

Minutes of Math Issues Committee
Friday, September 12, 2008
Gateway Community College
North Haven Campus, Room 113A

Present — Larisa Alikhanova (Three Rivers), Elaine Dinto (Naugatuck Valley), Paul Edelen (Manchester), Teresa Foley (Asnuntuck), Lori Fuller (Tunxis), Miguel Garcia (Gateway), Pat Hirschy (Asnuntuck), Mark Leach (Housatonic), Joy Mark (Quinebaug Valley), Linda Musco (Middlesex), Rachael Schettenhelm (Gateway)

The meeting convened at 10:55 a.m.

Miguel welcomed everyone, and requested volunteers to chair the Math Issues Committee for this academic-year. **Miguel was nominated to serve as Chair; his nomination was unanimously approved.**

Elaine shared with the group **comments submitted by Greg Banks** (Northwestern), in response to the May 9 Math Issues minutes and addressing the intermediate algebra outcomes grid, Accuplacer branching and cut scores, skills versus real world applications of those skills, and technology use. The New York Times article, *Study Suggests Math Teachers Scrap Balls and Slices*, published on April 25, 2008 and sent by Greg, was distributed. Also distributed, from College Board ACCUPLACER Coordinator's Guide, were proficiency statements regarding Accuplacer arithmetic, elementary algebra, and college level math subtests, and the *AMATYC Position Statement on Initial Placement of Two-Year College Students into the Mathematics Curriculum*.

Minutes from the May 9, 2008 meeting were approved with one revision to the grid.

Announcement — Teresa Foley has a new full time tenure track math position at Asnuntuck; congratulations, Teresa!

Accuplacer scores — When the Math Issues Committee responded to Dr. Susen's request for a recommendation of common placement scores, determination of these placement scores took into account current practices. For convenience, below is an excerpt from Miguel's letter to Dr. Susen, dated 12/17/07, in response to the state legislation and addressing those common scores. The letter stated that further discussions would continue to take place, and that revisions to the plan may become necessary.

1. All colleges will start Accuplacer with the Elementary Algebra (EA) subtest. An Arithmetic (AR) score should be available adaptively, for students placing below Elementary Algebra.
2. To place into Intermediate Algebra, the entering Elementary Algebra (EA) subtest score is between 54 and 66, system-wide.
3. To place out of Intermediate Algebra requires a score of 40 or higher in the College Level Math (CLM) subtest of Accuplacer. This score will place students into some, but not all, courses above Intermediate Algebra in the system.
4. An alternative way of placing out of Intermediate Algebra is a score of 550 or higher in the math portion of the SAT. This score will place students into some, but not all, courses above Intermediate Algebra in the system.

At the time of the discussions on placement, it was not apparent to math faculty that individual colleges could set the cut score at which students move from the elementary algebra subtest (EA) to either the arithmetic subtest (AR) or the college level math subtest (CLM). Below are some results obtained from an informal survey concerning the point at which students currently move from EA to either AR or CLM. Note that for colleges beginning with AR prior to implementation of the new placement scores, no data is possible for the bottom line of the chart. Please check the chart for accuracy; email Elaine with any needed revisions, also with information regarding your college if it is not already included in the chart.

College	ACC	CCC	GWCC	HCC	MCC	MXCC	NVCC	NWCC	NCC	QVCC	TRCC	TXCC
EA score at which move to CLM	>=65		>=81			>=67	>=73	>=100		>=54	>60	
EA score at which move to AR	<=34		—				<30	<100			<20	

Lori informed MI members that a new Accuplacer platform will be in effect in fall 2009; Tunxis Accuplacer personnel have recommended that these two changes (platform change and implementation of cut scores) do not take place at the same time.

Online math courses — An informal survey of CC online math courses, fall '08, showed the following:

College	Information regarding <i>online</i> math courses	Info regarding <i>hybrid</i> courses
Asnuntuck	Offers no online courses	Offers hybrid MAT* 137
Capital	Offers no online courses	Offers no hybrid courses
Gateway	Offers MAT* 123 and 172	Offers no hybrid courses
Housatonic	Offers MAT* 137 and 167	Offers no hybrid courses
Manchester	Offers no credit online courses; anticipates offering Quantitative Literacy	Offers no hybrid courses
Middlesex	Offers MAT* 137 and 168	Offers no hybrid courses
Naugatuck	Offers MAT* 095, 137, 167, and 172	Offers hybrid MAT* 095, 137
Northwestern	Offers MAT* 135	Offers no hybrid courses
Norwalk	Offers MAT* 201	Offers no hybrid courses
Quinebaug	Offers no online courses	Offers no hybrid courses
Three Rivers	Offers MAT* 075 and 095	Offers no hybrid courses
Tunxis	Offers no online courses	Will offer hybrid in spring '09

At this time it appears as if faculty can fulfill their entire teaching requirement with all online courses. AFT members receive pay equivalent to 4 contact hours for 3-credit online courses; currently 4C's members are not compensated in the same fashion, and the issue has been taken to arbitration. The informal survey revealed that some community colleges require on-campus exams while others allow online exams.

A new system-wide instructional method code relating to online courses will be implemented in the spring, according to an August 29, 2008 memo sent by Dr. Susen to the Academic Deans, "to more accurately identify how online courses are offered, not only in Banner, but in subsequent publications of courses targeted for students. This new code recognizes the fact that some online classes have an associated on-ground campus requirement, such as an orientation or an exam."

Existing codes are **ONLN** (fully online)
 HYBR (online and classroom)
New code is **OLCR** (online with campus requirement)

A lively philosophical discussion of online courses ensued. How do we ensure the integrity of these courses, when the potential for abuse is tremendous? How do we have accountability, yet respect instructor discretion? Are on-campus exams necessary? Some believe that it is essential to document that the student taking an exam is in fact the person registered for the course; otherwise, transferability may become an issue. Are clearer procedures needed? I.e., is the new instructional method code sufficient, or should it differentiate between "orientation" and "exams" as the on-ground component? Math Issues members will revisit this issue; please collect information from your campus and bring to the next meeting.

Committee members suggested the following items as future topics of discussion —

- Response to state legislation
- Integrity of online courses
- Accountability with adjuncts
- Tech prep (now Career College Pathways, CCP)
- How to address the challenge of working with faculty who are not willing to make changes
- Review of MAT* 123, 124 (stats without intermediate algebra prerequisite) and other courses below the intermediate algebra level
- Are Accuplacer cut scores working? Is further revision necessary?
- Should the system institute a sunset provision for Accuplacer scores, after which time the student's placement will need to be reviewed?
- How do students fare in MAT*137 when they have been successful in 095? Similarly, for 075 to 095? Note: We realize that there is a big picture with many variables over which we have no control.
- Integration of technology in our developmental courses
- Skills versus real world applications in our developmental courses

In **response to the state legislation**, using the Math Issues intermediate algebra outcomes grid, Pat will draft a response for Dr. Susen, including a general statement regarding learning outcomes (based upon 10-12 "yes" campus responses). Lori, Teresa, and Elaine volunteered to proof and offer suggestions. Pat will distribute the draft response to committee members prior to the next meeting.

Many **thanks** to Miguel and Rachael for the hospitality!

Future meetings at 11:00 a.m. — 10/17 (Tunxis), 11/14 (CCSU), 12/12 (Middlesex).

Reminder of homework —

- Online course info, including online/on-campus exams
- Accuplacer scores, EA to AR, EA to CLM
- Draft response regarding intermediate algebra learning outcomes

The **meeting adjourned** at 12:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine Dinto