Dr. Christine Schubert Kabban, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, joined the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) in 2009. She received her BS in Mathematics from the University of Dayton, her Masters in Applied Statistic from Wright State University, and her PhD in Applied Mathematics from AFIT. She simultaneously holds Adjunct and Affiliate Assistant Professor positions the Schools of Nursing and Medicine at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

Dr. Schubert Kabban actively publishes her research, authoring 47 (and counting!) peer-reviewed articles, 15 chapters, and 67 peer-reviewed abstracts for national and international proceedings. The recipient of major federal funding from NIH, AFRL, and AFOSR, she is currently the PI on an AFOSR-funded study of performance evaluation and validation in structural health monitoring systems.

Dr. Shubert Kabban supervises graduate students at both AFIT and VCU. She teaches graduate courses at AFIT and VCU in her area of expertise, including: Applied Statistical Data Analysis, Applied General Linear Modeling, and Theory of Probability.

What are your current research interests?
“My scientific area of expertise is in statistics and biostatistics. I use my experience and training in statistics to aid research from the design of the study, through data collection, computation and results interpretation across a wide range of applications from engineering to the biological sciences. My current research includes both methodological development and statistical applications. I work on deriving equations that enable researchers to better classify and detect the occurrences of events, such as disease. My statistical application research includes the epidemiology of childhood growth and disease progression as well as clinical interventions for disease and injury. On the biological side, this research advances our understanding of the natural tempo of disease progression and identifies ways in which clinicians can intervene in order to slow or reverse such progression.”

What do you like most about being a scientist?
“Working with people across a variety of career fields to design studies in order to answer their most pressing questions. It is very satisfying to, say, present the results of a clinical trial or an experiment in the lab that results in products that help people or will advance aerospace technology.”

What would you say to women considering a career in your field?
“Go for it! The diversity of the applications in statistics makes it a fantastic career field with flexibility to match your work to your own interests (whether medical, environmental, sociological, etc). In addition, the flexibility of the applications that require statistical expertise also includes a greater ability to match job specifications to both home and family needs, thus offering a balance that is often hard to obtain.”
Ten minutes into class, a tardy student bursts through the door acting annoyed that you’ve started without him. You soon realize that half of the class has begun to check e-mail on their laptops rather than listen to what you’ve prepared. Later that day, another student takes you to task for being “too hard” and questions whether you have ever taught before. When you get back to the office, you find (yet another) student e-mail requesting an extension on an upcoming paper deadline. Is it just you, or are students these days less respectful than in the past?

Mirroring trends in society more generally, the consensus among faculty is that students are less civil than in the past. Data from a survey of 339 faculty at 9 institutions supports these perceptions (Goodyear, Reynolds, and Gragg, 2010). The vast majority—84%—of faculty (male and female) who were surveyed reported experiencing incidents of incivility ranging from disengagement (e.g., sleeping or texting during class), to generally disruptive behavior (e.g., talking during class), to openly hostile responses (e.g., derision, intimidation). These rather disheartening data suggest student incivility is, indeed, likely to be common and widespread.

However, when these researchers looked deeper into the data, they found that female and younger faculty experienced student incivility at higher rates than their male and senior colleagues. While 24% of the men reported never experiencing incivility, only 9% of women said they had not experienced such incidents. Importantly, women reported experiencing more severe incidents than did men.

Student incivility may also emerge in teaching evaluations, where anonymity affords expressions of hostility without fear of reprisal. Research on gender and faculty teaching evaluations suggests female faculty more frequently experience hostile evaluations, particularly when they teach challenging courses. While overall ratings of male and female faculty are often similar on average, the content of student comments may reveal gender-stereotypic expectations about female faculty members. Specifically, students may expect female (compared to male) faculty to be more accommodating and to “go out of their way” for students. When female faculty fail to meet these expectations for “uber” nurturance, students may retaliate with extremely negative evaluations. These patterns are particularly true for male students’ ratings of female faculty (Barsow, 1995). Department chairs and others involved in faculty evaluation should be informed of the research on gender and teaching evaluations so they can best consider whether gendered patterns of evaluation may qualify the interpretation of overly negative student ratings, particularly in STEM classes where students may feel most challenged and female faculty may least fit students’ stereotypic expectations.

The consequences of student incivility in the classroom are not trivial. In addition to undermining student learning, disruptive and hostile behaviors can undermine faculty work satisfaction, leading to increased stress (Feldman, 2001). Productivity is necessarily at risk when faculty are preoccupied by negative experiences in the workplace, including the classroom.

The causes of incivility are complex, but faculty are not helpless when it comes to reducing incivility in their classrooms. Strategies for reducing incivility include expressing clear support for student success, including expectations for classroom behavior in syllabi, and addressing violations privately with students as soon as they occur. Institutions can also foster a climate of respect by creating clear policies and guidelines for student behavior that promote positive expectations for classroom conduct.
Once in awhile a great resource comes along to connect faculty and promote their success. Dr. Nikki Rogers, Department of Community Health at Wright State University, has developed just such a tool and is making it freely available to all faculty across the LEADER Consortium. Her wiki site—The Social Writing Connection—is based on the concept of creating spaces to promote writing productivity through social connection and community. Just as people benefit from having a “workout partner”, so too can faculty benefit from having “writing partners.” Her site makes it easier than ever to find a writing partner and get down to work.

When asked why she started the site, Dr. Rogers replied “…many people are interested in trying social writing, but it’s really difficult to organize around the changing schedules of multiple individuals. I tried setting up and advertising three meeting times and places per week via email and Facebook, but folks who planned to attend would have a last-minute emergency that got in the way or, when time for the group arrived, something came up that seemed more important than writing. A close colleague told me about the ‘wiki’ she created to organize her special interest group and invited me to join. I was impressed by the user-friendly interface and ability to enable email notifications about updates and new meeting opportunities. Every member has read/write permissions and can post their availability and respond to others, so it fosters person-to-person contact and encourages commitment to an arranged meeting time and place.”

What you’ll find at the site:
- Information on scheduled groups
- Queries to set up writing times and locations
- Information on social writing etiquette
- A community of scholars who, like you, want to make the most of their writing

Interested in joining The Social Writing Connection? Check it out at:

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<tr>
<th>SITUATIONAL FACTORS</th>
<th>STUDENT FACTORS</th>
<th>FACULTY FACTORS</th>
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<td>Large class size</td>
<td>Health problems</td>
<td>Disrespectful behavior (e.g., ridiculing students, condescension)</td>
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<td>Required class</td>
<td>Personal or family problems</td>
<td>Lack of help, ignoring questions</td>
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<td>Junior/younger faculty</td>
<td>Academic difficulties</td>
<td>Defensive responses to student questions, concerns</td>
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<td>Female faculty</td>
<td>Low esteem for professors</td>
<td>Lack of truthfulness, failure to provide timely feedback/grades</td>
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<td>Faculty of color</td>
<td>“Consumer” ideology regarding student/faculty relationships, education</td>
<td>Problematic teaching styles (fast paced lectures, disorganization, low preparation)</td>
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<td>Male students</td>
<td>Media-usage and norms for social interaction on internet/texting</td>
<td>Low levels of “immediacy” (e.g., poor eye contact, low enthusiasm, negative affect)</td>
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SOURCE: Peluchette, Karl, & Kopf
February 2012

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February LEADER Events

14 Valentine’s Day
20 Presidents’ Day

The Daily Grind

R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Dealing with Student Incivility
14 WSU—10-11am, Pathfinder Room, Student Union.
16 CSU—10-11am, CENS 103.
22 UD—noon-1pm, Alumni Hall, Women’s Center Conference Room.
AFIT—2:30-3:30, Einstein’s Bagels, WPAFB.

March 2012

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March LEADER Events

8 How to Run a Research Group, noon-2pm, UD, Kennedy Union, Room, 222. For more info, contact Julie Brill (julie.brill@udayton.edu).
8 Keys to Academics’ Success: Policies & Practices. Mini-conference for campus leaders and administrators, by invitation only. UD Alumni Center.

The Daily Grind

Making the Most Out of Summer
13 WSU—10-11am, Pathfinder Room, Student Union.
15 CSU—10-11am, CENS 267.
21 UD—noon-1pm, Alumni Hall, Women’s Center Conference Room.
AFIT—2:30-3:30, Einstein’s Bagels, WPAFB.

Save the Date:
April 12, 2012—Keys to Academics’ Success: Faculty Development, CSU. A day-long mini-conference for all Consortium faculty and administrators. Annual STEM Luncheon & Keynote Speaker, Dr. Donna J. Dean, former President of AWIS and author of Getting the Most Out of Your Mentoring Relationships: A Handbook for Women in STEM. Plus faculty development workshops and much more!

Wouldn’t You Like to be a LEADER Too?
The LEADER Consortium is developing a number of policy initiatives, programs and activities. Participation and inclusivity are key to our values and mission, and to that end, we welcome participation and suggestions from across the academy.

Lend your talents and be a leader for equity in the academy by joining a committee, suggesting programs/events, or just voicing your concerns. We’re here to help you make a difference. For more information, contact the LEADER Office at: leader@wright.edu.

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