

George Cobb's Contributions to Statistics Education Visiting Scholar

LISA W. KAY, EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY





Dr. George Cobb

2011 Vernon Wilson Endowed Chair at Eastern Kentucky University

Teaching

**MAT/STA 507/707
Markov Chain Monte Carlo
Spring 2011 MW 3:45-5:00**



**Taught by Dr. George Cobb,
Vernon Wilson Endowed Chair**

Markov Chain Monte Carlo is an extremely general and powerful method of computer simulation that has become one of the hottest research topics in statistics in the past decade or so. It is currently under active study by statisticians and mathematicians, with many open questions. The study of these questions brings together very different areas of mathematics, making connections that can be quite surprising and delightful. Among the areas of mathematics are probability, graph theory, linear algebra, and abstract algebra. The only prerequisite is a semester of linear algebra.

Sections and CRNs: MAT 507 (26220) STA 507 (26133) MAT 707 (26221) STA 707 (26136)

Image taken from <http://www.econseweb.org/uscoots/awards/>

Scholarship

- ▶ Gave presentations such as “Statistical Thinking and Serial Killing”
- ▶ Invited multiple scholars to visit campus, give talks, and have discussions with faculty

Service

- ▶ Chaired the Symposium Committee
- ▶ Held discussions with statistics faculty regarding curriculum, student engagement, etc.
- ▶ Led to the establishment of the Coffee Time series:
<https://math.eku.edu/coffee-time>

2017 Symposium in Data Science at EKU



Photo Credit: Crystal Harper

From the Program for the 2017 Symposium in Data Science at EKU

- ▶ “*Information* is the new library. *Data science* is the new card catalog.”
- ▶ Footnote under the speaker biographies: “I, George Cobb, take responsibility for these biographies. The other three speakers are too modest to write what Norman Mailer once called, ‘Advertisements for Myself.’ I compensate for my being shy in person by eschewing all modesty in print.”

Fun Facts



"Homemade pimento cheese spread with crackers" by [jeffreyw](#)
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Excerpt from 2019 Letter of Support

Dear Colleagues:

I write as a former Vernon Wilson endowed visiting professor, one with deep and fond memories of the University, its faculty and students, and with fond memories also of the friendly helpfulness of everyone I met at EKU and in Richmond. (Not to mention memorable trips to Keenland, and to Lexington for a Wildcats basketball game and for weekly banjo lessons.)

I apologize that this letter is so long; I hope you can find some consolation in knowing that it took me far longer to write than it will take you to read, even if you should choose to read the whole thing.

I'm writing in the hope that EKU will choose to support and develop a certificate program in Data Science. I harbor this hope, even as I recognize that, just as in Lake Wobegon every child is above average, in academia every program is in need of more resources. What is it that makes a certificate program in data science not merely above average in its potential benefit to EKU (as I see it) but truly different? What features set the proposed program apart from other claims on EKU's resources? In what follows, I suggest several.

“If I’d cared less, I’d have responded much sooner.”

