

Minutes of Math Issues Committee
April 28, 2006
Central Connecticut State University, Nutmeg Room

The meeting convened at 11:15 a.m.

Present — Kathy Bavelas (Gateway), Alice Burstein (Middlesex), Jean-Marc Cenet (Tunxis), Robert Clark (Tunxis), Elaine Dinto (Naugatuck Valley), Andre Freeman (Capital), Diane Hillyer (Manchester). Pat Hirschy (Asnuntuck), Mark Leach (Housatonic), Joy Mark (Quinebaug Valley)

Minutes from March 10, 2006, were approved.

Announcements —

(1) *Achieving the Dream* — Mark shared details about Housatonic 's *Achieving the Dream* project, in which a priority is to increase success in math courses. HCC will be introducing a program (software to be determined) that permits individualized self-paced instruction, where each student masters each math concept before moving on to new concepts. In the spring of 2007, MAT*E075 will consist of three separate one-credit components. Mastery of material in chapters 1-3 of the Martin-Gay Prealgebra text will be required for the first credit, material in chapters 4-6 for the second, and in chapters 10-11 for the third. Chapter tests are not cumulative, but a grade of 80 is necessary to move on. The final exam is cumulative, and students must earn at least 60 on the final to pass the course; a C is needed in the course to move on. A student who does not pass the course during the first semester pays for one or two credits the next semester, depending upon the amount of material yet to master. A similar program for MAT*E095 will be in place for fall of 2007. At the start, there will be three sections of MAT* E075, likely limited to 15 students each; both an instructor and a tutor will be present with the students during class time. Accuplacer scores will be used to determine placement into the courses. Contact Mark if you are interested in the project or have questions.

(2) NEMATYC Conference (April 21-22) in Manchester, NH —

Kathy shared information from Brian Beaudrie, currently at Plymouth State University , on Redesigning College Algebra Delivery from Direct instruction to a Computer Environment. The first semester ALEKS software was used; adjustments were made during the second semester — students used MyMathLab, attendance became mandatory, and instructors were required to make one-on-one contact with each student each day, i.e. to stop, look over the student's work, ask how he or she was doing. Although only a few students passed the course early, there was overall success.

Kathy also provided a handout on a presentation by Drs. Eiki Satake and Phil Amato, Emerson College, titled "Coincidences: Can Statistics Explain This?"

Pat provided handouts for some sessions, including the following —

- **MAC3:** Information regarding *Mathematics Across the Community College Curriculum* institutes, projects, activities (www.mac3.amatyc.org). The goal of MAC3 is to create a mathematically literate society that ensures a workforce equipped to compete in a technologically advanced global economy; in this NSF funded project, this will be accomplished by training math and non-math faculty across many disciplines to create, evaluate and modify projects that incorporate mathematics. Also included from this session was a flyer from The Center for Mathematics & Quantitative Education at Dartmouth, part of the National Numeracy Network.
- NEMATYC 2006, "Intersection: Psychology and the Math Classroom," presented by Phyllis C. Lurvey, Hesser College (New Hampshire).

If you would like to share information from the Conference, please feel free to distribute handouts at the next meeting or send to Pat or Elaine to copy and distribute.

(3) Don Small Contemporary College Algebra workshop —

Kathy announced that Don Small, faculty member at the U.S. Military Academy, will be presenting a 3-day workshop at Gateway's North Haven campus from May 31 - June 2. She encourages us to join the national debate: *College Algebra: Whom does it serve? What should it be? How do we prepare students for the mathematics needed in the future?* **Please distribute flyers (recently emailed to Math Issues members) to part-timers on your campus.**

(4) Voting for MATYCONN officers —

Kathy announced that email voting for MATYCONN officers worked smoothly; she will purge her computer of all votes and save hard copies until the fall 2006 meeting.

Suggestion to share with MATYCONN Executive Committee members for upcoming MATYCONN Meeting --

Perhaps MATYCONN would consider having a themed round table discussion at the fall 2006 meeting with a variety of computer packages and explanations of how they are used in computer, distance learning, or hybrid courses.

Name change for MAT* 167, Statistics with Technology —

As of the March meeting, representatives from five colleges preferred *Principles of Statistics* for the proposed name change for MAT* 167; representatives from four colleges would be comfortable with whatever the Committee decides. The three colleges who had not yet responded all agreed to *Principles of Statistics* (one by email, the remaining two through representatives who were present). Thus math faculty from all twelve colleges have had input. There was a motion by Diane, seconded by Mark, to change the title of MAT* 167 from *Statistics with Technology* to *Principles of Statistics*; the vote was unanimous. **Committee members should bring this change, through the appropriate college channels, to their Academic Deans and ask that the name change be an agenda item for the next meeting of the Council of Academic Deans (next meeting is scheduled for May 25 at Quinebaug Valley). This should be an FYI item to the College Curriculum Committee once approved.**

Rationale for new course name: (1) MAT* 167 was given the course name *Statistics with Technology* to indicate the use of technology (graphers or computer software) in the course. The reference to technology was important at the time of the designation (late 1990's) since not all statistics courses were using technology. Some 4-year colleges would not award transfer credit unless technology was required for the course. The reference to technology is not necessary at this time since it is more widely used in statistics courses; there is no longer a need to indicate the use of technology for the course to transfer. (2) Including the word "technology" in the course name is causing confusion. It is sometimes misconstrued to mean a technical field such as engineering rather than an instructional tool such as a grapher or computer software.

Note: The Committee agreed that the *Process for Course Name Change* (as revised by Pat for the April 28 meeting) appears to be working and that there is no need for further modifications at this time.

MAT* 185, Trigonometric Functions —

Across the system, MAT* 185 has differences in the prerequisite; depending upon the college, the prerequisite may be Intermediate Algebra or College Algebra. An interesting conversation ensued, with lots of inconsistencies emerging. In some cases, students need a C or better in College Algebra before they take Trig; in other cases, right triangle trig and radian measure are embedded in College Algebra as a foundation for Precalculus. Especially because of transfer issues, the inconsistencies need to be addressed by the Math Departments; new numbers may be needed. All agreed that the transition from Intermediate Algebra directly to Precalculus is very difficult for many students. The Committee agreed that we will continue the process of resolving differences.

Updates to common numbering information —

Updates to the *Common Course Equivalencies* document on the MATYCONN website (<http://www.nv3.comnet.edu/matyconn>) has now been received from representatives of Asnuntuck, Capital, Gateway, Manchester, Middlesex, Naugatuck Valley, Northwestern, Norwalk, Quinebaug Valley, Three Rivers, and Tunxis. Discussion is still ongoing. PLEASE send further revisions to Elaine so that we will have accurate system-wide math information compiled in an easily accessible location in order to best serve the interests of our students.

MAT* 143, 144 name modifications —

While the Math Departments of the colleges involved have agreed to the name modifications, there is still no word regarding resolution of this issue by the Council of Deans. **Please ask your Dean (going through the appropriate college channels) about the status of the request.**

Proposed "procedure for course change proposals at the system level" —

At the time of the meeting, it was unclear where the proposal originated or where it stands as of now; reactions to it were discussed. All present agreed that course changes should be resolved within the discipline rather than by a system-wide Curriculum Committee. Suggestions to facilitate communication among faculty within any given discipline include a website, email distribution lists, and time for faculty across the state to meet by discipline. Kathy suggested that the system-wide PD day would provide a great annual time for faculty

to meet by discipline and make course name or prerequisite adjustments, etc., and discuss proposed new courses on a campus. Ideally, action could be taken, since all would be present and in the months before, email, telephone and snail mail could get the items ready for a vote. Disciplines with no numbering/curriculum needs could just meet to talk about teaching pedagogy or whatever is relevant to their fields; in many of the smaller fields where there is a lone full-time faculty person, this would provide a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas with colleagues.

As acting Chair of Math Issues, Pat will email Dr. Susen with the Committee's initiatives this year to maintain the integrity of the common number process, and our offer to facilitate math curriculum development and to resolve math common course issues in the new common numbering environment. Also she will note that it would be helpful for the math community to have time to dialogue, perhaps on the next Professional Development Day.

Tabled items for next meeting —

(1) Accuplacer Bands —

If your college has not already sent your Accuplacer placement/cut score information to the group, please send that information to Pat or Elaine, or bring it to the next meeting.

(2) Placement Issues —

Committee members have been asked to review the AMATYC statement on placement (<http://www.amatyc.org/documents/Guidelines-Position/Placement.htm>) and to consider incorporating multiple assessment options in our placement process.

Meeting dates for fall 2006 — September 15 at Central CT State University, October 13 at Manchester CC, November 10 at Capital CC, and December 8 at Middlesex CC. All meetings will commence at 11:00 unless notified (email and posting on MATYCONN website) otherwise.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Dinto