Changes to Stat PhD theory and methods requirements

5-17-12
Previous pre-dissertator requirements

**Exams:** Pass the MS theory exam and two of the following five prelims:

1. Methods
2. Computing
3. Stochastic
4. Probability
5. Statistical Theory

**Core courses:** Three core sequences, chosen from

1. Methods
2. Computing
3. Stochastic
4. Probability
5. Theory
6. Statgen*
7. Social sciences*

**Other:** Consulting, seminar, math and computing literacy as advised.
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Motivation for changes

- Reduce the number of exams
- Reduce the redundancy of project exams
- Require core theory and methods
- Maintain links with the biostat program
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Current pre-dissertator requirements

Exams: 1. MS theory exam
  2. Research prelim

Courses: 1. Two core sequences: Theory (581-2-3); Methods (570-1)
  2. Research course (5XX)
  3. Four electives courses

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Theory:
Stat students no longer take a 2nd year theory exam. These abilities are already tested (at a lower level) via the 1st year theory exam.

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The prelim may be tied to a particular sequence of classes but does not have to be. It can be based on material from a combination of theory, methods and elective classes.
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The prelim may be tied to a particular sequence of classes but does not have to be. It can be based on material from a combination of theory, methods and elective classes.
Quick accounting of changes

• **Less exams:** From 3 to 2.
• **More courses:** From 9 to 10.
• **Less freedom:** Require theory and methods.
• **More freedom:** Flexibility with electives.
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Other things we considered

- Make 583 an elective.
  - Require two coherent two-quarter sequences instead of four electives.
  - Not requiring the 570s.
  - Not requiring the 580s.
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Coordination between Stat and Biostat

- The 570s and 580s are now required by both programs.
- Teaching and exam goals in the 570s are similar between programs.
- Some divergence for 580s: For biostat students, the sequence is to some extent “training” for the 2nd year theory exam.
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