

Math Department Meeting Notes

Date: February 7th, 2008

Time: 1:00PM

Room: B 206A

In Attendance: Joanne Manville, Yvette Straughter, Irene Sancinito, Adele Hamblett, Y. Venkat Rao, Barbara Ton Ferullo, Kiruba Murugaiah, Christian Agunwamba, Amaparo Hernandez-Folch, Chris Watson

Conducted by: Y. Venkat Rao

Minutes Recorded by: Kiruba Murugaiah

Agenda:

1. Review and Approve Minutes from December 4th Meeting
2. Math Computer Lab – Software
3. Math Computer Lab Coordinator – Update
4. Master Schedule – New Developments
5. MAT 090 – on line Final Exam Data
6. Developmental Math Sequence – Any Update
7. College Algebra Course Modification
8. MAT 090 Text Book(s)
9. General Concentration Program Review

Discussions:

1. Review and approval of the meeting minutes
2. Math Computer Lab Software 30 user TI-Interactive software has been purchased but we need to know where to install these. Venkat conducted a survey on the departments thoughts about where to install certain software. Other decisions made were to:
 - a. Install TI Interactive in the 25 Math Lab computers.

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Meet the Faculty

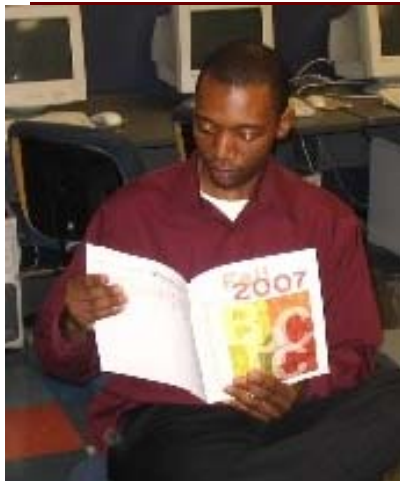


Kiruba Murugaiah was born in the small war torn South Asian Island of Sri Lanka, where her native language was Tamil. Having done all her education in English, she also speaks French. Hindu by birth, Kiruba believes in the universality of all religions and their fundamental teachings of love, righteousness, non-violence, peace, and truth.

As a six year old, she boarded a plane for the first time and landed in Guyana, South America, where her father worked as a Research Scientist at the Science Institute and was a lecturer at the University of Guyana. She received her pri-

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Mathematics Computer Lab



The Mathematics Department welcomes Mr. Louis Gregoire, who has accepted the position of Math Computer Lab Coordinator. Louis will start on March 3, 2008.

Louis earned a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Salem State College and a Master of Education degree from Cambridge College with specialization in Instructional Technology. He has taught math and computer science at Roxbury Community College, North Shore Community College, the ITT Institute and Newbury College. He has extensive experience teaching and tutoring developmental math and the uses of computer software in math instruction.

Of his teaching philosophy, Louis writes: "I endeavor to provide multiple opportunities for students to learn new material, realizing that while some students can learn through reading a chapter, others need to discuss it, and still others need to have it displayed visually. . . ."

Meet the Faculty (cont.)

mary and a portion of her secondary education there under the British system, and developed her love for all forms of dancing, especially the Indian classical dances of kathak and bharathanatyam.

After spending six glorious sunny and relaxing years of carnivals and calypso in Guyana, her family moved to Seattle, Washington, where her father was accepted into the Ph.D. program in Analytical Chemistry at the University of Washington. During this time all members of her family were in school on F1 (student visas) and not permitted to work. The family lived a very simple life style in campus housing on her dad's graduate student allowance. Kiruba graduated from high school in 3 years at the age of 15 and soon after her dad's graduation the family moved to Somerville, Massachusetts.

Although, she applied to MIT and Harvard and some other prestigious schools and was accepted into some of them, she was nervous about attending University as a 15 year old. She decided to enroll at Bunker Hill Community College.

At Bunker Hill, Kiruba tutored at the Center for Self Directed Learning for several years, even after graduating and moving on to Boston University. It was tutoring that inspired Kiruba to become a teacher. She gives this moving account of how she was working with a student who was a slow learner but extremely dedicated and hard working. "His name was Eugene, a student from Haiti studying to be a registered nurse. He stayed for hours on end during our tutoring sessions and did this without fail for two semesters until the day he passed his final exam with an A, after which, he came to thank me with a dozen roses. I can never forget this student's diligence and drive, or the feeling of accomplishment that I felt in helping him patiently as he reasoned through each problem."

Although teaching was of interest to her, she first worked four years for IBM as a programmer. She was a traveling IT specialist, which sounded exciting until she realized that office buildings anywhere in the US looked the same, cubicles looked the same and she could no longer interact only with a computer monitor day in and day out. Remembering her passion for teaching, she returned to school and earned a Master's Degree in Mathematics Education from Teachers College at Columbia University. Immediately after graduation, Kiruba joined the Peace Corps, where she taught Mathematics in French for two years in a remote village high school in Guinea, West Africa. She lived in a hut, had no electricity, little to no communication with her family or other English speakers, ate out of one plate every day with her host family, and taught students who came by foot from villages at least five kilometers away. Shortage of supplies and food and little to no infrastructure was the norm.

Within a month of her return to Boston, she joined Bunker Hill's adjunct faculty and a year later was hired as a full time faculty to the Math Department. "I love Bunker Hill's diversity the most," says Kiruba, "and I love once again dancing in the D-lounge as I did when I was a student and a member of the Asian club."

Kiruba is very excited these days about her impending wedding on April 19th!!!!

Math Department Meeting Notes (cont.)

b. There are 20 other licenses to be obtained from Joanne or 5 extra from Venkat for faculty. Contact Venkat/Joanne if you want a copy of TI-Interactive for your personal computer

c. Mathtype is available for the entire college; Venkat will send an email on how to access it

d. We have 4 full licenses for Sketchpad; all math lab computers will have it.

Joanne commented: The way TI Interactive licenses work is that you can have one copy in office, classroom and home. Sketchpad is not the same.

Question: Is there a centralized place for all software or paperwork?

The old ones are with Joanne, the new versions are with Venkat. Academic computing will have records as will Venkat. The chairperson of the department is supposed to maintain all paperwork related to software licenses.

3. Math Lab Coordinator Information is with President Fifield. As soon as she approves, he/she will be on board. (Editor's note: see announcement on page 2.)

4. Master Schedule – New Developments In the Dean's Council Meeting it was decided that the college will be preparing Fall and Spring schedules at the same time as an experiment. Some chairpersons are not very happy with this. This was not discussed in Department Chair's meeting. The template has already been sent for both semesters to the Department Chairs. This leaves us with very little flexibility. The Math Department is curious about the advantage of this change as it seems to be creating more of an issue. The supposed advantage is related to maximizing college classroom space. Venkat will update us on any new developments.

5. MAT 090 online Final Exam Data - postponed for next meeting.

6. Developmental Math Sequence

Joanne spoke on behalf of Ted that he has all but 2 signatures to push the new proposal forward. The Business Dept and Computer Dept need to review and sign. The proposal will be on the curriculum meeting agenda for the next meeting as it wasn't ready with the 2 signatures yet.

7. College Algebra Development – This is a work in progress; the committee members are basically playing with objectives for the MAT 195 STEM oriented course and the new Liberal Arts oriented course. Meeting for an informational session in March with the curriculum committee has been scheduled. We are waiting on institutional data from David Leavitt. We are hoping for a Fall change but it depends on how we progress. The committee also discussed re-introducing Rational Expressions into the new MAT 095 course and requested the department's opinion on this.

Joanne mentioned that currently the proposal for developmental sequence is underway so we need to wait for that change to be approved before adding more objectives to the course.

Amparo agrees that the department first needs to see a list of objectives and also we need to review the retention rates for 195 as they are different from 095. Her object criteria are how the changes will affect success rates and retention rates. She also feels that when the department embarks upon multiple changes at once it becomes difficult to track changes and evaluate the success or failure of these changes. Are the students succeeding/failing because of the change in the developmental sequence or in the college algebra course?

Yvette agrees that we need to allow the current proposal to go through and suggested that the entire March agenda for the departmental meeting should be to take a look at the objectives from 090 to 195 in order to decide whether to include/omit Rational Expressions.

Chris feels that we need to revisit the Rational Expressions topic. It has to be covered in one of the courses so what is best for our students? This will definitely affect student success rate. He sent out an email last year about possibly having Rational Expressions reintroduced into MAT 095 and he believes that we should revisit the topic again. The new 095 will have 2 less chapters than the current one. So adding one more chapter will still leave us with a 095 course with one less chapter than what we have now so we should consider it.

Joanne added that another piece to consider is maybe have an Introduction to rational expressions without getting into operations in MAT 095.

Venkat summarized everyone comments. There is a consensus in the department to discuss the addition of some portion of Rational Expressions and the April departmental meeting will be dedicated to objectives review of MAT 090 to MAT 195. Also, if the department agrees then an amendment to the current proposal can be made after it has been approved by the curriculum committee.

Math Department Meeting Notes (cont.)

8. MAT 090 Text Book

Stazskow released a new edition without informing anyone on time. Yvette tried to contact representatives at Kendall Hunt unsuccessfully. The books arrived late at the bookstore. In addition the publisher included the student access code on an index card in the front cover of the book which could be easily lost by a student. Also students should not have access to this code until it is time to take the final exam. Also, they want to charge individuals \$15 per access code if they have old textbooks. The college has a large account with Kendall/Hunt and also runs the exit exams with them so this is highly disappointing. Should we consider a different textbook? **This issue is open and to be revisited.**

9. General Concentration Program Review There will be a meeting on Feb 14th and will Venkat will report back any new information.

10. In other news

- a. Since Geri Curley is retired the responsibility of coordinating MAT 085 is now part of the developmental math coordinator's job.
- b. Chris Watson is having a new baby
- c. Kiruba is getting married in April

Notes from the Department Chair

Two of our colleagues are taking part in learning communities courses.

1. Culinary Calculations: Weights & Measures – How the Food Services Industry Will Be Measuring You Up

This is offered by George Kelly, Mary Beth Barton (Culinary Arts) and Yvette Straughter (Mathematics).

2. Algorithms, Analytical Skills and Problem Solving

This is offered by Hariklia Delta (Computer Information Technology) and Kiruba Murugaiah (Mathematics)

Editor's Notes

If you have any suggestions for an article or have a story you would like published, please forward it to Irene A. Sancinito, Mathematics Department at BHCC or send it to isancinito@bhcc.mass.edu. Electronic format preferred.

If you would like to submit an article for, "Meet the Faculty", please do so in electronic form. I will publish one per month on a first come, first published basis.

The deadline for the March issue is March 15, 2008.

Visit our Mathematics website (part of the BHCC website):

<http://www.bhcc.mass.edu/math>