

THE *Current*

[Society + Culture](#)

UCSB scholar to lead world's largest actuarial society

Seren Snow

October 8, 2025

Share this article



Ian Duncan, adjunct professor of statistics and applied probability at UC Santa Barbara, has been named 2025–26 president-elect of the Society of Actuaries (SOA), the world's largest professional organization for actuaries. With a history dating back to 1889, the SOA counts more than 34,000 members worldwide and advances actuaries as leaders in measuring and managing risk.

Duncan will become the organization's 78th president at its 2026 ImpACT Annual Conference.

The election marks a milestone in a career spanning more than five decades. As a dedicated SOA volunteer for 30 years and a two-time board member, Duncan considers the presidency a natural progression.

"This is great news for Ian and also for UCSB," said Tomoyuki Ichiba, chair of the Department of Statistics & Applied Probability and Center for Financial Mathematics and Actuarial Research. "I greatly appreciate his dedication to the Society and to our students in the actuarial science program."

After joining UCSB's faculty 15 years ago, Duncan was instrumental in helping its actuarial science program earn the prestigious Center of Actuarial Excellence designation. His election now brings further distinction to the department.

Drawing on a career in both industry and academia, Duncan, an entrepreneur who has founded or co-founded five companies, blends academic rigor with real-world application. His latest endeavor, Santa Barbara Actuaries Inc., merged with Arbital Health in 2023. His professional work has focused on advancing actuarial applications in health care, particularly in predictive modeling.

A fellow of multiple international actuarial societies and a member of the American Academy of Actuaries, Duncan has authored more than 70 peer-reviewed papers and several books, including "Healthcare Risk Adjustment and Predictive Modeling" and "Managing and Evaluating Healthcare Intervention Programs."

As the public face of the SOA, he will support the board's strategic pillars, which include optimizing the pipeline of new actuaries, continuing international expansion and adapting to new technology.

A central challenge, he noted, is preparing the profession for the impact of artificial intelligence.

"The question is, how do we change the education and the exam requirements that students have to go through in order to fit them for this new AI world?" Duncan noted.

In addition to these initiatives, he plans to foster a new mindset within the profession.

"Actuaries by nature are not risk-takers," he said. "I've been an entrepreneur, and I want to promote entrepreneurship and innovation during my term."

Media Contact

Debra Herrick

Associate Editorial Director

(805) 893-2191

debraherrick@ucsb.edu

Share this article



About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.