

Sinclair Mathnet

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FROM THE CHAIR



The college is currently in the process of considering some dramatic changes in the regulations for Regular and Special Adjunct positions. Since this may significantly affect some of you, I would like to update you on the current state of the dialogue. My

remarks will be ordered as follows:

1. A brief review of the current regulations
2. Some of the concerns that have motivated the effort to make changes
3. Highlights of the proposal that is on the table
4. Some reaction to the proposal

1. Regular Adjunct faculty are hired for a one-year contract to teach 45 credit hours and assume some additional outside the classroom activities. They receive the same rate of pay as a tenure track faculty member at the Instructor rank and the same benefits as tenure track faculty except during summer quarters. Their contract can be renewed at the discretion of the department chair (subject to college approval) for up to three years. At the end of the three years their position is considered open, a search is set up and they must reapply if they wish to continue in the position.

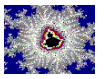
Special Adjunct faculty are hired for a one-quarter contract to teach 15 credit hours without additional teaching duties. They receive the same rate of pay as part-time faculty and the same benefits as tenure track faculty for the quarter they are under contract. Their contract can be renewed at the discretion of the department chair (subject to college approval) for up to eight quarters in a row (excluding summer quarters). After the eight quarters their service must be broken for a quarter before they can be contracted again. The eight-quarter limitation was instituted recently to assure that an "expectation of continued full-time employment" would not be established.

2. Some concerns about the present system include the fact that both adjuncts are without benefits when their

contracts lapse, and the fact that Regular Adjuncts who, although they may be doing a very good job, are required to go through the stressful process of having to reapply every three years. This also forces the college and departments to go through the expensive and time-consuming process of doing a search every three years. There is also the feeling that the Special Adjunct position exploits employees to some extent by tying them up on a full-time basis, often for many quarters in a row, without providing full-time pay or any meaningful kind of job security or adequate professional development opportunities. In addition, there is concern about the complexity of a staffing structure with so many levels of employment.

3. A proposal is currently under consideration that would replace the two types of adjunct positions with a single type of position called an Annually Contracted Faculty (ACF). The ACF would be like the current Regular Adjunct position in most respects. Notable exceptions are that benefits would extend over the summer, some small amount of sick leave could be accrued from year to year if an annual contract is renewed, and annual contracts could be renewed at the discretion of the chair (subject to college approval) without the three year limit or any limit. By the proposal the Special Adjunct position would be gradually phased out over the next four years. It is important to emphasize that this is only a proposal that is currently under discussion. No decisions have been made to date.

4. Reactions to the proposal have been mixed. There seems to be widespread satisfaction with the extension of benefits through the summer and the elimination of the need to reapply every third year. It seems that little concern has been raised about the fact that this latter provision would place some power in the hands of department chairs that currently resides in the hands of the department search committees. A great deal of concern has been raised, however, about the fact that departments are likely to have great difficulty staffing the many day classes that are currently staffed by Special Adjuncts if that position is phased out. This is because, while some Special Adjuncts would continue to teach as either Annually Contracted Faculty or part-time faculty, many may not. (Continued on Page 3.)



Faculty Issues - Prerequisites

It happens every quarter. At least one (sometimes many) of the students registered for our class has not met the prerequisite, but wants to stay in the course. What do we say to these students who swear to us that they'll work very hard, that even though they haven't had Trig and this is Calculus I, they know they'll be able to review the prerequisite material on their own, and they really need this class or they won't be able to graduate, and so on and so forth?

This was one of the issues that we discussed at the Math Department Retreat last summer, and we'd like to take this opportunity to share some of the responses that were suggested there.

- Remind students of the Math Department policy concerning the C-grade prerequisite. Assure them that this is not an arbitrary decision on your part, but that you are acting according to the rules of the Department.
- Suggest that they take the placement test if they have not done so already. (See the accompanying article on Placement Tests.)
- Remind them that we need them to be able to carry skills from one level to the next. Mathematics builds upon those basic skills from the prerequisite course, and we won't always have time to review them in class.
- Warn them that they won't have time to both review the material from the prerequisite course *and* learn the material from the current course. Besides, they won't know what material to review until they

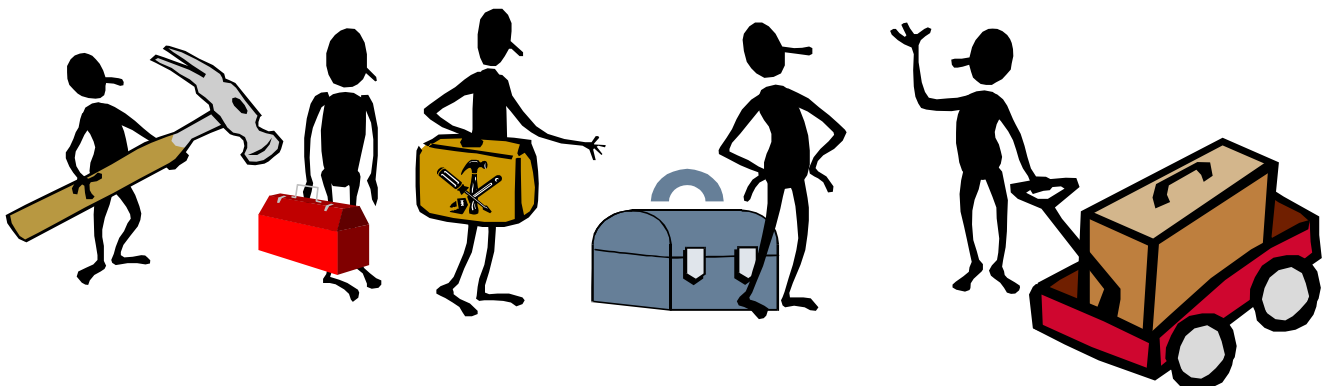
reach the point in the course when it is used, and then it's too late!

- Warn them that the difficulty level of math courses increases as they go on, and the tool kit that they need to take with them increases in size. We don't want them to be missing any of its pieces!
- Tell them that we want them to succeed! Try to convince them that it would be better to take the prerequisite course and do really well in it, than to take this course, struggle with it, and lose their self-confidence - not to mention what a four or five hour D or F will do to their grade point average!

Placement Tests

Because placement into the correct math course is so critical to student success, the Department has an extensive placement program to assure that this takes place.

- All students are expected to take the Math Placement Test given in Room 10445. If not satisfied with their score, students may retake this test up to four times, but retakes must be separated by at least 24 hours. This test, however, only identifies whether the student should be placed in Dev 085, Dev 108, Math 101, Math 102, Math 105, Math 108, Math 121 or Math 131. Placement tests are also given in Room 10445 for Math 117, 122, 132, 133, 151, 201, 218, and 220, but these tests may be attempted only once.
- For placement into Math 116, the student should go to the Math Lab in Room 1315.
- For placement into other courses, the student should go to the Math Office.





(Continued from Page 1.)

It has been suggested that the college undertake a broad-based faculty recruiting initiative to remedy this.

While these issues remain in the discussion stage there seems to be strong interest in instituting some revisions in the adjunct policy soon. It is important for you to be aware of this issue, and I welcome your comments about the changes that are under consideration.

Al Giambrone ■

REMINDERS

- If a student is unable to come in for the final exam, they should not be sent the exam to take on their own. Either give them a zero on the exam and assign them a final grade, or, if appropriate, give them an Incomplete grade and have them take the test later. Another possibility is to arrange for a proctor to administer the exam at the student's location.
- If a student has not received an Incomplete grade, they normally should not be permitted to complete any work after the last day of the quarter.
- Please remember to return any textbooks that you will not be using next quarter to the Office.
- Students should exhibit appropriate behavior in the classroom. Do not permit them to distract you or other students by unnecessary talking during class or through rude language or body language. Do not be afraid to expect them to raise their hand rather than interrupting when they have a question or comment. Teachers and students alike should display a professional demeanor and attitude in the classroom.



Al presented Dr. Lawrence K. Chilton, a professor at AFIT, a parting gift for speaking at the Fall Quarter Department Colloquium in October. The title of his talk was "Orthogonal Polynomials – What's All the Fuss?"



DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM



We will have a Department Colloquium on Friday, February 9, 2001 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 1001. All members of our full- and part-time faculty are welcome, as well as students who are interested in mathematics. The speakers and titles are as follows:

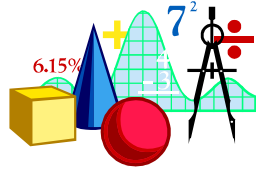
1. Mr. Tom Wilson, Professor of Mathematics
"Education in China"
2. Dr. Harvey Chew, Professor of Mathematics, Sinclair Community College
"The Personalities of Numbers"

Refreshments will be served.

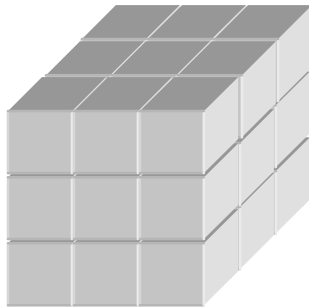


Test Your Skills

The Problem of the Week Contest, the weekly challenge problem contest for students sponsored by Susan Harris, put forth the following problem for week 7 (the week of 10/23/00).



We build a cube with 27 unit cube pieces. Is it possible to remove 10 unit cubes from the structure so that the surface area of the remaining body is the same as that of the large cube? (We assume the relative position of the cubes we have after the removal remains the same.)



This problem evoked many other interesting questions.

1. How many cubes removed, and in what way, will yield the largest surface area?
2. How many possibilities are there of removing 10 cubes that give the same surface area as that of the large cube? Which of these possibilities could actually be realized using a child's set of blocks?
3. By removing any 10 cubes, what is the largest and smallest surface area that can be obtained?
4. What is the largest and smallest number of cubes removed, and in what way, that still gives the same surface area as that of the large cube?
5. Which integer surface areas between six and the answer to question 1 can be obtained by appropriately removing cubes?

Share with *Mathnet* your solutions to any of these questions, and we invite you to pose further problems raised by the initial problem.

Swimmer Wins Medals

Dayton Synchronettes, Synchronized Swimming Club of Dayton, Ohio, sent thirty swimmers, ages 22-84, to the Masters National Synchronized Swimming Championships in Landover, MD, October 26-28, 2000. The club entered 26 events including solos, duets, trios and teams and brought home 6 gold, 6 silver, and 4 bronze medals. There were 29 clubs from 17 states from coast to coast and more than 200 swimmers.

Results:

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Dayton Synchronettes | 182 points |
| Unsyncables, Southern CA | 106 points |
| Oregon Synchro Masters | 87 points |

We would like to congratulate **Jeanne Schlagetter**, part-time mathematics faculty member, who received 2 gold (trio and individual figures), 1 silver (team) and 1 bronze medal (solo). These were all in the 60s age group. In events with more than one person, the age is determined by the average age of all swimmers in that routine. — Hey! Here's a use for the mean!

Harvey's Joke Corner

If the number 2 pencil is the most popular pencil, then why isn't it number one?

An extended-answer question: Do you prefer unsubscripted or subscripted variables? Explain y or y_0 .

Long odds: I bet on a horse at 10 to 1, but it didn't come in until 2:30.

Q. What is a math teacher's favorite meeting place at restaurants?

A. The counter.

A few minutes before the end of a class on using the quadratic formula, I reminded students that "It is $-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}$ ALL OVER 2a." Everyone left.

