a particular instructional program on a student’s learning, are impacted by the presence of natural variation. The field of statistics is concerned with valid and efficient ways to learn more about these phenomena in the presence of such variation. It is an inductive science in which information is extracted from sample data in order to draw inferences. This process most often involves planning experiments or designing studies to ensure that valid answers to questions are obtained from the sample.

How to Get In

To declare the statistics major, student should set up an appointment with a statistics major advisor prior to attaining senior standing (86 credits).

Prospective majors are strongly recommended to have completed the following classes before declaring the major:

- MATH 221 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 1
- MATH 222 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 2
- MATH 234 Calculus—Functions of Several Variables
- STAT 302 Accelerated Introduction to Statistical Methods

Requirements

University General Education Requirements

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatetext) section of the Guide.

- General Education
  - Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits
  - Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
  - Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits
  - Communication Part A & Part B *
  - Ethnic Studies *
  - Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

College of Letters & Science Breadth and Degree Requirements: Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

Students pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in the College of Letters & Science must complete all of the requirements below. The College of Letters & Science allows this major to be paired with either a bachelor of arts or a bachelor of science curriculum. View a comparison of the degree requirements here. (https://pubs.wisc.edu/home/archives/ug15/images/babs2009.pdf)

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

- Mathematics: Fulfilled with completion of University General Education requirements Quantitative Reasoning a (QR A) and Quantitative Reasoning b (QR B) coursework. Please note that some majors may require students to complete additional math coursework beyond the B.A. mathematics requirement.
- Foreign Language:
  - Complete the fourth unit of a foreign language; OR
  - Complete the third unit of a foreign language and the second unit of an additional foreign language

Note: A unit is one year of high school work or one semester/term of college work.

- L&S Breadth
  - Humanities, 12 credits: 6 of the 12 credits must be in literature
  - Social Sciences, 12 credits
  - Natural Sciences, 12 credits: must include one 3+ credit course in the biological sciences; must include one 3+ credit course in the physical sciences

Liberal Arts and Science Coursework: 108 credits

Depth of Intermediate/Advanced work: 60 intermediate or advanced credits

Major: Declare and complete at least one (1) major

Total Credits: 120 credits

UW-Madison Experience: 30 credits in residence, overall

Experience: 30 credits in residence after the 90th credit
NON–L&S STUDENTS PURSUING AN L&S MAJOR

Non–L&S students who have permission from their school/college to pursue an additional major within L&S only need to fulfill the major requirements and do not need to complete the L&S breadth and degree requirements above. Please note that the following special degree programs are not considered majors so are not available to non–L&S degree-seeking candidates:

- Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics (Bachelor of Science–Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics)
- Journalism (Bachelor of Arts–Journalism; Bachelor of Science–Journalism)
- Music (Bachelor of Music)
- Social Work (Bachelor of Social Work)

MATH 221 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 1 (must be completed with grade of C or higher) 1
MATH 222 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 2 (must be completed with grade of C or higher) 1
MATH 234 Calculus–Functions of Several Variables (must be completed with grade of C or higher) 1
MATH 340 Elementary Matrix and Linear Algebra 1

or MATH 341 Linear Algebra

Computer Programming

Select one of the following: 2

COMP SCI 200 Programming I
COMP SCI 300 Programming II
COMP SCI 301 Introduction to Data Programming
COMP SCI 400 Programming III
COMP SCI 412 Introduction to Numerical Methods
COMP SCI/ISY/E MATH/STAT 525 Linear Programming Methods

Statistics Electives

Select either Math Concentration or Applied Concentration

Total Credits: 50-56

An acceptable equivalent for all four of the required mathematics courses is MATH 275 Topics in Calculus I, MATH 276 Topics in Calculus II, MATH 375 Topics in Multi-Variable Calculus and Linear Algebra, and MATH 376 Topics in Multi-Variable Calculus and Differential Equations. MATH 275 and MATH 276 are acceptable equivalents for MATH 221 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 1 and MATH 222 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 2, respectively. MATH 211 Calculus and MATH 213 Calculus and Introduction to Differential Equations are NOT acceptable equivalents for MATH 221, MATH 222, and MATH 234 Calculus–Functions of Several Variables. (Students who have completed MATH 211 and MATH 213 are encouraged to take the Department of Mathematics’ Calculus Exam to determine placement in the MATH 221–MATH 222–MATH 234 sequence).

COMP SCI 300 is highly recommended because it will be particularly beneficial in most future careers. Students who have prior computing experience equivalent to COMP SCI 200 (such as AP computer science) are recommended to take COMP SCI 300, and students who will pursue a second major in computer science must take COMP SCI 300 and COMP SCI 400 to satisfy the computer science major requirements.

STAT 312 Introduction to Theory and Methods of Mathematical Statistics II will not be accepted in lieu of STAT/MATH 310 Introduction to Probability and Mathematical Statistics II.

STAT 479 Special Topics in Statistics can be repeated for elective credit when enrolled for different topics.
Introduction to Statistical Methods

overall university GPA, and must have completed
in Statistics, students must have declared statistics, must have a 3.500
the Statistics major advisor(s). To be admitted to the Honors Program
Students may declare Honors in the Statistics Major in consultation with
HONORS IN THE MAJOR

WORK IN THE MAJOR

L&S REQUIREMENTS FOR RESIDENCE AND QUALITY OF

1. 2.000 grade point average in all STAT and major courses
2. 2.000 grade point average in 15 credits of upper-level work in the
major completed in residence. Courses that count toward this
requirement are STAT courses: STAT 302 Accelerated Introduction to
Statistical Methods to STAT 699 Directed Study, excluding STAT 324
Introductory Applied Statistics for Engineers, STAT 371 Introductory
Applied Statistics for the Life Sciences, STAT 441 Introduction to
Biostatistics for Pharmacy, STAT/F&W ECOL/HORT 571 Statistical
Methods for Bioscience I, and STAT/F&W ECOL/HORT 572 Statistical
Methods for Bioscience II.
3. 15 credits in STAT subject, taken on campus

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

Students may declare Honors in the Statistics Major in consultation with
the Statistics major advisor(s). To be admitted to the Honors Program
in Statistics, students must have declared statistics, must have a 3.500
overall university GPA, and must have completed STAT 302 Accelerated
Introduction to Statistical Methods, STAT/MATH 309 Introduction
to Probability and Mathematical Statistics I and STAT 333 Applied
Regression Analysis with a GPA of 3.500 or higher.

HONORS IN THE STATISTICS MAJOR: REQUIREMENTS

To earn Honors in the Major in Statistics, students must satisfy both
the requirements for the major (above) and the following additional
requirements:

• Earn a 3.500 overall university GPA
• Earn a 3.500 GPA for all STAT courses
• Complete one of the following:
  - Two courses, taken for Honors, with individual grades of B or
    better, from Linear Statistical Models, Mathematical Statistics, or
    Statistics Electives other than STAT 699 Directed Study, or
  - Complete an additional course worth 3 credits from the Statistics
    Electives list (for a total of 12 statistics electives)
  - Complete a two-semester Senior Honors Thesis in STAT 681 Senior
    Honors Thesis and STAT 682 Senior Honors Thesis, for a total of
    6 credits, under the supervision of a member of the faculty of the
    Department of Statistics.

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Total Degree To receive a bachelor's degree from UW–Madison,
students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits.
The requirements for some programs may exceed 120
degree credits. Students should consult with their college
or department advisor for information on specific credit
requirements.

Residency Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30
credits in residence at UW–Madison. “In residence” means
on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate
degree classification. “In residence” credit also includes
UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online
formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study
Abroad/Study Away programs.

Quality of Work Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum
grade point average specified by the school, college, or
academic program to remain in good academic standing.
Students whose academic performance drops below
these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic
probation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Frame a scientific question with the appropriate mode of data analysis,
to analyze such data correctly, and to summarize and interpret the
results in a useful manner. Master a number of key statistical techniques,
certainly including significance testing, goodness-of-fit testing, and
regression analysis, which are common tools in analyzing data. This will
include a careful checking of assumptions that underlie the techniques.

2. Design experiments/studies — in conjunction with scientists
proposing the study — that will lead in an efficient manner to the
collection of data that can be properly analyzed. Design studies with
multiple factors taking variable reduction techniques into account.
Interpret and critique designs they encounter in analyzing data.

3. Use tools from mathematical statistics and probability to assess
the quality of point estimators, confidence intervals, and hypothesis
tests. Demonstrate the skills to connect methods of application to their theoretical underpinnings.

4. Use a statistical language (with emphasis on R) to manipulate data and perform exploratory data analysis using basic statistical methods. Write structured R programs using conditional expressions, loops, and functions and to use regular expressions to extract data from text and make high-level visualizations.

5. Evaluate critically articles that use statistical argumentation. Assess whether or not the statistical arguments have been developed properly and the conclusions are reliable. If the arguments are not properly developed, they will be able to provide specific evidence for this.

**ADVISING AND CAREERS**

**Looking for statistics advising?**

Students who are interested in statistics academic advising for the statistics major should contact the advisor group by email: advising@stat.wisc.edu.

**So what can you do with a statistics major after you graduate?**

Well-trained statisticians are in strong demand and have excellent employment prospects. Statisticians work in industry and business, in government, and in universities and other research institutions.

In most cases an undergraduate major in statistics can find employment as a quantitative analyst or other “generalist” position. A number of our graduates have been successful following this path. However, in most cases, positions aimed at “professional statisticians” require a master’s (or Ph.D.) degree. As a professional statistician, typical employment in industry might be as a statistical consultant to biologists, engineers, and/or other scientists in a research and development branch of a large company.

The single, best place to look for statistics jobs is the American Statistical Association Career Center (http://www.amstat.org/ASA/YourCareer/home.aspx). Consult with a statistics undergraduate advisor about the best fit for you.

Statistical training is seen as very desirable in many other areas (e.g., agricultural, biological, engineering, and social sciences, business, and economics) where the primary activity may not be statistics. In view of this, statistics may often be a strong choice for a second or additional major.

**L&S CAREER RESOURCES**

SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science helps students leverage the academic skills learned in their major, certificates, and liberal arts degree; explore and try out different career paths; participate in internships; prepare for the job search and/or graduate school applications; and network with professionals in the field (alumni and employers).

SuccessWorks can also assist students in career advising, résumé and cover letter writing, networking opportunities, and interview skills, as well as course offerings for undergraduates to begin their career exploration early in their undergraduate career.

- Set up a career advising appointment (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/make-an-appointment)
- INTER-LS 210 L&S Career Development: Taking Initiative (1 credit, targeted to first- and second-year students)—for more information, see Inter-LS 210: Career Development, Taking Initiative (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/inter-ls-210-career-development-taking-initiative)
- Learn how we’re transforming career preparation: L&S Career Initiative (http://ls.wisc.edu/lsci)

**PEOPLE**

**FACULTY**

Ané, Chappell, Clayton, Kang, Keles, Larget, Loh, Newton, Qian, Raskutti, Rohe, Shao, Tsui, Wahba, S. Wang, Y. Wang (chair), Yandell, Yuan, C. Zhang, Z. Zhang, A. Zhang, Zhu

**EMERITUS**

Bates, Draper, Johnson, Nordheim, Wardrop, and Doksum (retired)

**TEACHING STAFF**

Bean, Fischer, Gillett, Keuler, Li, Xia, Yang

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Brinkerhoff (curricular coordinator), Runyan (department administrator)

**IT STAFF**

Beebe, Brabender, Cammilleri (director)

**STUDENT SERVICES COORDINATORS**

Barnish, Nguyen