Math Basic Skills Committee of Connecticut  
October 15, 2010, TxCC  
Minutes

Present: Larisa Alikhanova (TRCC), Alain D’Amour (SCSU), Elaine Dinto (NVCC), Paul Edelen (MCC), Teresa Foley (ACC), André Freeman (CCC), Pam Frost (MxCC), David Gross (UConn), Pat Hirschy (ACC), Mark Leach (HCC), Sue Ricciuti (TxCC), Rachael Schettenhelm (GCC), Nick Stugard (TxCC), Kim Ward (ECSU)

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:35 pm.

2. The minutes of the September 17th, 2010 meeting at Tunxis were approved 13-0-1 with only one minor correction.

3. Announcements

The fall 2010 AMATYC conference is taking place November 11-14 in Boston. André will each be giving a presentation.

4. Old Business

André distributed course outlines for the Statway I / II courses approved by Capital Community College. This course sequence (created as part of a Carnegie Foundation grant initiative involving Capital, Housatonic, Naugatuck Valley and Gateway) is a sequence of two Mathematics 4-credit courses designed for students who place in Elementary Algebra and whose goal is to complete Elementary Statistics in order to fulfill the Mathematics requirement for their intended program of study. Students can reach their goal within 2 semesters instead of the normal 3 semester sequence MAT 095/137/167. The Statway I course essentially covers Elementary Algebra material and Descriptive Statistics. The Statway II course covers quadratic and exponential models and Inferential Statistics. André estimates that Statway II covers approximately 60% of an Intermediate Algebra course. (For instance, it does not include rational, radical and general polynomial functions, factoring, and systems of equations.) Obviously, these courses were not created to attract STEM students, and should students change their minds and switch to math or science, they would not be prepared to go on to a College Algebra or PreCalculus course.

André met with Jeff McGowan at CCSU (and Gateway’s Sam Perugini will be meeting with Terri Bennett at SCSU this coming week). Jeff suggested that the algebra content of the sequence be beefed up to include at least 70-80% of the Intermediate Algebra material in order to secure transferability to Central. David mentioned that because of UConn’s no backward rule, this may cause problems for students transferring to UConn. There might be problems with UConn’s Q-course designation as well. In the meantime, André is looking for feedback and comments about forging articulation agreements with CSU and UConn.

Faculty compensation and student fees relating to irregular schedules were discussed. Some community colleges allow 4-contact-hour courses to count as 3-credit courses for students, others don’t. There was also a brief discussion about the national trend of trying to attract students by promising to cram course content into shortened course sequences by providing “just what is needed” in terms of material and nothing else in order to save students time and money. So the 1-year formula to get through the math requirement in a targeted fashion certainly has traction.

Pat mentioned that identifying specific student populations for the sequence will help make the project viable. David suggested that getting provisional transfer approval in the early stages would be the way to go (because of the tendency to give new ideas a chance to prove themselves).
5. New Business

The Emporium Model mode of instruction was discussed. The following transpired:

- In Spring 2011, Manchester will offer 4 sections (capped at 50 students each) for students who need MAT 075 and 095. Students have the potential of getting through both courses and paying for only 3 credits. Paul talked about the mechanics of instruction. He also noted that student attendance is required in order to pass the class, and exams are proctored.
- Larisa mentioned that Three Rivers will pilot something similar in Fall 2011.
- Mark mentioned that Housatonic has been doing this for several years now. The course is called Open Entry Open Exit Mathematics and it uses MyMathLab to deliver instruction. Enrollments are usually high, which Mark suggested might be because students like computers and the notion of self-pace instruction, and also because students who register late cannot find room in traditional courses. These courses are tailored for students who need 2 to 3 semesters of remediation. Unfortunately, many students don’t stick with it, don’t work at it outside of class, and do not register for the second semester. This has led to poor success rates. Committee members also mentioned that an estimate puts at 5-9% the proportion of MAT 075 students who wind up successfully completing MAT 137 down the road.

The discussion then moved on to online courses. Kim talked about ECSU’s informal intention of phasing out their Elementary Algebra course, MAT 098. As of now, the sequence includes MAT 098, MAT 101 (Intermediate Algebra), and MAT 101W (Intermediate Algebra with Workshop) which more or less combines the material from 098 and 101. Kim was asked to create a MAT 101P course designed for non-science majors who placed into MAT 098. This is a 5-credit course for which students receive 3 credits and instructors receive 4.5 credits of compensation. It is comprised of 4 in-class hours and 1 mandatory online hour per week, and MyMathLab is used to deliver instruction. Students have daily problem-solving online assignments. This approach creates a very high-maintenance teaching environment for instructors. When leaving the course, students can move on to either Math for the Liberal Arts or Number System.

A brief discussion on student disposition and study skills ensued.

The committee set the meeting schedule for the spring semester: February 11th, March 11th, April 15th, and May 13th (should there be a need for an additional meeting). Participants thanked David for chairing the meeting in Senan’s absence.

Meeting was adjourned around 3:10 pm.
Respectfully submitted by A. D’Amour