

Minutes of Math Issues Committee

Friday, December 8, 2006

Middlesex CC, Chapman Hall, Pegasus Gallery

The meeting convened at 11:15 a.m.

Present —

Kathy Bavelas (Gateway), Alice Burstein (Middlesex), Jean-Marc Cenet (Tunxis), Elaine Dinto (Naugatuck Valley), Teresa Foley (Asnuntuck), Andre Freeman (Capital), Miguel Garcia (Gateway), Diane Hillyer (Manchester), Pat Hirschy (Asnuntuck), Joe Karnowski (Norwalk), Mark Leach (Housatonic), Rachael Schettenhelm (Gateway)

Minutes from November 10, 2006 were approved.

Union differences —

Committee members discussed differences between the 4 C's and the AFT contracts regarding faculty workload and process for promotion, especially with regard to time in rank.

System-wide proposal to remove all credit from Intermediate Algebra —

Alice reported that her Dean informed her that a change in credit status for Intermediate Algebra will not happen in the near future; the proposal is being studied and suggestions will be considered.

System-wide proposal to establish a procedure for course changes —

A proposal to institute a new academic affairs process for course changes calls for a System-wide Faculty Curriculum Committee to be established to resolve differences among colleges regarding course changes. The System Office would forward the initiating college's proposal to the Curriculum Committees of the other 11 colleges, who in turn will consult with the appropriate Departments and Disciplines; the proposal would then proceed through the normal approval process at each college. If the eleven other colleges do not come to a unanimous decision, the System-wide Curriculum Committee would decide to approve, refer back to the colleges, or reject the proposed change.

Math Issues members all support the idea of System Office assisting by providing a vehicle for faculty input, but all believe that the proposed process would be cumbersome at best. For example, faculty outside of the mathematics area would not likely be in a position to answer questions about whether a course is skills based or functions based or a combination of both, what mode of delivery would be best suited, or what population the course would serve. The proposal would shift curriculum development away from faculty in the discipline involved, would stifle the creative process and be unworkable. Instead the System Office might assist by providing one day per semester for meetings of discipline-based committees, modeled after Math Issues, or by setting up email distribution lists by discipline so that faculty within the discipline could more easily communicate.

A course proposal should be developed locally, but then should then go to the Discipline Committee charged with the following responsibilities:

- Reviewing new course proposals in order to maintain the integrity of the CCN grid.
- Disseminating information of what's currently going on and what's happened before.
- Reviewing annually the course change process.

If a committee of peers believes that a proposed course does not meet the "80% rule," then the Dean from that college would select an appropriate number. For a small discipline, or one with no Discipline Committee, the System Office could decide how to involve folks. After the course changes have been reviewed by a committee of peers, then the proposal would go through the appropriate college process.

Other —

There was a brief discussion of the mission of the **MAT Council**, to ease the transition from high school to college, specifically to decrease the number of students who take intermediate algebra in college. One goal is to raise expectations in urban school systems where they are currently vastly lower than in other areas (grade 11 math is often algebra I, since many students are not prepared for algebra II, and grade 12 math might be consumer math).

High school **CAPT tests** (released questions can be found online) include functions based questions, algebra I, geometry, some statistics, and problem solving; questions involve multiple math skills in multi-step problems — colleges should consider including these scores in the placement process. Intent of the CAPT test is to drive curriculum, to drive more good mathematics.

Announcement —

Manchester will be offering a MAT* 139 combination algebra course, a combination of MAT*095 and MAT* 138, in one semester, 5 contact hours, for 3 credits.

Agenda items for next meeting —

- (1) Proposed procedure for new common courses
- (2) Tech prep
- (3) Other

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Dinto