Candidate's Statement:
I am so excited and honored to be nominated for the Caucus for Women in Statistics's Program Committee. Currently, I am a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Tanya Garcia in the Department of Biostatistics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). I have a Ph.D. in Biostatistics from Vanderbilt University and a B.S. in Statistics from the University of Florida (graduated summa cum laude). Starting next week, I will ditch my "trainee wheels" and begin my next adventure as a new Assistant Professor of Statistics at Wake Forest University.

My dissertation work (defended in May 2021) immersed me in studies of the implementation and importance of data quality initiatives in observational cohorts, focusing on tackling clinical and statistical challenges in practice. This work was motivated by challenges in my collaboration with a large multi-national HIV research cohort. Now at UNC-CH, I have brought my zest for robustness and familiarity with incomplete data to the realm of censored covariates. My research continues to be motivated by real-world challenges when analyzing incomplete data, e.g., due to covariate censoring in longitudinal studies of neurodegenerative diseases.

I enjoy innovating through collaborative discussions and am an avid conference goer, speaking at least three per year since 2018. During these conferences, I have earned a reputation for leading expeditions with colleagues new and old to the best donuts in each of our host cities (e.g., to the world-famous Voodoo Doughnut during the Joint Statistical Meetings [JSM] 2019 in Denver). I am currently researching donuts in Washington DC for JSM 2022, as my first invited session proposal has been accepted: an all-women technical session (including the chair, speakers, and discussant) jointly sponsored by the CWS, ENAR, and Section on Statistics in Epidemiology entitled “What we know about what we don't know: Overcoming incomplete data in practice.” In this session, we bring together a diverse group of women researchers in missing data, measurement error, and censoring to discuss techniques from each area and highlight the similarities and differences between how we handle these different types of "incomplete" data.

I am passionate about empowering women in statistics and biostatistics. When I joined, women in my lab were unfamiliar with the opportunities provided by R-Ladies, which targets "proportionate representation" for underrepresented genders in statistical computing (specifically R). An enthusiastic member myself, I invited them to meetups and co-presented a tutorial with a female graduate student. This was her first time preparing and leading a guest lecture, so I was grateful for the welcoming audience of R-Ladies and excited to guide her through it. To celebrate and extend the influence of women beyond R, I also participate in events of the CWS (like the new Buddy Program) and am a regular attendee/volunteer/speaker for the American Statistical Association's (ASA) Women in Statistics and Data Science (WSDS) conference.

Biography:
Sarah Lotspeich is an excited new Assistant Professor of Statistics at Wake Forest University. She holds a Ph.D. in Biostatistics from Vanderbilt University and completed her postdoctoral
training at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research is motivated by challenges encountered in the responsible analysis of “incomplete” data, including error-prone observational data and censored covariate data from longitudinal cohorts, as motivated by collaborations with international HIV networks and Huntington’s disease researchers, respectively. Outside of academia, Sarah has worked in data-centric roles with a government health department, an energy corporation, and a social media tech company. Sarah was raised by rocket scientists on the east coast of Florida, previously earning a B.S. in Statistics from the University of Florida. When she’s not writing code, you can find her sipping bubble tea, cross stitching, or rewatching the Mindy Project for the millionth time.

Website: www.sarahlotspeich.com