



Spring 5-11-2010

## Leekley Publishes New Statistics Textbook

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### **Recommended Citation**

Hatch, Rachel, "Leekley Publishes New Statistics Textbook" (2010). *News and Events*. 2013.

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## Leekley Publishes New Statistics Textbook

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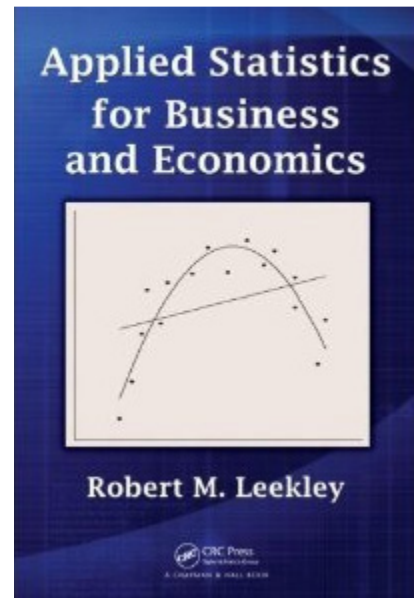
BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University Associate Professor of Economics Robert Leekley had a problem. As an instructor of introductory statistics for economics for more than 30 years, the longer Leekley taught, the more disillusioned he became with textbooks available for his course.

“I felt textbooks in this field were headed in the wrong direction,” said Leekley from his office in the Center for Liberal Arts on campus. “They were increasingly written so that instructors could pick and choose topics in any order they pleased. That might seem desirable, but then students lose any sense of continuity.”

To remedy that fault, Leekley created his own textbook years ago to use in class. This month, his insights are available to a larger audience. Leekley has published his work as a new textbook titled *Applied Statistics for Business and Economics* (CRC Press, 2010).

“Statistics is really just a few key ideas applied differently to different data,” Leekley said. “My goal for the textbook was to bring out the connections.”

Arriving at Illinois Wesleyan in 1974, Leekley earned a bachelor’s degree from Carleton College in 1967, and a master’s degree and doctorate from Michigan State University in 1968 and 1974, respectively. During his tenure at Illinois Wesleyan, he said he has witnessed a greater appreciation of statistics in economics and business, thanks in large part to the expanding use of the computer in the classroom. “Computers have allowed us to go beyond teaching the mean and standard deviation using just five numbers, for example,” said Leekley. “Now we can look at spreadsheets of realistic data, and the relevance of what we are doing becomes clear.”



Leekley has taken steps to facilitate the use of *Applied Statistics for Business and Economics*, allowing textbook users to download both actual and hypothetical databases from his Illinois Wesleyan web site. "The trend for a while was to attach CDs to the inside back cover of textbooks with all the examples included," said Leekley. "Now we can make larger databases available online."

Illinois Wesleyan Economics Department Chair Diego Mendez-Carbajo called the new book a professional landmark. "This 476-page text distills decades of Bob's teaching at Illinois Wesleyan University," said Mendez-Carbajo. "The textbook is now in print and represents an exceptional achievement in the field of Economics."

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