

Proposal for the University of Guelph to Host the Annual Meeting of the Statistical Society of Canada in 2012

Introduction

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Guelph is pleased to submit a bid to host the Annual Meeting of the Statistical Society of Canada in 2012. Our department previously hosted the SSC Annual Meeting in 1984, the first time the SSC met independently of the Learned Societies. It would be a privilege for us to host the SSC meeting again. We have excellent facilities, an experienced Conference Services group with tremendous expertise in holding similar meetings, and many enthusiastic statisticians at Guelph who would work to ensure the event is a real credit to the SSC. The central proximity of Guelph to several other universities makes travel very convenient for many statisticians. In addition, Guelph has both bus and train stations and is close to several airports.

We have worked out two preliminary budgets, one based on 450 registrants and the other on 600 registrants. The budgets are conservative; for example, we typically budgeted at the top end on meeting food costs, and we have numerous ways to accommodate additional miscellaneous expenses within the budget.

Dates

Currently no large group has blocked out rooms for the 2012 time period in which the SCC meeting would be held. We would prefer to hold the meeting before Spring Convocation (expected dates 11–15 June). Our first choice of recommended dates is 3–6 June and our second choice is 27–30 May, but these are not inflexible.

Venue

The Opening Reception would be held in the new Science Complex Atrium, a large area that can be licensed for 583 people.

The central venue for the meeting would be Rozanski Hall, a modern state-of-the-art classroom complex centrally located on the university campus. Rozanski Hall has both 600 and 400 seat classrooms, as well as three other rooms suitable for breakout sessions (capacities of 200, 120, and 60). All rooms are equipped with modern audiovisual equipment, and have superior acoustic and visual qualities and comfortable seating. Rozanski Hall is not used for classes in the summer, and is controlled by our Conference Services at the time the meetings would be held.

Additional meeting rooms are located in buildings very close to Rozanski Hall. These also have modern audiovisual equipment, and are also fully controlled by Conference Services. We have budgeted to use two rooms in the Thornborough Building (capacities of 311 and 100) and two rooms in the MacNaughton Building (capacities of 295 and 157), so that nine concurrent sessions would have a combined seating capacity of 2243. If desired other rooms can readily be obtained for additional concurrent sessions.

Small meeting rooms are available in several buildings, including Rozanski Hall and the University Centre. Several small meeting rooms under the control of our College are available in the MacNaughton Building and the new science complex; these rooms can be used for free. For the convenience of those with meetings to attend on the Saturday and Sunday prior to the main meeting, we have planned to accommodate these meetings in the new Delta Hotel. We have included hospitality costs for these meetings in our budget.

Room rates are given in the document “Statistical Society of Canada Conference Bid Information May–June 2012”.

Conference Services

The University of Guelph Conference Services group is very experienced in holding conferences as large as (and larger than) the Annual Meeting of the SSC. We understand that their rates are very competitive with other Canadian universities, and we would work closely with Conference Services on all matters related to holding the meeting. Lisa Tersigni-Holt and Kathy Nahwegahbow in Conference Services have been assisting us with our bid and have provided the document “Statistical Society of Canada Conference Bid Information May–June 2012” attached.

Accommodation

The University of Guelph has both on-campus residence rooms and very close hotels available. Conference Services controls 3000 regular residence rooms and approximately 400 townhouse accommodations. Four hotels are very close to campus and partner with Conference Services; these hotels have a total of 475 rooms. Please see the document “Statistical Society of Canada Conference Bid Information” for current accommodation prices and hotel vicinities.

Food

Creelman Hall is a large dining hall that is used in the summer strictly for conference delegates, and all three meals can be served here. It is a 5 minute walk from Rozanski Hall. Any meeting (e.g. business meetings) can be individually catered. We have included lunch for all three days (Monday to Wednesday) for every delegate in our budget.

Conference Services provides a wide range of food options for conference delegates. Prices are listed on the document “Statistical Society of Canada Conference Bid Information”. Food services at the University of Guelph are consistently the highest rated in a survey of Canadian university students, so we are confident SSC meeting delegates will be well fed!

Coffee Breaks and Exhibitors

Rozanski Hall has a large Concourse area that would be used for coffee breaks and could be used for at least some exhibitors and/or posters. Several other options are available if more space is desired. Morning coffee breaks will include a variety of beverages in the morning as well as a variety of pastries and fruit. Afternoon coffee breaks will provide beverages and gourmet cookies. We have also included coffee on arrival.

Banquet

Among possible options for holding the banquet, we are currently leaning towards holding it in the gymnasium, which can seat 700 in a single venue. We have budgeted the banquet at a price point higher than the top rate provided by Conference Services to ensure an excellent meal is served and some beverage is included.

Wherever we hold the banquet, it will be catered by Conference Services, so that we can take advantage of the experience this group has in preparing a wide variety of domestic and international foods.

Places to Visit Near Guelph

Conference attendees coming from a substantial distance may wish to take the opportunity to visit one or more key attractions that are within reasonable travel distance of Guelph. Toronto has numerous attractions, including the Toronto Zoo, the Royal Ontario Museum, and potentially (depending on the schedule) Toronto Blue Jays games. The Stratford Festival is world famous for Shakespearean theatre. Niagara Falls is, of course, another world famous attraction; travel time by car from Guelph is about 1.5 hours.

Support

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics currently has 13 statisticians on faculty and a large contingent of graduate students, and we know this will provide an enthusiastic core group for holding the meeting. In addition, we have several retired faculty and other statisticians in other departments and in the local community who may wish to participate. As noted earlier, the expertise of the university's Conference Services will help to ensure the meeting runs smoothly.

University rooms are provided at a substantially discounted rate for the meeting since the meeting will be hosted by the department. Other support from the university may be forthcoming, but under the current financial situation we have not counted on this in our budgeting.

Alumni Events

Concurrent with the SSC meeting we will hold an event for University of Guelph alumni (not included in the SSC meeting budget) that we expect will attract a substantial number of alumni to the meeting that might not otherwise attend. We will also encourage other universities to hold their own alumni receptions, and we will be happy to facilitate local arrangements.

Child Care

It is expected that on-campus child care will be available for a limited number of children at the University of Guelph Child Care and Learning Centre. Please see the document "Conference Child Care" kindly provided by Rachelle Campbell, Interim Director.

Key Websites

The University of Guelph:
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/>

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Guelph:
<http://www.mathstat.uoguelph.ca/>

Hospitality Services at the University of Guelph (links to Coffee Services, Catering Services and especially Conference Services with a Photo Gallery):
<http://www.hospitality.uoguelph.ca/>

Guelph Tourism:
<http://www.visitguelphwellington.ca/Modules/Pages/>