Dear SRA-New England Members:

We are sending out this letter to announce the SRA-NE 2005-2006 speaker series. We would like to thank Igor Linkov for his excellent leadership as SRA-NE president for the past year. Igor brought in a diverse array of speakers and placed our organization on firm financial ground. What one person could possibly replace Igor? No one, so SRA-NE will be led by co-presidents this year!

We are in the process of lining up speakers for the coming year and have a number of excellent talks already scheduled. We hope you all can attend our September meeting featuring Dr. Richard Williams of FDA. Please see the attached flyer with Richard’s topic and bio. We are planning on varying the format somewhat this year by featuring one longer, more in-depth talk at some meetings rather than our standard two speaker format. This will allow us more time to talk with one another, too. If members have suggestions for individuals whom they would like to hear speak at one of our meetings, please feel free to let Jo Anne or Tom know. The calendar in this newsletter has several tentative dates so you can reserve them. We are planning to finalize meeting dates and speakers early so that members will have plenty of time to mark their calendars and avoid scheduling conflicts.

We would like to encourage new membership this year and plan to discuss suggestions for speakers and increasing membership after Richard Williams’ talk at the September meeting. If you have colleagues who do not attend our meetings, please encourage them to come to one of our sessions. If you are a current member or wish to become a member, please be sure to fill out the attached membership form and get your dues into Arlene Levin.

We look forward to seeing you all at upcoming meetings.

Sincerely,

Your co-chairs: Tom Angus and Jo Anne Shatkin
Society for Risk Analysis
New England Chapter

SRA-NE September Seminar
Wednesday, 14 September 2005

RSVP Required to Korin Scheible at CDM, ScheibleKA@cdm.com
By noon the day of the meeting to facilitate security sign in

4:30-5:00 PM Social gathering, light snacks
5:00–6:30 PM Program

Conference Room, CDM
One Cambridge Place, 50 Hampshire Street,
Cambridge, MA

Integrating Risk and Economic Assessments

by
Richard A. Williams, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Social Science Staff
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
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College Park, Maryland 20740
301 436-1989
RWilliam@CFSAN.FDA.GOV

Summary: A process will be presented for an integrated policy analysis that combines risk assessment and benefit-cost analysis. This concept, which explicitly combines the two types of related analyses, seems to contradict the long-accepted risk analysis paradigm of separating risk assessment and risk management since benefit-cost analysis is generally considered to be a part of risk management. Yet that separation has become a problem because benefit-cost analysis uses risk assessment results as a starting point and considerable debate over the last several years focused on the incompatibility of the use of upper bounds or "safe" point estimates in many risk assessments with benefit-cost analysis. The problem with these risk assessments is that they ignore probabilistic information. As advanced probabilistic techniques for risk assessment emerge and economic analysts receive distributions of risks instead of point estimates, the artificial separation between risk analysts and the economic/decision analysts complicates the overall analysis. In addition, recent developments in countervailing risk theory suggest that combining the risk and benefit-cost analyses is required to fully understand the complexity of choices and tradeoffs faced by the decision maker. This article also argues that the separation of analysis and management is important, but that benefit-cost analysis has been wrongly classified into the risk management category and that the analytical effort associated with understanding the economic impacts of risk reduction actions need to be part of a broader risk assessment process.
Biography: Dr. Williams is the Associate Director for Social Science within the Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN). In this position, he supervises the research of economists, psychologists, agricultural economists, sociologists and statisticians who play leading roles in both risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis. In his 26 years at CFSAN, Dr. Williams has become the FDA’s spokesperson for the economics of food safety and the integration of risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis. He has received numerous awards for his performance at FDA including the Award of Merit twice. Dr. Williams received his Masters and Ph.D. degree in the Philosophy of Economics from Virginia Tech. He has received advanced training in risk assessment and risk communication.

At FDA, Dr. Williams organized a 3-day conference for top agency risk managers and assessors and internationally renowned risk assessors to help FDA assess its risk assessment programs. This conference revitalized risk assessment in CFSAN and helped to launch FDA’s first microbial risk assessment program. He also organized a conference for federal economists on uncertainty in cost-benefit analysis at the White House Conference Center and created a federal peer review process for economic analysis. He has estimated risks, costs and benefits on issues as diverse as HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points), labeling education and risk of coronary heart disease and cancer, urethane cancer risk and research on issues including discounting, value of life estimation, property rights, microbial risk assessment and risk-based import sampling. He supervised a team of scientists and economists to create the first microbial risk assessment in CFSAN on the hazards associated with juice. In international work, he has negotiated United States trade positions under the U.S./Canada Free Trade Act. He has created an introduction to risk assessment course with USDA’s ORACBA (Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis) and is creating a series of risk analysis classes under the auspices of the World Health Organization, JIFSAN (Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition) and USDA. He has also taught risk analysis courses for the Management Development Center in Denver CO. Dr. Williams is also responsible for reviewing and commenting on Congressional legislation related to risk analysis, has chaired cost hearings for small businesses around the country and has testified before the Senate on regulatory costs. Dr. Williams currently sits on the board of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis. He recently supervised a report entitled, A Helping Consumers Lead Healthier Lives through Better Nutrition: A Social Sciences Approach to Consumer Information, Food Choices and Weight Management.


He is a member of numerous professional associations including the American Economic Association, the Henry Simmons Society and has been a member of the Society for Risk Analysis since 1981. He is also currently a member of the microbial risk assessment subgroup and co-founder of the Economic Benefits Subgroup of the SRA.
CALENDAR OF UPCOMING SEMINARS

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<td>September 14, 2005</td>
<td>Richard Williams</td>
<td>Integrated risk and economic analysis</td>
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<td>October 19, 2005</td>
<td>Michael Hutcheson</td>
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<td>APRIL</td>
<td>Joint SRA-NE/LSPA meeting</td>
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<td>May 10, 2005</td>
<td>Ragnar Lofsted</td>
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POSITIONS (none this month)

Please note that the job-posting fee for this newsletter is $100 for recruiters/commercial and $50 for government and nonprofit organizations. Please make your payment to Arlene Levin, NE-SRA Treasurer at Eastern Research Group, Inc. 110 Hartwell Street, Lexington, MA 02421

DIRECTIONS TO CDM: One Cambridge Place, 50 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, MA 02139, 617-452-6000.

From I-93 (north of Boston): Take Route 93 South into Boston. Take Exit 26A North 28 (Leverett Circle, Cambridge). Once on exit, keep left & follow signs for Storrow Drive. At bottom of ramp, take left at the lights. Go straight through next set of lights onto Storrow Drive West & get in the left lane. Exit at government Center/Kendall Sq. exit. Take right at the end of exit onto Longfellow Bridge to Kendall Square. Go straight over Longfellow Bridge through first sets of lights & pass the Marriott Hotel on the left. Continue straight on Broadway until you cross the railroad track. Take the next right on Hampshire Street & continue two blocks. The building is on your left, at 50 Hampshire Street.

From I-93 (south of Boston): Take Route 93 North into Boston. Take Exit 26 (Storrow Drive/Cambridge - Somerville). Once on exit, stay in the left lane & follow through the tunnel & onto Storrow Drive. Follow signs for Kendall Square. At the blinking light, take a right onto the Longfellow Bridge to Kendall Square & pass the Marriott Hotel on the left. Continue straight on Broadway until you cross the railroad track. Take the next right on Hampshire Street & continue two blocks. The building is on your left, at 50 Hampshire Street.

From Mass Turnpike (I-90): Take Exit 18 (Cambridge/Allston) & follow signs to Cambridge. At first intersection, turn right onto Storrow Drive. Continue straight for about four miles. Take Government Center/Kendall Square exit. At first light make a left turn. At second light make another left turn & cross over the Longfellow Bridge (over the Charles River) to Kendall Square. Continue straight on Broadway until you cross the railroad track. Take the next right on Hampshire Street & continue two blocks. The building is on your left, at 50 Hampshire Street.

From the T:
Red Line: The T stop that is closest to One Cambridge Place is the Kendall Square/MIT stop, on the Red Line. From in front of the MIT COOP, near the city bus stop on Main Street, you can take the CDM shuttle-bus (free transportation to the office). The shuttle has a sign in the window that says CDM. The shuttle leaves Kendall Square at 4:10 and 4:25 pm.
Green Line: If you are coming from the Green line, change to the Red Line at Park Street, heading towards Alewife.
Blue Line & Airport: From Logan International Airport, take the shuttle bus to the airport Subway stop, then take the Blue Line inbound to Government Center. Change to the Green line Inbound to Park, then take the Red line (towards Alewife) to Kendall.
Orange Line: Change from the Orange Line to the Red Line (towards Alewife) at Downtown Crossing.

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