CAUSEweb.org: Building a Community in Statistics

MERLOT Statistics

NSDL

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What is CAUSE?

The Consortium for the Advancement of Undergraduate Statistics Education (CAUSE) was formed as an outgrowth of a strategic initiative by the American Statistical Association (ASA). The Consortium already benefits from the involvement of over 40 individuals from dozens of institutions. These individuals represent the core of current work in developing statistics teaching.

Goals of CAUSE

The CAUSE organization was formed with three overarching focus areas

•**Resources**: Collect, review, develop, and disseminate resources for members of the undergraduate statistics education community.

•**Professional Development**: Coordinate, develop, and disseminate opportunities, programs, and workshops for teachers and others involved in statistics education projects and initiatives, present and future.

•**Research**: Establish the area of statistics education research as a recognized discipline with a visible presence. Prepare and connect researchers from all disciplines that conduct research in statistics education.

One method for achieving the goals of CAUSE is the creation of CAUSEweb.org. Funded through the NSDL Collections track, this site provides resources for teaching statistics.
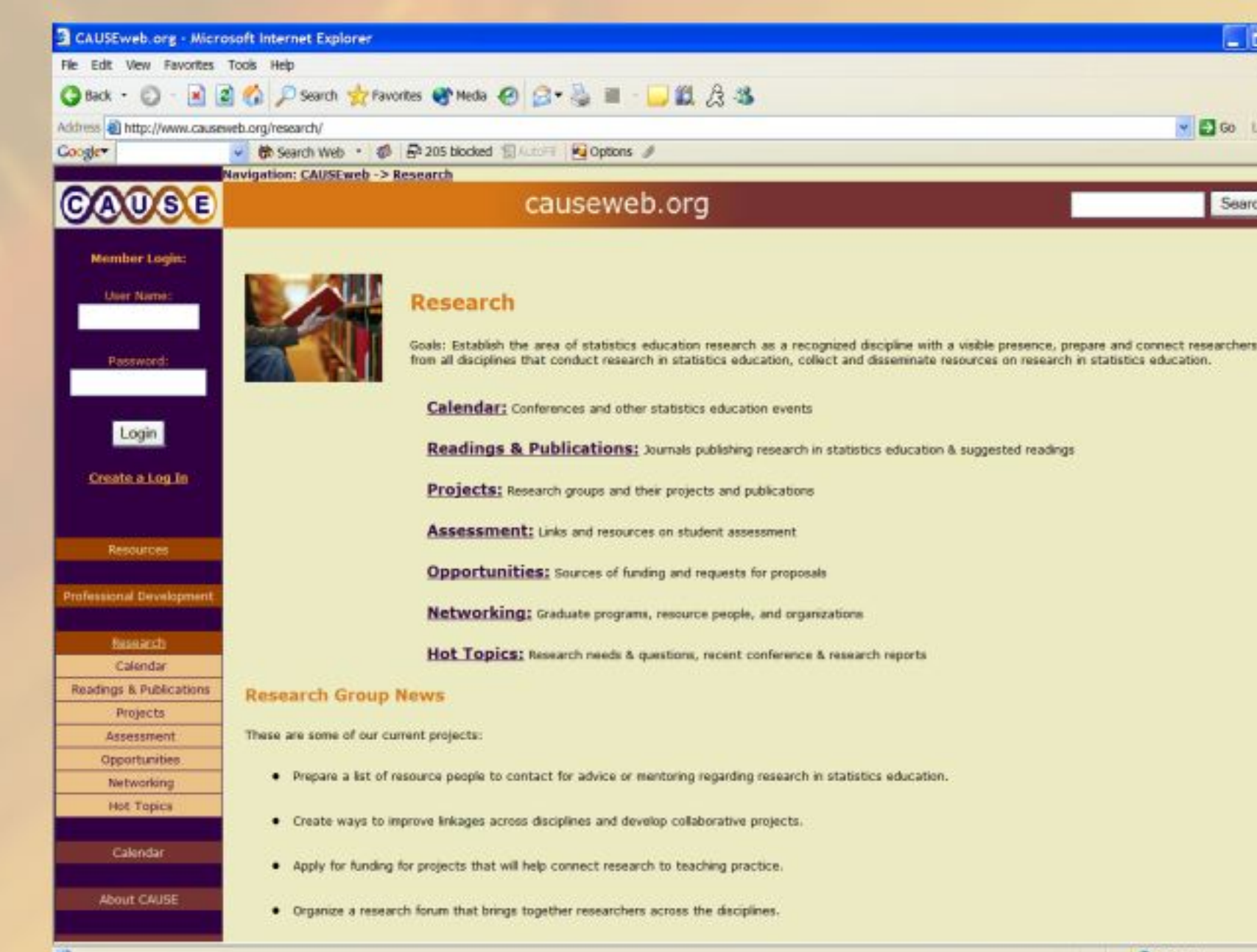
A Digital Library of Resources for Teachers of Statistics

The resources section of CAUSEweb is designed to provide a single point of contact for anyone who teaches undergraduate statistics. The resources section of CAUSEweb implements the Collection Workflow Integration System (CWIS) to manage the collection of resources.

•**Browsable**: The resources in CAUSEweb can be browsed by the method of use with categories including lecture examples, laboratories, out of class materials, teaching tips, datasets, analysis tools, curriculum, humor, building blocks, and multimedia.

•**Indexed and searchable**: One of the advantages of CAUSEweb is use of an extensive set of topic specific meta tags. The meta tags are a superset of the Dublin Core that includes tags that allow searching and browsing based on criteria that are of interest to the end user. The resources on CAUSEweb are indexed to help teachers find materials relevant to their needs. In addition to a detailed description, each item is indexed by the audience (high school, undergraduate lower division, etc.), mathematical level (non-symbolic math, algebra, calculus), and application area (biology, social sciences, etc.)

•**Peer reviewed**: CAUSEweb has partnered with MERLOT and implements the MERLOT peer review process. To help teachers understand which materials hold the most potential, the editorial board of CAUSEweb reviews key items. The reviews include an indication of the quality of the content, potential effectiveness as a teaching tool, and ease of use for students and faculty.

Broadening the Community

•**National Conference**: CAUSEweb is also the point of contact for the U.S. Conference on Teaching Statistics (USCOTS). CAUSEweb provides sources of information and online registration for the conference. Additionally, several sessions and workshops at USCOTS will focus on using CAUSEweb.

•**Connections to the broader NSDL Community:** CAUSEweb is a member of the Mathematics Working Group and is a partner in the Math Gateway project.

Building Community through the Digital Library

The resources section brings users to CAUSEweb.org. Other aspects of the site help connect users and build the statistics education community.

•**Calendar of events**: The calendar provides a listing of major conferences, workshops, and items of interest for those working on research in statistics education.

•**Readings and Publications**: CAUSEweb provides an indexed searchable listing of over 1500 seminal papers in the field of statistics education. This list is a first stop for references and background reading for anyone interested in working in statistics education.

•**Communication about current projects**: CAUSEweb provides a list of activities being undertaken at major centers in statistics education. This gives researchers an excellent starting point for finding out about ongoing projects.

Visit CAUSEweb!

CAUSE

Consortium for the Advancement of Undergraduate Statistics Education

http://www.causeweb.org