

MichMATYC Sum-Times



Two-Year College Mathematics in Michigan

Edited by Jack Rotman (Lansing Community College)

September 2009

Mathematics Drives the Future

MichMATYC 2009 at Henry Ford Community College, October 9 and 10



<http://michmatyc.org/michmatyc2009/index.htm>

developmental mathematics. I enjoyed the city, the sessions, and the sense of reconnecting with the broader aspect of mathematics.

Barbara Jur
Macomb Community College

MathFest

Mathfest was held in Portland Oregon, August 6-8. It was the largest MAA summer meeting with about 1700 participants. I went for several reasons: to attend committee meetings, chair a panel discussion on assessment of precalculus mathematics, see old friends, and hear talks on math history and general interest. One highlight was the address by Joan Ferrini-Mundy of Michigan State University and the National Science Foundation. It was titled "Communicating Among Communities and Calling for Change: Continuing the Improvement of Mathematics Education." One of her major points was the need for research in undergraduate mathematics education and the need for the community to value such research. The MAA has come a long way from an organization focused on mathematical research to one concerned with including a larger scope of issues. Bonnie Gold of Monmouth University is even working on establishing a special interest group in

From the President

Maria Andersen Muskegon Community College
This summer, I asked the MichMATYC campus reps to report what's going on around the state. I want to share some of their comments with you:

- "Our enrollment is up so much but a lot of crises are being pushed into the future."
- "I've paid for two conferences on my own this past year."
- "Adjuncts teach over half our sections."
- "Our math department has experienced a 32.6% growth in seats for the summer 2009 semester."
- "Our adjunct pool has needed to grow considerably [to accommodate enrollment increases], to the point where we don't know them all and really don't know what happens in a lot of the classrooms."
- "The only faculty we are hiring are replacements for retiring faculty."
- "The adjuncts have no bargaining rights, and haven't seen a raise in many, many, many, many years."

Let me see if I can summarize the problem succinctly: There's no money, enrollments are surging, very few campuses are getting full-time hires (some campuses are hearing rumors of layoffs) and money for professional development is tight (or nonexistent). Adjuncts in our math departments teach a huge number of math classes for pay that is not great and they get even less opportunity for professional development than full-time folks. That certainly paints a rosy picture doesn't it?

Under normal circumstances, we'd be celebrating the enrollment increases that we're seeing at community colleges across the state. Unfortunately, these increases are not self-generated. Closed businesses and industries all over the state

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have pushed people back to school, and many of these folks are looking to a community college for their education (or re-education).

There are two big questions that this brings up for me:

1. What can **we** do to help the state legislature see that they cannot neglect our colleges (and math departments in particular) much longer?
2. How can we help **all** the community college math instructors in Michigan to get access to training?

By my count, there are approximately 28,000 community college math instructors in the U.S. Michigan claims about 3.3% of the population of the country (used Wolfram Alpha for that stat "population Michigan / population U.S."). This means that we have roughly 900-1,000 community college math instructors in this state.

Look, we're all in this bad Michigan economy together. But adversity usually promotes innovative thinking and clever solutions to difficult problems. With that in mind, I have two goals in mind for my 2-year term as MichMATYC president.

Goal #1: Let's get some cold, hard data.

There are 28 community colleges in Michigan (see www.mcca.org). Through our network of campus reps, a few MichMATYC volunteers, and a little bit of old-fashioned legwork, we should be able to get some real data:

- How many full-time instructors are employed at each college? How many credits of math do they teach, and what levels?
- How many part-time instructors are employed at each college? How many credits of math do they teach, and what levels?
- How much funding does each full-time instructor get for professional development?
- How much funding does each part-time instructor get for professional development?
- Two years ago, how many FT instructors were there? Five years ago?
- Two years ago, what was the total campus enrollment (by headcount and by credits)? Five years ago?
- What is the pay for 1 credit for an adjunct math instructor with a Bachelor's degree? A Masters degree? A Doctorate?
- Do years of experience factor in to pay for adjunct math instructors?

The Conference Board of Mathematical Sciences (CBMS, www.cbmsweb.org) conducts a study every 5 years that asks math department heads to report data to the professional organizations. I propose we write our own survey for Michigan community colleges (or campuses) and conduct it every few years. This will give us not only an accurate portrayal of the "state of the state" math-wise, but a way to

track progress or declines in hiring, math enrollments, and funding. Armed with this data, we could begin making our case to the state legislature.

There's got to be some department or instructor in our MichMATYC network who's been itching to do something about the declining numbers of full-time faculty. Or perhaps someone needs a project for a graduate class they are taking or an Honors Stats class they are teaching? I'm looking for a volunteer, group of volunteers, or department of volunteers to spearhead this one.

Goal #2: Get out the training! (MichMATYC Morsels)

I'd like to propose a new section of the newsletter and the website called "MichMATYC Morsels." This would be a place to share ideas related to teaching or professional life. They would not have to be well-researched, or even be in written form.

Every one of you has some kind of expertise that you can share with the rest of us. Perhaps you're not ready to do a full-length conference talk, but that doesn't mean you're off the hook!

Most of our MichMATYC members are full-time instructors, blessed with full-time salaries and benefits. Can you spare **one hour** of your well-paid time to help get training out to those folks that get the short end of professional development funding?

Think of something you have learned or developed:

- A novel instructional strategy
- A technology tip that has saved you time
- A grading technique that has lessened the pain
- An assessment that works well for math
- A classroom management tip for dealing with cell phones
- A great way to explain a particular math concept

Now **share** it in one of the following ways:

- Write up a 1-paragraph tip for the newsletter
- Write up a 1-page article for the newsletter
- Record yourself explaining your tip (or showing us how to do it) in 5 minutes or less (use Jing, it's free!) and send us the link to the video for MichMATYC Morsels
- Make a clever diagram that explains your tip and submit it to the website or newsletter
- Build an interactive map of resources for other instructors (Mindomo is a free application that will let you do this) and then send us the link for the website

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- Make a slide deck (e.g. Powerpoint) that explains your tip and send us the slides to publish on the website

You've learned **something** about teaching that you need to share with the rest of us.

Go directly to your calendar and block out an hour of your time to write it up, record it, design it, or draw it. Do it before you have a boatload of tests to grade (or do it as a procrastination method).

Together, **we** can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Maria H. Andersen

P.S. Note that I didn't say **I** can make a difference, I said **WE**. Go block off some time!

P.P.S. Don't make me send you all email reminders!

Send submissions to MichMATYC Morsels (in any form) to our web guru / newsletter publisher extraordinaire, Jack Rotman, rotmanj@lcc.edu.

Campus News

Alpena Community College (Rep: Dan Rothe)

Alpena Community College started off a new semester in late August. We have an increased number of off campus classes this semester with College Algebra (Finite Math) being offered at Hale and Rogers City High Schools and Precalc being offered in Rogers City. We hosted the regional Science Olympiad in the spring. Joshua Jobin was awarded the mathematics achievement award for the 2008-2009 school year.

Sigma Zeta Math/Science Honor Society inducted five new members on April 16, 2009. The group went on a tour of the Michigan Historical Museum and MSU Museums in Lansing in May and will be helping provide coat check and valet parking for the military ball at the Phelps-Collins Air National Guard Base in November. We will be searching for a fall trip idea.

Henry Ford Community College (Rep: Jeff Morford)

Henry Ford Community College welcomes Jennifer LaRose to the Math Division. Jennifer served the Division once before on a temporary contract and we are pleased she is with us now in a tenure-track position.

We are also pleased to announce that Rama Chidambaram was one of twenty-four community college math instructors accepted into the 2009 cohort of Project ACCESS. The complete list of Project ACCESS Fellows is available at <http://www.access.amatyc.org/roster-cohort-6.htm>. Finally we hope you can attend the 2009 MichMATYC conference on our campus October 9 and 10. You can see details at <http://michmatyc.org>.

MichMATYC members should also have received a paper copy of the registration form.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College (Rep: Tim Kane)

We are at 98.3% capacity in our Math classes generating over 15,300 credit hours. Our Math Department employs 19 FT and about 20 PT mathematics faculty.

KVCC's enrollment for Fall 2009 represents a 23.1% increase in credit hours over Fall 2008.

Over the next 18 months, KVCC is building a 30,000 ft², two-level addition at the west end of campus.

The project will include classrooms/lecture halls and labs, student service areas, and much needed office space.

Four of our faculty (Winch, Stasiuk, Vendeville, and Wilson) attended Maria Andersen's technology workshop in August.

Tim Kane is our new Department Chairperson. The former department chairperson, Lee Marsh, who served over 15 years as our leader. Lee stepped down in January, but is still teaching and mentoring!

Many in the department are using new technology such as Webassign, MyMathLab, and Moodle.

Eight (8) of us will attend the MichMATYC Conference in Dearborn. Darlene Kohrman and Sheila Eisenhauer will present at MichMATYC.

Lansing Community College (Rep: Todd Troutman)

In the Department of Mathematical Skills, Professor Nicole Lloyd was recently appointed an AMATYC Project ACCESS Fellow.

The Mathematics and Computer Science Department lost a valued friend and colleague. On August 25, Bill Petry died in a bicycling accident. Bill had been a member of LCC's Math and Computer Science Department since 1970. He was also active in the Lansing community, in a wide range of roles. He served as a board member of the Lansing Area Peace Education Center for well over thirty years, traveled with peace teams to Palestine, was an active member of the faculty union (MAHE), bicycled across the United States, and rode ten times in the DALMAC bicycling event. He leaves behind his wife Julia, chair of the LCC Department of Social Science, a son and daughter-in-law, and a huge circle of friends. Kathy Burgis is the new Chair of Math and Computer Science.

Adjunct faculty member Laura Shears will have a poster session at this fall's League for Innovation Conference on Information Technology, in Detroit.

Mid Michigan College (Rep: David Kedrowski)

The Mid Michigan Community College mathematics department welcomed new hire Dr. Jordan Webster to our full-time staff in August. This hire finally fulfilled a 2004 promise to add a new full-time

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faculty member to our department.

Muskegon Community College (Rep: Maria Andersen)

Muskegon Community College hosted the 2nd (annual?) MCC Math & Technology Workshop August 10-14, 2009. There were 37 participants from Michigan, Texas, Illinois, California, New Jersey, South Carolina, Missouri, Washington, Massachusetts, Indiana, Arizona, and Qatar! We are looking at August 9-13, 2010 for the next workshop, so mark your calendars and look for more information in late October. Our math department would also like to welcome David Wiggins as our new full-timer hired to teach both Physics and Math.

Oakland Community College , Auburn Hills Campus (Rep: Gladys Rockind)

Long time faculty member Chuck Neumann retired in May from the Auburn Hills campus. His position is being filled on a temporary full time basis by Linda Britton, one of our adjunct instructors. We say good-bye to and Chuck and welcome Linda.

St Clair Co Community College, (Rep: Cindie Wade)

We are having a population boom at SC4, we have more student this semester than we have ever had (it may be 5000 by now) and so it is true in the Math Discipline also. Just about every class is filled and we have many Michigan Works students. Last year we hired Nick Goins as a fulltime instructor and Marie St. James as Limited Status fulltime instructor, to replace Aaron Beach who left last year. Carol Lambert retired and we have not replaced her yet. We adopted a new Pre-Calculus and Calc book We also adopted Bittinger & Beecher's Introductory and Intermediate Algebra book. Many of the instructors are using the Course Compass and MyMathLab that comes with the book. Last March we had a second annual "March Math Madness" for all of the Math instructors, both full time and adjunct. We saw what Course Compass had to offer and had some great discussions about things that various teachers use in their classrooms, such as gradebooks, activities, tricks of the trade, etc. The Dean even sprang for lunch. Before classes started in August we had a workshop on setting up Course Compass sites. Cindie attended Maria Andersen's Technology Workshop in August and is trying to use as much of what she learned in her online and face to face classes. She also has a Smartboard that she is still trying to learn more about. Many of us are looking forward to attending MichMATYC and AMATYC this year!

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

MICHMATYC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HENRY FORD CC (DEARBORN) OCTOBER 9-10

<http://michmatyc.org/michmatyc2009/index.htm>

AMATYC 35TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

LAS VEGAS, NV NOVEMBER 12 TO 15

<http://www.amatyc.org/Events/conferences/2009LV/>

Treasurer's Report

On behalf of the executive board, I would like to express my gratitude to our current members for their continuous support to MichMATYC. Your membership dues, your participation in the annual meeting, and the donations you make to the student scholarship fund have enabled us to continue to offer many services to our members and also continue to support other associations that share similar values.

We currently have about 120 current members and would like to increase this number by asking you to help in inviting non-members (full time and part time) to join MichMATYC. Even given the rising costs of some of the services we offer such as the printing and mailing of the Newsletter and the hosting of the website, our membership dues remains steady at \$5.00.

MichMATYC members receive a newsletter three times a year, subscribe to an electronic listserv where issues of great importance pertaining to the teaching and learning mathematics at the two-year college level are discussed. An excellent professional development opportunity for our members would be to attend or present at our annual conference. This year's conference will be hosted by Henry Ford Community College and next year conference will be hosted by Muskegon Community College. We encourage you to make plans to attend the conference this year and the conference next year. The annual meeting is a great way for Michigan two year college mathematicians to meet, present, and share new ideas and methodologies pertaining to teaching and learning.

MichMATYC recognizes excellence in student learning by offering the Student Scholarship Award which is funded by contributions from our members and money transferred from general fund when there is a shortage in the scholarship fund. At the fall 2008 conference, MichMATYC recognized one student as award recipient and the amount of the award was \$500.00. It is our goal to continue to offer such awards. Given our non-profit status, any contributions you make to the scholarship fund are tax deductible. For a membership form, please refer interested people to our website at <http://www.michmatyc.org>.

Sam Bazzi

MichMATYC Secretary / Treasurer ■