

27 May 1933.

Dr. E.S. Pearson,  
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Dear Egon:

Thanks for your letter. I agree entirely as to the importance and, indeed, the necessity of avoiding the giving to students of any impression of antagonism between the two departments. I do not feel that this should be difficult, though it may for some time require circumspection, for there is no antagonism in aim, and, as your letter assures me, very little excuse for finding it in the substance of your statistical teaching.

I am particularly glad that you have found my methods useful and have incorporated them to such a large extent in your regular lectures. Indeed I am surprised that you have found time to include so much as the tests of significance and the theory of estimation, with the new concepts that these imply. I cannot think, however, that I ought to bind myself not to lecture on any aspect of statistical methods which concerns the work of either staff or students connected with my department. There is, as I think you will fully agree

no practical line to be drawn between theory and its applications. For nearly all my own researches in statistical theory have had practical procedure immediately in view, and it can be nothing but a gain to students in strengthening their grasp of principle, if they find that the same conclusions can be reached from slightly different standpoints, or with some difference of notation.

I am sure too that you will not think it reasonable to press your suggestion that I should not from time to time, offer a connected account of my own methods to foreign students, whose object in visiting this country may be partly to avoid the inconvenience of acquiring these methods at second-hand; and though I am confident that your lectures will always attract the larger audience I know there are some who wish especially to acquire the particular point of view, from which my own results were arrived at. It would, I submit, put the department of Eugenics in an anomalous position, and be in the ways I have indicated, injurious to the teaching of the college, if I were to accept in principle the restriction you suggest. In practice, however, I should probably find it much more useful to make the statistical approach to biological problems the theme of central interest, and to use results from other branches of the subject only incidentally as they were needed to complete the argument.

I should in any case, hope that students from the department of Eugenics would attend your lectures, and am sure they will profit from them a great deal.

Yours sincerely,