Probability And Statistics for Elementary Teachers at Western Oregon University

# Probability And Statistics for Elementary Teachers at Western Oregon University

Scott Beaver - Western Oregon University

MAA MathFest August 3, 2007

▲□▶ ▲□▶ ▲ 三▶ ▲ 三▶ - 三里 - のへぐ

### **Course Structure**

- Course meets for two hours, twice each week once in a standard classroom and once in a computer lab
- The two subjects are developed in parallel wherever possible
- Statistics text is Workshop Statistics: Discovery with Data and Fathom<sup>TM</sup>
- No probability text
- About one-quarter of classtime is group work

## **Two Surprises**

Discuss, play the games and take (lots of) data

▲□▶ ▲□▶ ▲ 三▶ ▲ 三▶ - 三 - のへぐ

- The Monty Hall Problem
- Non-Transitive Dice

## **Preliminary Definitions**

- Probability: experiment, outcome, sample space, event, random variables, probability of an event
- Statistics: datum, data, sample, population, parameter, statistic

Note that a set of data can have repeated values unlike a mathematical set

Discuss raw data and derived data like sample proportions

< □ > < 同 > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > <

### **Fair and Unfair Games**

Analysis of simple games is used as a tool for practicing sample space enumeration and probability computation

Typically, a game is presented, students construct a probability-based analysis, play it and take data, and then consider the statistics

・ロト ・ 同 ト ・ ヨ ト ・ ヨ ・ うへつ

# Display

- Begin with dotplots; discuss various features
- Dotplots lead to histograms or bar graphs
- Granularity of a dotplot leads to a discussion of the similarities between discrete quantitative and categorical RV's
- We also note that the real-life constraint of finite precision reduces all continuous RV's to discrete RV's
- Relabeling a histogram/bar graph with proportions instead of raw numbers leads to the idea of a probability distribution

# Measures of Center and of Spread

- Define the parameters and statistics and give symbols used
  - Note potential misrepresentation of average by the mean, and resistance of median to single datum change
  - ▶ Brief mention of why sample standard deviation has division by *n* − 1 rather than *n* (un*biased* estimator of population standard deviation)
- Students generate small data sets having particular properties

## Flipping 5 coins, or one coin 5 times

An extremely rich topic:

- Enables a discussion of the occasional non-uniqueness of the experiment-RV pair
- Leads to combinations and discussion of when order matters
- Under assumption of fairness, construct probability distribution, get in groups of three and perform the 5-coin experiment 50 times each
  - Compare individual and aggregate proportion distributions with theoretical - leads to discussion of sample size
- Discuss what we'd be able to conclude in the absence of fairness assumption
- Discuss what would happen if a different number coins were flipped - leads toward binomial distribution

# **Normal Distribution**

Derived as limiting case of binomial distribution

Brief mention of the calculus involved, but we just use the table to compute the four standard kinds of probabilities associated with z-scores

Largely in anticipation of central limit theorem and confidence intervals

< □ > < 同 > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > <

# Sampling

- Essentially performing a single-stage experiment repeatedly
- Most interesting experiments are those involving people and their opinions or activities - very little theoretical understanding, so we take statistics

・ロト ・ 同 ト ・ ヨ ト ・ ヨ ・ うへつ

- Discuss bias; sampling and non-sampling sources
- Discuss Literary Digest debacle, and pitfalls of mailed questionnaire surveys

# Sample Means, the Central Limit Theorem, and Confidence Intervals

If the population is normally distributed with respect to some RV with population mean  $\mu$ , then the sample means will be distributed normally about  $\mu$  as well

This leads to conclusions about the chances of getting a sample mean within some range

Dually, if we assume that the population RV is normally distributed with *unknown*  $\mu$ , we can draw conclusions about the chances of  $\mu$  being in some range

Question: which of the above two results is more useful?

## Association of two RV's

#### Qualitative treatment of scatterplots

Correlation does not imply causation

Small correlation coefficient does not imply lack of causation

< □ > < 同 > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > < □ > <

# **Misleading Statistics**

We survey various techniques often employed to mislead consumers or voters

 Two- or three-dimensional figures displaying one-dimensional data

▲□▶▲□▶▲□▶▲□▶ □ のQで

- Y-axis expansion
- Excision of part of the y-axis
- Omitted measure of spread
- Use of raw data rather than proportions
- And many more!

# Counting

The final 2-3 weeks of the course is a systematic treatment of more difficult probability calculations involving counting arguments

- Multiplication and addition rules
- Combinations and permutations
- Complements, replacement, independence, and mutually exclusive events
- Conditional probability

We always do the Birthday Problem, but with 17-20 students in the class, we've never had a duplicated birthday...

#### Assessment

- Weekly homework
- Two midterms and a final exam
- Three-class lesson plan project

▲□▶ ▲□▶ ▲ 三▶ ▲ 三▶ - 三 - のへぐ

Probability And Statistics for Elementary Teachers at Western Oregon University

#### **Contact Information**

#### Scott Beaver - Western Oregon University

beavers@wou.edu

www.wou.edu/~beavers

▲□▶ ▲□▶ ▲ 三▶ ▲ 三▶ - 三 - のへぐ