

Minutes of Math Issues Committee
Friday, March 30, 2007
Tunxis Community College,
Faculty Conference Room B (F-57)

The meeting convened at 11:15 a.m.

Present — Larisa Alikhanova (Three Rivers), Andre Blaszczyński (Tunxis), Jean-Marc Cenet (Tunxis), Elaine Dinto (Naugatuck Valley), Paul Edelen (Manchester), Teresa Foley (Asnuntuck), Lori Fuller (Tunxis), Miguel Garcia (Gateway), Pat Hirschy (Asnuntuck), Linda Musco (Middlesex), Barbara Paskov (Manchester), Rachael Schettenhelm (Gateway)

Minutes from the February 23, 2007 meeting were approved.

Procedure for course change proposals at the system level to facilitate curriculum development in the new common course environment —

Andre Blaszczyński, invited by Jean Marc, graciously attended the meeting in order to explain his proposed procedure to expedite curriculum changes and to obtain feedback from Math Issues Committee members. Using an example from his own experience, in attempting to affect a change in the name of a business course that he teaches, he led a discussion concerning the issue. His concern is to solve problems and to establish a procedure that allows curriculum changes to be made in the best, most efficient manner. Once a temporary procedure is in place, the document (procedure) could then be modified, as needed.

- "Common" Numbering requires that courses have commonality; a minimum of common core topics for courses taught on more than one campus makes sense and is essential for transfer.
- Commonality of courses needs to be balanced with academic freedom. Curriculum is flexible and the Common Course Numbering (CCN) document will continually need to be updated; the document must allow for creativity. NEASC recognizes faculty as having the primary role in curriculum development.

The System Office is responsible for facilitating course changes and must provide faculty the opportunity to discuss valid philosophical approaches.

Faculty need time to review and revise the CCN document that now exists. The 80% rule in effect allows for large differences in the same courses. The core of common topics must be communicated to faculty in the discipline in all colleges.

Participation in the Math Issues Committee is open to all math faculty across the 12 colleges and is encouraged. At least one math faculty member from each of the 12 colleges receives information regarding meetings, also meeting minutes. The Committee has agreed to an informal process (which is linked under Math Issues on the MATYCONN website) for affecting a name change in a common course; the process, in writing, includes notifying everybody in the discipline; MI has been responsible for effectively bringing about name changes in three common courses.

Questions: Some colleges are without institutional definitions of courses; should this be changed? What is the most efficient way to make syllabi available? Should outcomes be agreed to? Can the same course taught at different colleges have a difference in the number of credits and/or contact hours? Can the same course have different prerequisites at different colleges? Will time be provided for discipline committees to meet? Should the focus be on the professional day in September?

Key components of a system process for curriculum changes—

1. Discipline committees, which meet on a regular basis, modeled after Math Issues, should be encouraged. Such discipline committees should be given formal status, recognized by the System Office as a mechanism for, and a source of, valuable input, and as a body to resolve discipline issues.
2. For disciplines that do not meet on a regular basis, for practical or other reasons, another mechanism for curriculum change is necessary. This might be a working group, such as a system-wide Curriculum Committee, supported by the System Office.

Next steps: Andre B. will revise his initial proposal based upon feedback already given by the Math Issues Committee and today's discussion. His revised proposal should go to disciplines, and to college curriculum committees, for discussion. He will present a new version of his proposal at the Deans' Council, after which time he gave permission to link the proposal under Math Issues on the MATYCONN website.

Homework: Look carefully at the document, think about it; add to the issues to yet be resolved. Spread the word.

OTHER ISSUES —

Tech Prep —

Math Departments at some colleges have again been told that they must articulate a math course as part of Tech Prep. At Tunxis, Lori will proctor departmental final exams at local high schools, which will be graded by committee. At Asnuntuck, Pat announced that June 2006, 2007 graduates' names will be put into a database, and progress will be tracked. The answer to Committee members' question last month about designating that a student is a tech prep student on his or her transcript is that this is not possible.

PreK-16 Council —

There is a proposal by the Governor (backed by the State Department of Education, the Department of Higher Ed, principals, CBIA) to require 4 years of high school math, and 3 years of science, with the goal of, in one year, having no more remediation in college. The accountability process is uncertain.

Discipline Reviews —

Jean Marc was the leader of the Mathematics Discipline Review at Tunxis; as Tunxis has hired two new full time faculty, this was a good time for the review. Miguel is leading a Program Review at Gateway CC.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Dinto