

15 Years a Consultant

The Shocking True Story of UCLA Statistical Consulting

Phil Ender

UCLA Statistical Consulting Group (Ret.)

Stata Conference Columbus - July 30, 2015

- There isn't actually anything shocking in this presentation.

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- This presentation is mostly true.

- I studied Psychology at UC Riverside

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- Where I was trained to use SPSS

Personal History

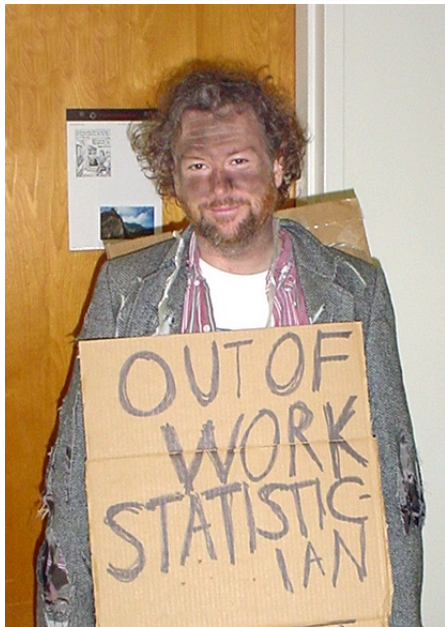
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- I began using Stata in 1999 ...
- when I was hired by Michael N. Mitchell to work for UCLA Statistical Consulting in 1999



Michael N. Mitchell after leaving UCLA



- Free walk-in consulting

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- Email consulting

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- Focused research projects (fee for service)

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- Library of statistics books

Who do we help?

- UCLA researchers and instructors, including ...

Who do we help?

- UCLA researchers and instructors, including ...
- Faculty

Who do we help?

- UCLA researchers and instructors, including ...
- Faculty
- Staff researchers

Who do we help?

- UCLA researchers and instructors, including ...
- Faculty
- Staff researchers
- Graduate students

Who do we help?

- UCLA researchers and instructors, including ...
- Faculty
- Staff researchers
- Graduate students
- Course TA's

Who does not qualify for help?

- Undergraduates

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- Undergraduates
- Students working on homework problems

Who does not qualify for help?

- Undergraduates
- Students working on homework problems
- Non-UCLA researchers

Where do our clients come from?

- All of the academic departments on campus

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- All of the academic departments on campus
- Medical Center

Where do our clients come from?

- All of the academic departments on campus
- Medical Center
- Medical School

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- All of the academic departments on campus
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- School of Nursing

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- Law School

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- Law School
- Graduate School of Management

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- Graduate School of Education

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- Stata

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What kinds of help do we provide?

- Research planning

What kinds of help do we provide?

- Research planning
- Research design

What kinds of help do we provide?

- Research planning
- Research design
- Data management

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- Stat package use

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- Stat package use
- Applied statistics
- Data analysis

What kinds of help do we provide?

- Research planning
- Research design
- Data management
- Stat package use
- Applied statistics
- Data analysis
- Graphical presentation of data and results

Who are the Stat Consultants?

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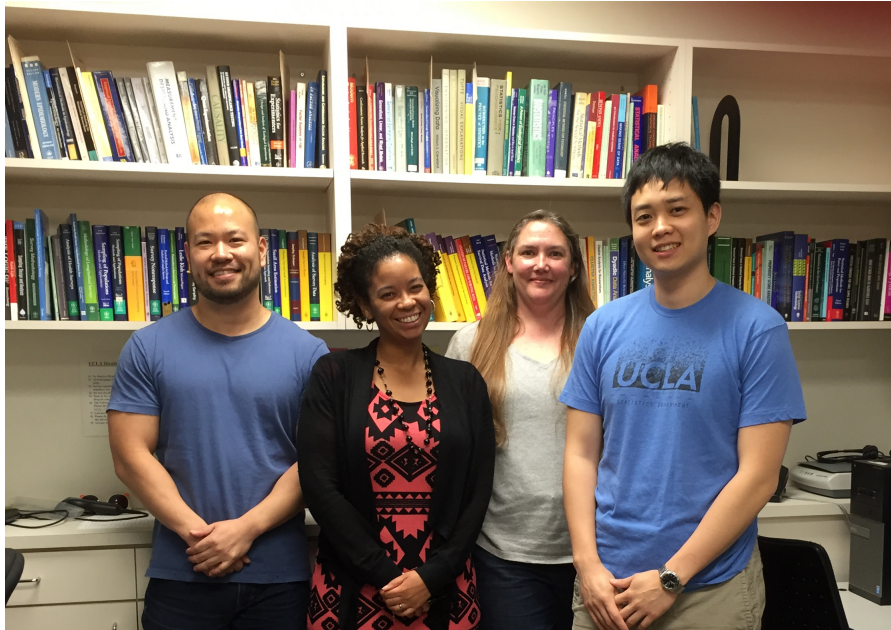
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- One part-time graduate student
- Why no statisticians or economists?
- Hypothesis: They have better options

Current Stat Consultants



Phil Ender

15 Years a Consultant

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- On a busy day there can be up to 12 to clients wanting help

Stat Lab during consulting



More Stat Lab during consulting



- Help the client to do their own data analyses

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- Get them started

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- Give them homework

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- Approx 1M hits per month

The tricky part about consulting

The questions that clients ask are often not the real problem. The tricky part of consulting is trying to figure out what is the "real" problem.

What's the most common question in consulting?

Mediation analysis is a hot topic on campus. Questions include basic mediation analysis, mediation with binary or nominal mediators, multilevel mediation, conditional indirect effects, mediation with complex survey data, and any combination of these.

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- They just want us to run the analyses for them
- They don't care about the statistics

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- They don't understand the analysis they are requiring their students to perform
- They tell students to ask Stat Consulting what analyses to do for their dissertations
- They require analyses that are ahead of current technology, e.g., multiple mediation analysis with binary mediators for complex survey data using multiple imputation to handle missing data

This Concludes the Presentation