

Minutes of Math Issues Committee
Friday, December 12, 2008
Middlesex Community College, Chapman Hall, Room 808A

Present — Kathy Bavelas (Gateway), Alice Burstein (Middlesex), Elaine Dinto (Naugatuck Valley), Paul Edelen (Manchester), Teresa Foley (Asnuntuck), Lori Fuller (Tunxis), David Gross (UConn, guest), Christina Gundlach (Eastern, guest), Pat Hirschy (Asnuntuck), Steve Krevisky (Middlesex), Barbara Paskov (Manchester), Sam Sagong (Middlesex). Rachael Schettenhelm (Gateway)

The meeting convened at 11:10 a.m.; in Miguel's absence, Pat agreed to chair the meeting.

Minutes from the November 14, 2008 meeting were approved.

AMATYC Report — Several Math Issues Committee members including Kathy, Steve, Teresa, Rachael, and Pat, attended the 34th Annual AMATYC Conference, November 20-23, in Washington D.C. Reports regarding sessions of interest to attendees included the following —

- Steve was especially interested in what is happening in international math education; he also reported on *Statistics in Action: Explore a Successful Service-Learning Project* (going out into the community to collect data related to social service issues).
- Describing this as an incredible project in which you can meet and work with people from across the country, Teresa shared information regarding Project ACCCESS, which focuses on professional development and mentoring; she will be developing a research project this spring for implementation in the fall. Teresa encouraged new faculty in their 1st – 3rd year to apply for the sixth cohort; information will become available on February 10.
- Rachael shared information from sessions on mandatory use of MML in developmental courses that have considerable support, online courses in college algebra and calculus with instructor videos and live office hours, a unique strategy for math placement, streamlined courses, learning styles activities and assessment, and how to make adjuncts feel like part of the department.
- Pat's sessions of interest focused on the area of research. She spoke about the final report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel (<http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/mathpanel/report/final-report.pdf>), which offers "recommendations in the areas of curriculum content, learning processes, instructional practices, materials, assessment, and teacher preparation. The panel recommends that curriculum simultaneously develop conceptual understanding, computational fluency, and problem-solving skills to adequately prepare students for algebra and calls for research on the use of full-time mathematics teachers at the elementary level" (http://www.centerforcsri.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=541&Itemid=109). Pat also shared information regarding a session on technical mathematics, which discussed recommendations and exemplary programs including what mathematics is needed for students in the technical areas to enter the workforce, advance in their careers, and earn a bachelor's degree, and how it should be presented (<http://www.amatyc.org/publications/Electronic-proceedings/2008DC/proceedings2008/hovis.ppt>).
- Kathy focused on the college algebra / trig / precalculus sessions and reported on a session by Philip Cheifetz which stressed the need for students who take these courses to enter not only with the prerequisite algebraic manipulation skills, but also with conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills. She also especially enjoyed a session on imaginary numbers, and another on "e" from an area perspective.

Contact the above named people if you are interested in learning more.

Other AMATYC Business issues —

- Steve encouraged faculty to apply for the AMATYC Excellence Award.
- Steve discussed reasons to move the Delegate Assembly Task Force meeting from the last day of the conference to the preceding day; he suggested that MATYCONN (to which many MI members belong) may be interested in voting at the Spring Business Meeting (April 17) to support moving the date of the Delegate Meeting.
- Pat announced that there will be a traveling *Beyond Crossroads* summer workshop, at Cape Cod Community College, in West Barnstable, MA, June 11-12, 2009; some may want to take advantage of this professional development opportunity.
- Teresa announced upcoming AMATYC Conferences: November 12-15, 2009 in Las Vegas; November 11-14, 2010, in Boston.

Math Issues Spring 2008 plan and draft of intermediate algebra outcomes response to the Legislature — The draft outcomes document has received unanimous approval from the 12 sister colleges. (Note: A discussion of specific details, to include calculator/technology use, integration of the concept of functions, and modeling will take place later.) After discussion concerning revisions to the MI proposed plan for Intermediate Algebra (see last page of minutes), the Committee asked Pat to again revise the first page of the outcomes document and to send the document to a subcommittee (Miguel, Lori, Teresa, Elaine). Once reviewed, Miguel will send the document, with a cover letter, to Dr. Susen on behalf of the Committee.

Accuplacer —

1. Christina announced that with a change in vendors, there will soon be a new platform for the Accuplacer exam, and that a meeting for placement testing people concerning this would take place on January 29. We may want to ask our Placement Testing Coordinators to find out if there is a way that the math folks can have more input into the questions, i.e., if we can customize the test at all.
2. Discussion of Accuplacer practices was tabled due to lack of time; it was suggested that we have an Accuplacer dialogue at the next meeting at which we address, among other issues, letting students know exactly what is expected and the importance of the exam.
3. **HOMEWORK:** If you can gather any information about campus practices surrounding the Accuplacer exam, including whatever your campus does to help students review, also any Accuplacer rules that are in print, please bring these to the next meeting. If you will kindly email Elaine with the URLs for any websites that you believe are particularly useful for Accuplacer review, she will create a list for distribution to interested folks and link the list to the MATYCONN website.

The **meeting adjourned** at 12:38.

The **next meeting** will be held at 11:00 on February 13, 2009 at Tunxis CC.

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine Dinto

December 2008

Progress on the Math Issues Committee proposed plan for Intermediate Algebra

Action	Status
<p>1. Math Issues Representatives will bring feedback/concerns from our colleges to Math Issues meetings regarding the four proposals which resulted from the discussions on Intermediate Algebra Placement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.• To place into Intermediate Algebra, the entering Elementary Algebra (EA) sub-test score is between 54 and 66, system-wide.• To place out of Intermediate Algebra requires a score of 40 or higher in the College Level Math (CLM) sub-test of Accuplacer. This score will place students into some, but not all, courses above Intermediate Algebra in the system.• 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	New policies implemented at most colleges (at others will take effect fall 2009); assessment to be addressed
<p>2. With assistance from campus Institutional Research, we propose that colleges affected by the proposed changes in the placement testing procedure do a simulation in spring 2008 to test the impact of the changes, i.e., determine the number of students who would be placed higher or lower if EA is used first and our proposed Accuplacer band is implemented. This data will impact directly on college scheduling and staffing needs.</p>	Completed.
<p>3. We will identify common student learning outcomes for Elementary Algebra and Intermediate Algebra.</p>	Preliminary work completed; review is ongoing.
<p>4. With facilitation from the System, Math Issues will initiate a dialogue with College Board in order to assess alignment between the Accuplacer and our student learning outcomes.</p>	Ongoing.
<p>5. We will investigate alternative assessment tools in addition to Accuplacer results and SAT mathematics scores to use in the placement process, such as CAPT scores, Credit by Exam scores, high school grades, and high school math courses successfully completed.</p>	To be addressed.
<p>6. We will continue communication with MATYCONN, CSU and UConn math faculty. (Note: MATYCONN is the Connecticut chapter of the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges, AMATYC.)</p>	Ongoing.
<p>7. We will identify approaches to make placement testing more effective. This will include investigating ways to refresh student algebra skills prior to taking Accuplacer, considering programs such as Accuplacer A+ and Western CT State University's Bridges Program and the work of the MAT Council, and implementing AMATYC's position statement regarding mathematics placement in order to provide a more holistic approach to placement.</p>	In progress; needs continual study/review.
<p>8. We will explore ways to disseminate information about "combination courses" and other innovations developed at sister colleges.</p>	To be addressed.

On action items where the process requires going back and forth between campus Math Departments and Math Issues Committee meetings, further details will be available in Math Issues Committee Meeting minutes.