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## Submenu and dialogs for meta-analysis commands

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**Abstract.** The `metadialog` package provides Stata dialog boxes for the publicly available meta-analysis commands. It includes the commands needed to create a **Meta-Analysis** submenu on the StataCorp-defined **User** menu.

**Keywords:** pr0012, dialog, menu, meta-analysis

### 1 Description

User-written dialog boxes and menus were introduced in Stata 8 to provide an alternative to the standard command-line interface. The `metadialog` package provides dialog boxes (`.dlg` files) and the commands needed to create a **Meta-Analysis** submenu that will contain the publicly available meta-analysis commands. The 14 commands included in this package that may be placed on the menu are `meta`, `metan`, `metap`, `metareg`, `metacum`, `funnel`, `metafunnel`, `labbe`, `metannt`, `metaninf`, `metainf`, `galbr`, `metabias`, and `metatrim`.

This package, which was announced on Statalist, was made available originally at the Statistical Software Components (SSC) archive site hosted by the Boston College Department of Economics at <http://ideas.repec.org/s/boc/bocode.html>. Many of the underlying meta-analysis programs were introduced in the *Stata Technical Bulletin* (STB), though some subsequently may have been updated and republished via the SSC archives. Some programs were published only on the SSC archives site. The `metadialog` package is reintroduced here to allow update pointers to be placed to the underlying STB programs and to announce it to those users who may not participate on Statalist.

The dialogs were written for a specific version of each program file (see the listing below). If you do not have these versions installed, you should update the specific programs before using the related dialogs. Use the `net search name` command to find and install the appropriate versions of these programs.

You may choose not to create the menu and, instead, run the dialogs directly from the Stata command line via the `db name` command. If so,

| command       | runs            | description                            |
|---------------|-----------------|--|
| db meta       | meta 2.06       | Meta-analysis of effects               |
| db metan      | metan 1.74      | Meta-analysis of binary and continuous |
| db metap      | metap 2.0.0     | Meta-analysis of $p$ -values           |
| db metareg    | metareg 1.06    | Meta-analysis regression               |
| db metacum    | metacum 1.02    | Cumulative meta-analysis               |
| db funnel     | funnel 1.04     | Metan-based funnel graph               |
| db metafunnel | metafunnel 1.02 | Funnel graph (vertical)                |
| db labbe      | labbe 1.21      | Metan-based L'abbe graph               |
| db metannt    | metannt 1.0     | Metan-based NNT                        |
| db metaninf   | metaninf 1.0.1  | Metan-based influence analysis         |
| db metainf    | metainf 3.0.0   | Meta-based influence analysis          |
| db galbr      | galbr 2.0       | Galbraith plot for heterogeneity       |
| db metabias   | metabias 1.2.2  | Publication bias in meta-analysis      |
| db metatrim   | metatrim 1.0.5  | Trim and fill analysis                 |

You can install the `metadialog` package from within Stata by using the `net install metadialog` command.

The commands needed to create a **Meta-Analysis** submenu are documented in help file `meta.dialog.hlp`, which is installed with the dialogs. These commands are also shown below. The menu commands are placed in your personal Stata `profile.do` file to create a submenu on the StataCorp-defined **User** menu.

You can determine if you have defined a `profile.do` file by starting Stata and observing whether a line of the form

```
running C:\data\stata\profile.do ...
```

appears on the screen as part of the initiation sequence. If it does, add the commands below to that file and resave the file. If the line does not appear, you have not defined a profile. Create a plain text file containing the commands below, name it `profile.do`, and save it somewhere in the Stata path.

The menu creation commands are shown below. Because of the length of these lines, many have been split into two lines:

```
if _caller() >= 8 {
  window menu clear
  window menu append submenu "stUser" "&Meta-Analysis"
  window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\
    "Of Effects (&meta)" "db meta"
  window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\
    "Of Binary and Continuous (meta&n)" "db metan"
  window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\
    "Of p-values (meta&p)" "db metap"
  window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\
    "Cumulative (meta&cum)" "db metacum"
  window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\
    "Regression (meta&reg)" "db metareg"
  window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\
    "Funnel Graph, metan-based (f&unnel)" "db funnel"
```

```

window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"Funnel Graph, &vertical (metafunnel)" "db metafunnel"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"L'abbe Graph, metan-based (&labbe)" "db labbe"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"NNT, metan-based (metann&t)" "db metannt"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"Influence Analysis, metan-based (metan&inf)" "db metaninf"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"Influence Analysis, meta-based (metain&f)" "db metainf"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"Galbraith Plot for Heterogeneity (&galbr)" "db galbr"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"Publication Bias (meta&bias)" "db metabias"
window menu append item "Meta-Analysis" \\\
"Trim and Fill Analysis (metatrim)" "db met&atrim"
window menu refresh
}

```

Dialogs are available only in Stata 8 or later; thus, the leading

```

if _caller() >= 8 {
and trailing
}

```

lines above are needed only if you also run Stata 7. Leaving these lines in will not cause problems.

The easiest way to capture these commands is to open the help file in your text editor, copy the lines, and then paste them into your `profile.do` file.

#### About the Author

Thomas J. Steichen is an industrial statistician who has used Stata for many years. He has contributed programs to the Stata user community on several problems, including duplicate observations, meta-analysis, violin plots, and noncentral distributions, and has authored several inserts in the *Stata Journal* and the *Stata Technical Bulletin*.