

NNN President's Report: 2020

Milo Schield, President

The National Numeracy Network (NNN) has had another good academic year ending in June, 2020. This President's report summarizes the NNN activities, some member achievements, and the plans for the 2020-21 academic year. It also reviews the NNN's organizational status including membership, finances, and personnel.

NNN Achievements and Plans

Compared to the MAA or the ASA, the NNN is very small. But the NNN has a unique goal and focus. The NNN continues to have a unique and significant impact directly and through its member's activities.

Working directly, the NNN has four core activities: (1) to conduct annual meetings; (2) to support the NNN journal, *Numeracy*, (3) to maintain a website that handles memberships, meeting registrations and numeracy-related information, and (4) to support projects that advance numeracy. Here are some of the 2019-2020 achievements in each of these areas:

1. The 20th annual meeting, Nov., 2019 was co-sponsored by the Charles A. Dana Center. Uri Treisman, founder and executive director of the University's Charles A Dana Center, was scheduled to talk on the Equity-Minded Design of Introductory Mathematics courses but was unable to attend. Nick Horton, ASA Fellow, gave the Saturday keynote address: Data Acumen and Data Numeracy. There were 31 sessions including the six workshops.
2. *Numeracy* published 37 papers in calendar year 2019 under the leadership of senior editor Nathan Grawe. This was eight more papers than in any prior year. The Numeracy website had 76,454 downloads: a 28% increase over 2018. Since inception, *Numeracy* has had 368,028 downloads. In 2019, *Numeracy* was selected to be indexed in the Scopus Journal of Metrics.
3. NNN's website had 2,500 visits and 8,000 page views during the academic year despite having very little content.
4. Two days of teacher training at San Marcos Community College on quantitative and statistical literacy were provided Sept. 20-21, 2019 by NNN officers: Gaze, Schield, Tunstall and Isaacson.

Working indirectly through its members, here are two noteworthy numeracy-related achievements.

The MAA published *Shifting Contexts, Stable Core: Advancing Quantitative Literacy in Higher Education* as MAA Notes #88. This is arguably the most important QL-related publication in the 2020 academic year. Indeed it may be the most important QL-related publication in the last 14 years since Gilman's 2006 *Current Practices in Q/L*. This book is a must read for anyone interested in Quantitative Literacy or Quantitative Reasoning. Of those authors involved in the 21 articles, 11 are members of NNN. Even more importantly, all three editors are NNN or *Numeracy* officers or board members. NNN. The three editors are NNN Vice President Luke Tunstall, NNN Board member Victor Piercey, and *Numeracy* senior editor Gizem Karaali. For more details on this publication, SEE THIS *NUMERACY* ARTICLE: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/numeracy/vol12/iss2/art13/> To obtain the book, go to www.maa.org/press and search on 'Contexts'.

Confounder-based Statistical Literacy was adopted as a catalog course by the University of New Mexico, Mathematics department as an alternate to the traditional introductory research-methods course. NNN President, Milo Schield, consulted with the Department of Mathematics in proposing this new course using his textbook. This course has been approved as satisfying a mathematics requirement by the UNM for their core curriculum, approved by the NM Higher Education department for the statewide General Education curriculum, and approved by the UNM Anderson School of Business as an alternative to traditional statistics for all Business majors. This is the first adoption of a confounder-based statistical literacy course by a public university and by an entire state. This course is scheduled to start in fall 2021.

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The National Numeracy Network's plans for the 2021 academic year include:

Running this year's annual meeting entirely online. The Friday keynote speakers are the coauthors of *Calling Bullshit: The Art of Skepticism in a Data*: Jevin West and Carl Bergstrom. The Saturday keynote speaker is Jessica Utts, Author of *Seeing Through Statistics* and a former ASA president.

Generating a survey of US colleges on courses offering numeracy: Q/L, S/L and Q/R. This two-year project will provide current data on these new courses. The MAA will send the survey to their campus representatives.

Developing more unique and interesting content for the NNN website. Since all the sessions at this year's annual meeting are online via Zoom, it is easy to record each of them. With the presenter's permission, these videos will be hosted and available to NNN members. The details of the Numeracy survey will also be posted.

Documenting policies and procedures involving finance, meetings and website for future officers.

Heightening awareness of statistical literacy as a part of numeracy. Most of the NNN members are in departments of mathematics and tend to see quantitative literacy as being central to – if not exhaustive of – numeracy. Statisticians and those in the social sciences tend to see statistics or statistical literacy as central to numeracy. Organizationally, the NNN must be a welcoming home to members of both groups.

NNN Organizational Status and Personnel

The NNN is financially and operationally viable. With stable finances, the new website and better documentation of some procedures, NNN is very close to being easily managed without much training.

Membership is steady with over 100 dues-paying members. NNN is most grateful for the support given by nine institutions including the MAA and the ASA.

Financially, the NNN successfully balanced income and expense for the past year – as it has done every year since inception. But now this is being done without grant monies. At this time, NNN's two biggest fixed expenses are the NNN's support for *Numeracy* and web expense. The University of South Florida Libraries (Tampa) is the NNN's biggest institutional supporter since they are covering half the expense connected with *Numeracy*. Web expense now is less than \$1,000 per year.

At the fall 2019 Board Meeting, the following officers were elected or designated:

Eric Gaze, former President (Bowdoin College): designated as past-President
Milo Schield, former Vice-President (Augsburg University): elected as incoming President
Luke Tunstall (Trinity University): elected as the incoming Vice President
Marc Isaacson (Augsburg University): re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer

At the fall 2019 Board Meeting, the following Board-members were continued or elected:

Carol Ann Davis, Assistant Dean, Digital Scholarship Services, University of South Florida
Katherine Follette, Assistant Professor of Astronomy, Amherst College
Nathan Grawe, Professor of Economics, Carleton College. Editor of *Numeracy*
Sarah Hoiland, Assistant Professor of Behavioral Sciences, Hostos Community College
Lauren Nelson, Senior Math Curriculum Specialist, Democracy Prep Public Schools
Victor Piercey, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Ferris State University
Alisa Rod, Associate Director of the Empirical Reasoning Center, Barnard College
Monika Sikand, Assistant Professor of Engineering, Physics, & Technology, Bronx C/C

As of June 2020, personnel at *Numeracy* include:

Executive Editor: Nathan Grawe, Carleton College
Senior Editors: H. L. (Len) Vacher, Bernard L. Madison and Gizem Karaali
Contributing Editor: Dorothy I. Wallace, Dartmouth
Book Review Editor: Michael Catalano, Dakota Wesleyan University
Production Editors: Jason Boczar and Carol Ann Davis, University of South Florida