Session B7

Actuarial Statistics : Its Place in the University Curriculum

Organiser: Paul Embrechts   (Zürich, Switzerland)

Invited Speakers: Stuart Klugman   (Des Moines, USA)
                       Ragnar Norberg   (Copenhagen, Denmark)
                       Leigh Roberts   (Wellington, New Zealand)

Contributions to   Suchada Kiranandana   (Bangkok, Thailand)
the Discussion: John Pollard   (Sydney, Australia)

Introduction

Determining the place of Actuarial Statistics in the university curriculum is surprisingly difficult. First of all, one should define what exactly "Actuarial Statistics" stands for; secondly, it turns out that the "right place" is very much geographically dependent. Indeed, one of the key factors in understanding where exactly actuarial teaching enters the university curriculum is by discussing the position of the relevant, local insurance bodies whose influence may vary from merely showing an interest into the material taught and examined towards dictating the whole curriculum. The question of what Actuarial Statistics is all about will be answered gradually throughout the various papers. How the teaching is currently being organised is first addressed by Norberg who concentrates on the *Continental European* point of view with a heavy emphasis on the academically strong training in Denmark. The *North American* situation is explained by Klugman; the UK and, to some extent, Australasia could have been included here. The recent developments in *Australasia* merit, however, a third contribution by Roberts, augmented by comments by Pollard. A seemingly middle of the road solution used in Thailand is discussed by Kiranandana. Various authors also give hints with respect to the evolution of so-called classical insurance towards the broader field of financial mathematics. The session's aim was not to present an "ideal solution", but rather to offer an overview of the current situation worldwide. Future ICOTS meetings may want to concentrate more on the actual curriculum content in the specific sub-areas of insurance mathematics. There is a very noticeable momentum in the way in which modelling of financial processes enters the mathematics curriculum at the university level; I very much hope that the papers presented in this session will contribute towards a fruitful integration of insurance related teaching into our curricula.