

TexMATYC News

Texas Mathematical Association of Two -Year Colleges Affiliate to the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges

Fall 2006

www.texmatyc.org

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The TexMATYC Board would like to invite each of you to attend the TCCTA/TexMATYC Conference to be held Feb. 22-24, 2007 at the Renaissance Hotel in Austin . The schedule for the conference will be available soon. We look forward to seeing everyone in February and look forward to a great conference.

2007 TexMATYC Award for Teaching Excellence Submission Deadline: December 15, 2007

Know someone that you can nominate for this award? This statewide prestigious award is given to a deserving individual who is an exceptional teacher.

Nominees must have a minimum of five years teaching experience with the last two years in Texas. The nominee's primary assigned duties must be delivering instruction in an associate's degree program. Teaching excellence is the main focus of this award. The Award winner will be announced at TexMATYC official meeting held in conjunction with TCCTA. All TexMATYC awardees will be nominated for AMATYC Teaching Excellence Award, which is given in odd-numbered years.

Nomination forms are available online at www.texmatyc.org.

Proposals for the TCCTA/TexMATYC Conference are now being accepted online. www.texmatyc.org.

Community College Day at the Capitol will be Thursday, February 22. TCCTA will provide bus transportation from the Renaissance Austin Hotel.

President's Message Mel Griffin, Texas A&M University

Greetings Colleagues,

Another academic year has begun with many potential changes on the horizon that will affect mathematics in community colleges. Some of these issues are related to actions of the 79th Texas Legislature which met in 2005.

House Bill 2808 (HB 2808) which passed during the regular session includes language for the Texas P-16 Council to make at least twelve hours of dual-credit courses available to high school students in every high school in the state. Co-chairs of the P-16 Council are the Commissioner of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency. The rules for the enactment of this bill are currently being discussed and written. The language of the bill states:

....the bill requires the council (P-16), on or before January I, 2007, to (1) review existing school district programs that allow high school students to enroll in advanced academic courses offered through dual credit and concurrent enrollment programs; (2) review the recommended high school program curriculum; and (3) study the feasibility of offering a revised curriculum that would provide graduating high school students with at least 12 hours of advanced academic courses or college-level coursework through dual credit and concurrent enrollment programs.

HB 2808 was to study the issues concerning dual-credit and advanced academic courses, but this became law in House Bill I passed in the third special session of the 2005 Legislature in September, 2006. This is not a time to argue the pros and cons of dual-credit classes; this is the time to be proactive to ensure the delivery of these courses with the highest quality and integrity possible. Offering dual-credit is not an option; this is in statute. If you have never studied the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for high school mathematics classes, now is the time to read them carefully and relate them to the objectives and standards of college mathematics courses that have the potential to be dual-credit classes. The TEKS are the legislatively mandated curriculum for public schools. To award dual-credit for a course, the TEKS must be included and aligned with the college course. This is not difficult to do, but every one of us should become knowledgeable of these requirements.

Additionally, House Bill I (passed in the third called special session) mandates that every student graduating from a Texas high school under the Recommended High School Program will take four years of science and four years of mathematics. The State Board of Education (SBOE) voted on Thursday, September 14, 2006, to add two additional credits to the high school graduation requirements to meet the guidelines of this legislation. This will begin with the students who will be graduating in 2011. The SBOE also voted to allow students who take Algebra I in the eighth grade to count the eighth-grade algebra as one of their four required courses. This potentially allows these students to take no mathematics their senior year in high school which defeats the purpose of many of the backers of this bill. These topics have two more readings before they become Texas Education Agency rules. We should all be alert to this action and the impact it will have on entering college freshmen and mathematics placement.

At least one mathematics group is proposing to use the current Mathematics Modeling course as an alternative course for the third course, following Algebra I and Geometry, and to move Algebra II to the senior year. While another group, lead by the Austin Chamber Task Force on Math and Science, is proposing a senior-level course with Algebra II as a prerequisite. This proposed course will benefit students who are going into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs that will lead to certification programs, or associate and bachelors degrees that prepare students for the high-tech workforce. This is an addition to the current choices such as precalculus, calculus, and statistics; it does not replace those options for students. The proposal for the Task Force course is to ensure a better-prepared workforce for the high-tech industries in Texas. This high school option could positively impact community college programs.

The Texas Legislature will begin the 80th session in January 2007, but the composition of the legislature will not be determined until the November 2006 elections. Voting is every citizen's right and responsibility. Study the issues and VOTE.

Best Wishes,

Mel Griffin



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Benefits of TexMATYC Membership – Priceless! Paula Wilhite, Vice President



The 2006 September membership drive is off and running. Let's spread the word about the benefits of membership in the Texas Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges. Consider what your \$5 annual membership dues will buy in one year. Can you think of a better bargain?

Online professional development February mini-conference Fall, winter, and spring newsletters TexMATYC membership listserv Participation in state-wide surveys Information from state-wide surveys Southwest Regional conference June 2007 Representation to AMATYC Collaboration and networking among mathematics educators CE units for HS teachers who are adjunct faculty Connection with TAMU and Dana Center VITA enhancement

Please join our effort to strengthen our voice for quality mathematics education in Texas by talking to a colleague (full-time or part-time) about the benefits of our organization. If your membership has expired, please take time today to renew.

Information on how to join /renew your membership is located at <u>www.texmatyc.org</u>.

AMATYC Southwest Regional Conference June 15-17, 2007 San Antonio, TX

Invited Speakers Joseph Gallian, University of Minnesota Gloria White, Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin



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Data Collection Tools Heather Gamber Cy-Fair College



Do your students ask, "Why do we need to know math?" Data collection tools now allow your students to discover some real applications for themselves. Tools such as motion detectors and pressure and force monitors, which can be attached to TI-83 & TI-84 calculators, are not just for science classes.

Here are three examples I have tried:

• In Trigonometry after studying curve fitting, have each group set up a pendulum (borrowed from the physics department) and record its motion with a motion detector attached to a calculator. The sinusoidal graph of simple harmonic motion will be reproduced and students can use their newly acquired curve fitting techniques to model the curve and compare it to the theoretical curve based on measurements of the system.

• In College Algebra add some relevance to the reciprocal function by investigating the reciprocal relationship that Boyle's law gives between the pressure and volume of a gas by using a syringe of air attached to a pressure sensor.

In Algebra, motion detectors can be used to replicate distance versus time graphs. Yes, these experiments take time to set up and class time, but the "Aha!" moment at the end of the lesson when students make the connection between the real world and abstract math will make it worth your while.



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Cy-Fair College (NHMCCD) is now in its fourth year and its enrolment continues to grow. We are pleased to welcome Dr. Wendy Alexander to the Mathematics Department and David Miller to the Transitional Mathematics Department. Wendy has been an adjunct at Cy-Fair College for the last 2 years, and David joins us from Cy-Creek High School.

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TexMATYC Executive Board

Mel Griffin President Texas A&M University melgriffin@tamu.edu

Paula Wilhite Vice-President Northeast Texas CC pwilhite@ntcc.edu

Peg Crider Secretary Tomball College peg.crider@nhmccd.edu

Habib Far Treasurer Montgomery College habib.y.far@nhmccd.edu

Heather Gamber AMATYC Delegate Cy-Fair College Heather.a.gamber2@nhmccd.edu

Linda Zientek Past-President Blinn College - Brenham natile.woodrow@tstc.edu

Mary Robinson AMATYC Southwest VP U of New Mexico—Valencia maryrobn@unm.edu



Dates to Remember!

TCCTA/TexMATYC Conference February 22-24, 2007 Austin, TX

AMATYC Annual Conference November 2-5, 2006 Cincinnati, OH

AMATYC Regional Conference June 14—16, 2007 San Antonio, TX

A College Algebra survey is currently being conducted and mathematics

GOT NEWS?

If you know of any exciting news in mathematics, have it published in your TexMatyc newsletter! Please submit articles to Heather Gamber

(Heather.a.gamber2@nhmccd.edu)