The Newsletter of the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges South

News from the South C's

Volume XXI, Number 2 Fall 2012

Inside this issue:

Upcoming Events:

- CMC^3-South Fall Conference, October 6, 2012, Sylmar, CA.
- AMATYC Annual Conference, November 8-11, 2012, Jacksonville, FL.
- CMC^3 40th Annual Fall Conference, December 7-8, 2012, Monterey, CA..
- CMC^3-South Annual Spring Conference, February 22-23, 2013, Anaheim, CA

From the President's Desk

Welcome! I hope everyone's semester is going well and got off to a great start. I also deeply hope all Californians, educators especially, understand the importance of the elections coming up this November. As most of us know, the California ballot includes a proposition which will have an immense impact on its education system regardless of the outcome.

It would be my pleasure to see you all at the Fall Conference on October 6, 2012 at Los Angeles Mission College. Debby Wong and her colleagues have worked exceptionally hard to develop a fantastic event for us to attend this fall. On behalf of all members of CMC^3 South, I would like to thank all of the board members for the valuable time they have dedicated to this organization and its events. I thank you all for your time and efforts and hope to see you there! Also, don't forget to save the date for our spring conference in Anaheim February 22-23, 2013.

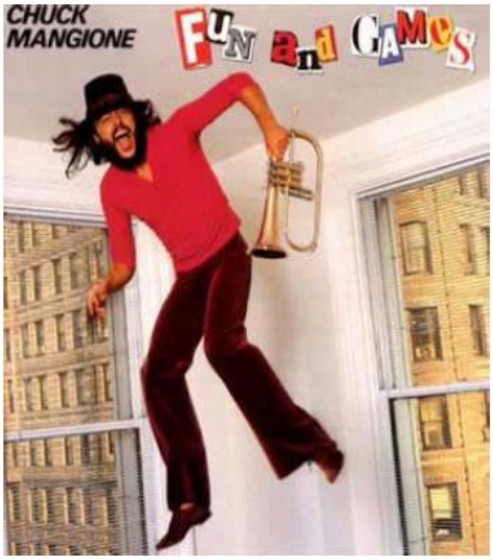
Sherri Wilson
Department of Mathematics
Crafton Hills College

CMC3 – South Fall Conference

Saturday, October 06, 2012
Use of Technology in Mathematics
Los Angeles Mission College, 13356 Eldridge Avenue, Sylmar, CA 91342

For more information please see www.cmc3s.org

Keynote Speaker:
Fred Feldon, Coastline Community College



Give It All You Got:
Break Away from the 3R's to the 3C's

Chuck Mangione wrote this instrumental, the official theme of the 1980 Winter Olympics. He wanted to celebrate the focus and effort of Olympian athletes. In a similar manner, Fred is hoping to inspire everyone to break away from traditional practices in higher education. College teaching is no longer about the lecture. Community trumps content. Professors need to highlight, motivate, and ignite a shared intellectual endeavor. Teaching mathematics should be all about the 3C's: communication, connectivity and collaboration!

Plus lunch and exciting breakouts!!!

CMC³ - Fall Conference
October 6th, 2012

Los Angeles Mission College
13356 Eldridge Avenue
Sylmar, CA 91342

Advance Registration postmarked by September 28th, 2012

Last: _____ First: _____ M.I. _____

College/ Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Phone: (_____) _____ ☐work ☐home ☐cell

Email: _____

Please use a separate form for each registrant. Copy this form freely.

Saturday Conference:

- Registration:
  - Attending the conference:
    Advance Registration, postmarked no later than *September 28th, 2012* **(No refunds after September 28th, 2012)** $ 50

    Late/on site registration (lunch only if available): $ 60
  - I wish to make a tax deductible contribution to CMC³-South: $ _____
  - Total amount included: $ _____

- **Make check payable to CMC³- South**
- Return advance registration to:

  Debby Wong
  13356 Eldridge Avenue,
  Sylmar, CA 91342

Lifestyles of a Newly Hired Math Instructor
By: Ryan Yamada, Los Angeles Mission College

"I'm on my feet, I'm on the floor, I'm good to go. Now all I need is just to hear a song I know."

Late birthday presents are usually not that great. They usually are somewhere along the lines of a gift certificate to Sizzler that expired three months ago. But last year, two days after my birthday, I got the best late birthday present of all: I got a voicemail from the Dean of Academic Affairs at LA Mission College saying she needed to speak with me urgently. Since it is quite rare to find someone who urgently needs to tell you they want to keep your resume on file, I suspected good news right from the start. And sure enough, that day was the start of an incredible year as one of LA Mission's newest mathematics instructors.

"My world's on fire, how 'bout yours? That's the way I like it cause I'll never get bored..."

The beginning was a whirlwind. With barely a month before school started, I didn't have much time to get acclimated to my new surroundings, which now happened to be 80 miles away. My parents helped with that: they lived only 40 miles away. But it was 40 miles away on the 405 which (if you do the math) is roughly equivalent to 80 miles on a halfway normal road. And even after navigating all of the asphalt currents, there still was the paperwork, finding my way around the new campus, the union, deciding which campus committee to join, the review process … and, oh yeah, something about classes. With so much going on, that first semester seems like a blur.

"I'll turn to a friend, someone that understands, sees through the master plan."

One of the highlights of my first year was getting the chance to attend conferences. It is amazing how much you can learn about teaching. I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to attend two conferences in the past year, one in Chicago and one in Orlando. These were welcome experiences for someone who had only been east of the Mississippi twice before, but I wasn't only exposed to new places; I was also exposed to new ideas. After seeing what others across the country were doing, my second semester would be spent trying to adapt and apply these ideas to my classes.

"I won't forget the day that, that I came to and I started thinking that there's more"

During that second semester, my classes started to evolve: things like Mathematica demonstrations and labs added a breath of fresh air to my classroom presentations. My MyMathLab courses changed from just something that was automatically graded into more of a directed and focused effort at giving students practice. Instead of being scolded and chastised for their mistakes, worksheets started appearing that gave students the chance to search out common test mistakes on their own. The difference felt like night and day.

Continued on page 5

Lifestyles continued:

"I am a new day rising, I'm a brand new sky to hang the stars upon tonight"

And as I head into my second year, things continue getting better. Our department has just moved into a brand new building, with brand new state of the art classrooms and with a brand new office (adorned with a brand new Mike Trout poster). I will get to try my hand at presenting when the CMC^3 mini-conference comes to Mission in the fall. Classes start up again soon and I have this strange feeling that almost resembles preparedness. And I have a brand new bag of tricks to try and get students to do more work (without them realizing it, of course).

"I love that sound so give me one more line."

It goes without saying, but I kind of like this teaching thing. It comes with many perks, I mean how many other jobs can you do a sizable portion of your work in front of a baseball game? (Spoiler alert: the Angels bullpen gives it away again. Don't worry, it will still be valid at print time) But one of the downsides of this profession is that time has a tendency to pass by in the blink of an eye. I taught part-time for five years and it feels like just yesterday I was walking into my first class. My first year at Mission flew by at ludicrous speed. One of my goals for this upcoming year is to not let May sneak up on me and to not feel like I'm writing an article on my second year in this very next paragraph.

It's not 2013-14 yet, is it? Excellent…

Local College Spotlight

Local College Spotlight: **College of the Canyons**

by Collette Gibson, James Gilmore, Anzhela Grigoryan, and Kathy Kubo

As a way to help students reduce the number of semesters required to reach a transferable math or English course, College of the Canyons, located in Santa Clarita in the northern Los Angeles County, began offering the PAL (Personalized Accelerated Learning) program, in 2008. PAL sequences help students by allowing them to complete several courses back-to-back in one semester – often with the same instructor and book within a cohort environment, along with tutoring and counseling. This model has included: Math 025/058 (Arithmetic & Algebra Preparation), Math 060/070 (Elementary & Intermediate Algebra), Math 075/140 (Intermediate Algebra for Statistics & Introductory Statistics), and Math 102/104 (Trigonometry & Precalculus) for our STEM majors. Students must attend a special orientation before enrolling in PAL.

Math 026 and 059 (computer-assisted Arithmetic & computer-assisted Algebra Preparation) are based on "mastery learning," and have online tutorial software. These mediated math courses provide an in-class tutor and more personalized instruction compared to their traditional lecture counterpart courses, Math 025 and 058. Students must demonstrate proficiency at the 80 percent level before proceeding to the next topic.

The newest course is Intermediate Algebra for Statistics (Math 075), which includes a prerequisite of Math 058. It includes elements of exploratory data analysis and intermediate algebra (logarithmic, exponential, quadratic and higher polynomial modeling), and replaces elementary and intermediate algebra as a prerequisite for our transferable Introductory Statistics course (Math 140). Course design elements include the following:

* Just-in-time remediation of relevant algebra skills;

* Intentional support for the affective domain;

* Varied pedagogy including student presentations (projects, posters, reports), structured discovery based activities, contextualized learning, and increased use of technology, and;

* "Productive struggle" to develop critical thinking and persistence.

The college is excited about recent student successes in two of the most promising PAL sequences: Math 025/058 followed by Math 075/140. Beginning at the lowest level of mathematics, students are able to progress through transfer-level mathematics in only *Continued on page 7*

Local College Spotlight continued:

one year, and have shown remarkable success, persistence and retention.

COC students have found additional support with our Supplemental Learning Program, which consists of workshops, computer-based tutorials, and practice jams designed to enhance learning and promote student success. Every semester, nearly two thousand students complete workshops in math, English, and learning skills. Students who complete at least five Supplemental Learning activities increase their success rate by 10 percent – or by more than 20 percent in math courses below the transfer level. The college hopes to maintain continued success while increasing the offerings in the upcoming years.

Contact Michael Sherry, Mathematics Department Chair, at Michael.Sherry@canyons.edu for further information.

For the Students of CMC^3-South

Bob Crise, Crafton Hills College

We wish to congratulate East Los Angeles College for finishing 1st in our section, among the CMC^3-South's colleges that participated in AMATYC's Student Mathematics League; also we wish to congratulate the top three students from our area.

First Place: *Ziqi Han*, East Los Angeles College
Second Place: *Yi Lin*, Santa Monica College .
Third Place: *Brian Edwards* , Mt. San Antonio College.

If you would like to bring students to CMC^3-South's Spring Conference, contact Bob Crise at rcrise@craftonhills.edu .

Bring your students to the Conference!!!

Should We Be Paying Attention
to the Common Core State Standards?

Bruce Yoshiwara, Los Angeles Pierce College

California adopted the Common Core State Standards for mathematics in 2010. The math CCSS explain what mathematical knowledge and habits of mind are needed to be college or career ready. So far 45 states (and the city of Austin) have adopted the math CCSS. (46 states have adopted the English CCSS.)

I've had to read the math CCSS because I'm on the state committee tasked with aligning the CA math standards (a.k.a. Framework) with the math CCSS. But I'm hoping other community college math faculty are also looking carefully.

Although it is unlikely that the adoption of the CCSS will make remediation at community colleges obsolete, there are still reasons for community colleges to take interest in the CCSS. First, the traditional order in which we teach topics has been significantly altered. And second, the content for what is required in high school is also changed by the CCSS.

The CCSS assessments are promised for 2014. And presumably the results of those assessments will become high stakes measures of the effectiveness of teachers, programs, and schools. So (unless the California Department of Education reverses itself) we should expect not just a handful but essentially all California K-12 schools to be teaching to the CCSS soon.

The ninth grade math course will have students compare exponential and linear functions, but not study quadratics or other polynomials. The ninth-grader may also have practice with constructions and transformation in the plane and even given some simple geometric proofs. The tenth grade math course will include right triangle trigonometry and probability, and the eleventh grade course will include analytic trig for modeling periodic behavior and inferential statistics.

Where will our placement tests put these students in our current developmental math sequence?

The Student Success Task Force recommends that community colleges should align its courses with the K-12 curriculum. Do we try to make our developmental math program include all topics and skills that the CCSS say are needed to be college ready, or do we include only what math is required to succeed in a transfer math class?

If we choose the latter, are we putting our transfer students at a disadvantage compared with the students who will be entering the universities directly from high school having mastered the math CCSS?

The main website of the math CCSS is http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/mathematics/. There are other resources at the Illustrative Mathematics site: http://illustrativemathematics.org/.

CMC^3-South Board and Conference Committee Members

Beginning March 3, 2012

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- **Member at Large, South Region:** Sally VanDenBerg, Barstow College
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