962-97-1146   **Steven M. Hetzler*** (`smhetzler@ssu.edu`), Department of Math & C.S., Salisbury State University, Salsibury, MD 21801. *Introduction to Modeling via the MCM.* Preliminary report.

The author will present an assignment which achieves several objectives for an applications course for mathematics majors. The assignment is to summarize outstanding Mathematical Contest in Modeling (MCM) papers and the responses of mathematics professionals, as published in Undergraduate Mathematics and its Applications. Following the structure of some of the best MCM papers guides students in appropriate structure for their own original work. For example, students are exposed to the importance of senstivity analysis and its importance in mathematics. They also see the role of analyzing their own work for strengths and weaknesses. By reviewing practitioner's comments, the students get an exposure to mathematicians with whom they might not otherwise have any contact. In addtion to gaining some idea of what real mathematicians do, students learn what kinds of questions these people find interesting, and what they value about mathematics. Perhaps my two favorite objectives of the assignment are the writing exercise it provides the students, and the recruitment possibilities for the MCM! (Received October 02, 2000)