

# Sinclair Mathnet

June 2005

Volume 11, Issue 6

## FROM THE CHAIR



This issue of *Mathnet* marks the completion of our tenth full year of publication! The first issue was published in March of 1995. Three issues were published during that first academic year and six issues have now been published in every one of the ten academic years since then. I think this is a remarkable record. With the exception of the quarterly bulletin and the course catalog, I can think of no other ongoing college publication with such a long and consistent record. And *Mathnet*, with a tiny staff and no budget, comes out twice per quarter as opposed to once per quarter for the bulletin and once per year for the catalog!

The long term consistency and the frequency of *Mathnet* are a testimony to the dedication, perseverance and reliability of our two editors, Lyn Keeler and David Stott, who have made certain that a high quality sample of this publication has appeared in our mailboxes twice every quarter for ten years. Also to be commended is Harvey Chew who has consistently entertained us with his joke corner from his first joke in the March 1995 issue (Q. What do you call the time following your class each day? A. The aftermath) to his most

recent joke in the May 2005 issue (Definition of a square: A circle trying to go straight). I won't give it away here, but see page 4 of this issue for his latest contribution.

In that first issue of *Mathnet* I discussed the intensive series of department meetings that resulted in a Department Plan, which included not only the establishment of *Mathnet*, but a number of other initiatives as well. Included among these was the establishment of the Technology Committee, chaired by Frank Hammons (now chaired by Len Ruth), which was then charged with "developing a utilization strategy for the computer equipped classroom" and with establishing a policy for the "use of graphing calculators in our courses" that now appears in section 5.3 of our handbook. Also discussed was the establishment of the Formula Memorization Committee, chaired by Susan Myers (now chaired by Lyn Keeler), that was

charged with creating "a list of formulas that students would be required to memorize in each course in our curriculum." These lists now appear in all of our syllabi.

Since that first issue *Mathnet* has served up articles on topics ranging from "Method vs. Details in Grading" by part-timer Byron Hall (Jan. 1996) to *Technology in the Classroom-Why Teach Mathematics* by part-timer Jean Carlson (May 1997) to a piece on famous paradoxes by the editors (November 1999) to *Maize* (Continued on Page 4)

## Our first issue



## Sinclair Mathnet

March 1995

Volume 1, Issue 1

### FROM THE CHAIR

It is indeed a pleasure to introduce you to this first edition of the Mathematics Department Newsletter. The idea of a newsletter was overwhelmingly supported by the part-time faculty in the questionnaire that I distributed in the Fall, and its primary purpose will be to benefit the part-time faculty by keeping them better informed of the activities of the department and to give them a sense of more intimate involvement in the life of the department. I strongly urge all faculty, but particularly part-time faculty, to share your input with me, Lyn Keeler or Dave Stott regarding any issues that you would consider it useful to address in future editions.

An intensive series of Department meetings in the Fall term has resulted in a Department Plan that includes a number of important initiatives, not the least of which is this newsletter! I would like to highlight a couple of the others.

A Technology Committee under the leadership of Frank Hammons has been established and charged, among

other things, with developing a utilization strategy for the computer equipped classroom which we hope to have operational next year. The committee has also been asked to establish policies for the use of graphing calculators in our courses and to implement an educational initiative to help our faculty understand the potential uses of technology in the classroom.

Susan Myers is heading up the Formula Memorization Committee which will establish a list of those formulas that students will be required to memorize in each course in our curriculum. This idea was suggested by a variety of people including some members of the part-time staff. When this work is completed, the course syllabi will be augmented accordingly, and I believe that this will solve many problems for our faculty as well as our students.

Thanks to Lyn Keeler and Dave Stott for their willingness to work on this publication. I'm glad that you have read this far; I hope you will read on, and I hope you will find our newsletter helpful.



Faculty Feature – Wendy Chang

This year’s recipient of the Mathematics Department Part-time Faculty Member of the Year Award is Wendy Cheng, who was recognized at the Department Colloquium on April 29.

Wendy started teaching in the Math Department part-time six years ago. Some of you may remember that Wendy has also served the Math Department as one of the Math Lab Coordinators. At the time of Sy Ostransky’s retirement from the position of lab coordinator at the end of Winter Quarter in 2002, Wendy Cheng agreed to fill in until a full-time replacement for Sy could be found.



Wendy moved to the United States from Taiwan in 1985. She has a Masters degree in Actuarial Science from the University of Connecticut. Her previous teaching experiences include a position at the Eastern Connecticut University, where she taught just prior to coming to Dayton seven years ago.

Congratulations Wendy on this well-deserved honor!

Susan Harris ■

New Textbooks for Fall 2005

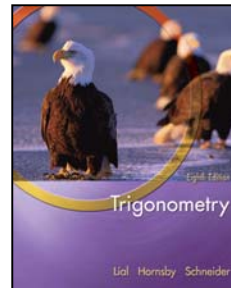
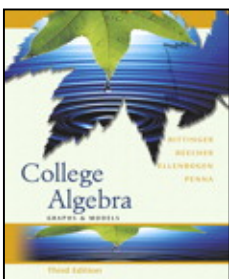
New texts were selected for six courses. Please be sure that you are using the correct edition of the text and an up-to-date syllabus for each of the classes you are teaching in the Fall.

MATH 116 Graphing Calculator Section

College Algebra: Graphs and Models, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Bittinger, Beecher, Ellenbogen, Penna

Addison-Wesley 2006



MATH 117

Trigonometry, 8th Edition

Lial, Hornsby, and Schneider

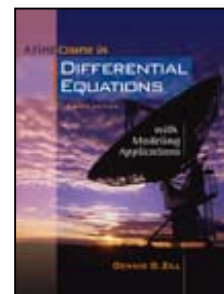
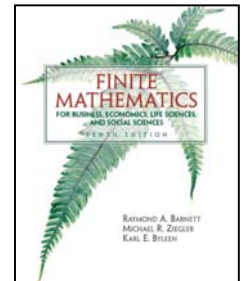
Pearson; Addison-Wesley 2005

MATH 218

Finite Mathematics for Business Economics, Life Sciences and Social Sciences, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition

Barnett, Ziegler, Byleen

Prentice Hall 2005



MATH 215

A First Course In Differential Equations with Modeling Applications, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition

Dennis G. Zill

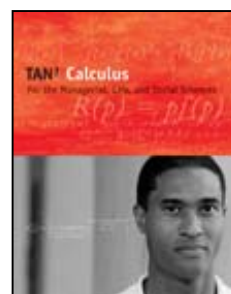
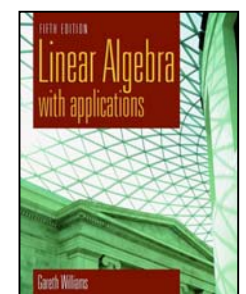
Brooks/Cole 2005.

MATH 216

Linear Algebra with Applications, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

Gareth Williams

Jones and Bartlett 2006

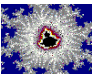


MATH 218

Calculus for the Managerial, Life, and Social Sciences, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition

Soo T. Tan

Brooks/Cole 2006



## Can You Read Me Now?

Accdrnig to rsearech at an Elingsh uinervtisy, it deosn't mttar in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteers are in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae we do not raed ervey lteter by itslef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

The paragraph above (once deciphered) is a slightly altered version of a statement made by Graham Rawlinson in a letter to *New Scientist* (vol 162 issue 2188 - 29 May 1999, page 55 ).

Referring to work that he did for his PhD thesis,\* Rawlinson explained that one could take a passage of text and randomly rearrange the letters of each word *except for the first two letters and the last two* without adversely affecting the ability of a skilled reader to understand the passage.

Either way, the effect is quite dramatic. Included here is a passage from Al's

article after its letters have been scrambled. Can you make it out?

This isuse of Matnhet makrs the comtleipon of our tenth flul yaer of pulbiaciton! The frist isuse was puhliesd in Macrh of 1995.

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\* Rawlinson, G. E. (1976) *The significance of letter position in word recognition*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Psychology Department, University of Nottingham, Nottingham UK.

The following two links may be of interest:

<http://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/personal/matt.davis/Cmabrigde/> presents a detailed discussion of the phenomenon and provides a link to a summary of Rawlinson's thesis work.

[http://www.patio-de-recreo.com/huh\\_jumble.asp](http://www.patio-de-recreo.com/huh_jumble.asp) is the link used to scramble Al's text.

## REMINDERS

- The Testing Center will no longer accept tests during the last week of the quarter. The Math Lab is very limited in its ability to administer exams particularly in the last week of the quarter when they are quite busy. Therefore please make appropriate arrangements for your students to get their tests and make-up tests taken without relying on these two facilities.
- The Department asks that exams be returned to students the very next class period if at all possible and that lab assignments in statistics be returned within one week.
- Please do not cancel classes even if you have completed the material. Find some way to make good use of the time. If it is impossible for you to make a class please get a substitute.
- Please remember to turn in a copy of your tests as well as their grade distributions to your course coordinator.
- Except for an I grade revision, a grade change is generally not appropriate for a student who submits work after the end of the quarter. See section 4.2 in our handbook.



(Continued from page 1)

*Craze* by the editors (October 2000) to *Are Graphing Calculators Electronic Cheat Sheets?* by Barb Carruth (June 2001) to *Teaching Tips - Using Analogies* by student/tutor Alex Teplitsky (November 2003) to *Dayton Revisited* by retired professor John Pfetzing (June 2004). As you can see many people get involved in the publication of *Mathnet*, and specially to be noted is Susan Harris who frequently writes the *Faculty Feature*. I think that *Mathnet* continues to be successful in its initial purpose, which was described in the first issue to be "to benefit the part-time faculty by keeping them better informed of the activities of the department and to give them a sense of more intimate involvement in the life of the department." Thanks to all who contribute, but particularly to Lyn Keeler and David Stott, without whose persistent hard work and dedication *Mathnet* would not be possible.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and congratulations to Barb Carruth, who retires at the end of this year after 27 years of dedicated service to the department and the college as a part-timer, a regular adjunct and a tenure track faculty member. Barb's contributions in the areas of technology, curriculum development, professional activities, departmental leadership and service to students are legendary. (See the last issue of *Mathnet* for a *Faculty Feature* article on Barb.) And I am personally much in her debt for her able assistance with departmental administrative responsibilities for the past three years. She has made my life much more bearable. I thank her, my wife thanks her and my physician thanks her. Best wishes to you and your family, Barb, for a happy and productive retirement.

Al Giambrone ■

### ••• Serious Stuff

At New York's Kennedy airport today, an individual later discovered to be a public school teacher was arrested trying to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a setsquare, a slide rule, and a calculator.

At a morning press conference, Attorney general John Ashcroft said he believes the man is a member of the notorious al-gebra movement. He is being charged by the FBI with carrying weapons of math instruction.

"Al-gebra is a fearsome cult," Ashcroft said. "They desire average solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in a search of absolute value. They use secret code names like "x" and "y" and refer to themselves as "unknowns," but we have determined they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country.

"As the Greek philanderer Isosceles used to say, there are 3 sides to every triangle," Ashcroft declared.

When asked to comment on the arrest, President Bush said, "If God had wanted us to have better weapons of math instruction, He would have given us more fingers and toes."

### Harvey's Joke Corner

You should take a number at a popular pastry shop to keep your "wait" under control.

Customer: "I'm out of cash. How much pizza can I get on my credit card?"

Server: "About 4 square inches."

First dad: "What's your son taking in college?"

Second dad: "All I've got!"

Q: What two words have the most letters in them?

A.. Post Office.

Shortest math joke: "For all epsilon less than zero... ."

