## Professors Bergen and Iverson @USCOTS

Rachelle Hackett <rhackett@PACIFIC.EDU>

Sun 5/21/2017 4:08 PM

**To:** Williams, Nicole L <nwilliams@winona.edu>
**Cc:** Bergen, Silas R <sbergen@winona.edu>; Iverson, Todd <tiverson@winona.edu>

Dear Professor & Department Chair Williams,

I am sending to a quick note to compliment your department and university for hiring Dr. Silas Bergen and Dr. Todd Iverson.  It is <u>not</u> a routine practice of mine to take the time to contact the leadership of workshop presenters.  But, in this case, I wanted to do so.

I was deeply impressed by the 2-day workshop on Web Scraping & Data Visualization that Drs. Bergen & Iverson provided last week at the U.S. Conference on Teaching Statistics (USCOTS).  It was clear that both of them have developed not only the content knowledge, but that they also continue to hone their pedagogical knowledge for facilitating the knowledge and skills of their learners in the emerging field of data science.  From what I was able to discern, they had a tall order to fill because there was much variation in the prior knowledge and skills of those of us who enrolled in the workshop.  I, for one, was completely new to the software they used (Python and Tableau) while others appeared to know one or the other, or a similar type of program making the transfer more easily.  Still, what was particularly noteworthy about both Silas and Todd, was their attentiveness to my struggles.  Rather than dismiss me as one who would not "get it," they each took the time to sit near me, while the other was presenting, and offer countless help, as needed.  And, while doing that, they also showed awareness of the other learners and addressed their needs, too.  Their patience and kindness were much appreciated.

While I am not seeing myself as a future "web scraper," I felt that the exposure I received from Todd will be very helpful to me as I now better understand the process others go through, including the potential for errors, when creating more manageable "big data" sets.  The exposure to data visualization was quite intriguing and set the stage for the conference's opening talk (which highly reflected ideas Silas covered) and other sessions I attended where additional software (besides Tableau) was introduced.  I appreciate how Silas took the time to first cover the Elementary Perceptual Task (EPT) principles that underlie quality visualizations before working with Tableau.

This is turning into more than a quick note, so I will conclude here.  In sum, it is my impression that your department and university are fortunate to have Dr. Bergen and Dr. Iverson.  Undoubtedly they will continue to grow professionally and benefit not only their students, but faculty colleagues, as well.

Sincerely,

*Rachelle Kisst Hackett*

Professor Rachelle Kisst Hackett

Educational & School Psychology

Benerd School of Education

University of the Pacific

Email:  [RHackett@Pacific.edu](mailto:RHackett@Pacific.edu)