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**Q:  What services are offered by the SCSC?**

**A:** The SCSC provides assistance in a wide variety of areas including grant proposal development, research design, design of clinical trials, data collection strategies, power and sample size determination, statistical modeling and analysis, interpretation of results, manuscript preparation, and, to some extent, data management. The Center also can help designing, conduct and analyze surveys. The Biostatistics faculty members have extensive experience in providing statistical support for NIH, NSF and private foundation grants. Their specializations include clinical trials, nonparametric methods, epidemiology, statistical genetics and genetic epidemiology, regression analysis, time series analysis, graphical methods, and Bayesian methods. Consultation is provided by Biostatistics faculty and staff. Staff consultants are supervised by a faculty member.

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**Q:  During what phase of research is it best to contact the SCSC?**

**A:** Although a biostatistician can help you at any phase of your research, it is best to contact us before you design your study. Biostatisticians are trained to frame appropriate statistical hypotheses for research questions and to determine the most efficient design and analyses methods. This will ensure the use of valid and most powerful statistical methods, which in turn, will increase the likelihood of resolving your research questions.

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**Q:  Do I need to schedule a consultation or can I just send my data to the SCSC for analysis?**

**A:** You must schedule a consultation meeting. This is vital to ensure valid and efficient statistical support. During this meeting, the consultant will ask you to describe your study in detail and he/she will most likely ask you many questions to become familiar with your project. It is important that the biostatisticians understand both the design, as well as the scientific background, of your study. This information can only adequately be conveyed during a face-to-face meeting.

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**Q:  How far in advance of my deadline should I meet with a biostatistician?**

**A:** For grant preparations, we strongly suggest that you meet with us at least two months prior to your deadline. This gives the statisticians the opportunity to understand your research goals, work through potential statistical analysis problems that may arise during the designing of the study, and write well thought out sections on design, power and sample size requirements, and statistical analysis. Please note that if we are given less than two weeks notice for grant preparation, we may not be able to complete your request. For all other consulting projects, the amount of lead-time depends on the complexity of the problem, but a minimum of 3 weeks is expected.

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**Q:  How do I schedule an appointment?**

**A:** Visit our website, www.gru.edu/mcg/bistatepi/scsc. At the bottom of the page, you will find two links for consulting request forms. If you are affiliated with GRU, fill out the internal form. If not, fill out the external form. FAX or deliver your form to the SCSC or the Biostatistics Department at GRU. This form is used in matching the client’s needs with the proper statistical expert in order to ensure the best possible services. You will be contacted shortly thereafter to set up an appointment. You may also contact us by phone or by visiting our office. If the investigator is a student, resident or fellow, his/her faculty advisor must be present at the initial consultation session.

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**Q:  Does the SCSC have a walk-in consulting service?**

**A:** No, we do not accept walk-ins for three reasons. First, in order to serve you most efficiently, we assign each project to an appropriate Biostatistics faculty member and a staff consultant, and this requires receiving the consulting request form prior to the first meeting. Second, we need some lead-time to prepare questions for the investigator based on the description of the research project. Third, many of our faculty teach courses or have other professional engagements and, consequently, may not be available for a walk-in meeting.

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**Q:  Can I request to work with a specific faculty member?**

**A:** Yes, if you would like to work with a specific faculty member, please indicate that on your consulting request form. If you already have a productive working relationship with any particular faculty and would like to continue the professional collaboration, we highly recommend that you do so.

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**Q:  What information will be useful to my consultant for our first meeting?**

**A:** You should bring along any information that will help us better understand your research goals and questions, including your research hypotheses, relevant papers from literature, latest draft of the proposal or manuscript, and critiques from previous grant review, if applicable. If you have already collected data, please provide an electronic copy of your data set, as well as how the study was designed, conducted, and provide any data collection issues that may have occurred. Please make sure that you have IRB approval.

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**Q:  Does the SCSC provide computer assistance or statistical software assistance?**

**A:** As a general rule, the SCSC does not provide computer assistance or statistical software assistance.

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**Q:  What if I need more help after the first session?**

**A:** We are more than happy to meet with you as many times as you need us. Simply contact your consultant faculty or staff to schedule additional meetings. You may also communicate with them through e-mail or phone.

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**Q:  How much does the consulting service cost?**

**A:** The consultation fee is at the rate of $200 per hour. GRU-affiliated clients will receive the first consultation meeting free of charge and a 50% discount for the remaining work. After the initial meeting, a cost estimate will be provided. A 50% surcharge is imposed for work needed within one week. Charges are billed directly to the investigator’s department.

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**Q:  How are grant preparations and long-term collaborations handled?**

**A:** There is no charge for grant preparation assistance in which the biostatistics faculty, and possibly, the staff consultant are serving as co-investigators with substantial percent effort for salary coverage, as it is done in the spirit of true scientific collaboration. If a department or a division/section needs long-term on-going statistical support, this can be done by compensation through salary coverage for the percent effort to the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology. The details of these types of arrangements must be worked out with the Chair of the Department.

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**Q:  Does the SCSC offer tutoring for statistics courses?**

**A:** We do not offer a tutoring service at this time.

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**Q:  What is the difference between consultation and collaboration?**

**A:** A consultation is normally a relatively simple, one-time project that while important, does not necessitate repeated contact with the researcher, whereas collaboration is a long-term research partnership with funding support through extramural grants and contracts. The biostatistics faculty members are eager to collaborate with other investigators to find solutions for complex scientific problems that affect human health.

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**Q:  What is the expectation on co-authorship resulting from the projects?**

**A:** Where meaningful intellectual contribution to the formulation of a research question or the analytic scheme for a research project has been provided by the statistical consultant, it is expected that biostatistics personnel will be offered co-authorship on consequent publications and presentations. Please see more details on co-authorship guidelines at www.gru.edu/mcg/bistatepi/scsc.