

962-D1-85

Ronald J. Harshbarger* (ronharsh@hargray.com), University of South Carolina Beaufort, 1 College Center, Hilton Head Island, SC 29928, and **Lisa S Yocco** (lisay@gsvms2.cc.gasou.edu), Georgia Southern University, Box 8093, Statesboro, GA 30460. *College algebra in context: An interdisciplinary approach.*

Our algebra course is based on real life applications from business, economics, biology, and the social sciences in a setting that connects the mathematical content with the real world. Data analysis, modeling, and technology are woven into the course so that the approach is refreshing and interesting to the students. The course provides the algebraic skills and concepts for a core course, or for the future study of calculus, in an informal, less threatening, and more meaningful setting. Students use technology to observe patterns and reach conclusions inductively, to check answers of solved problems, to study function types, and to create models. Students can readily make the connection between real data and the extrapolated results of modeling, thus enhancing their conceptual understanding of the topics. Most examples and exercises in the course are applied rather than skill problems. Some applications provide the models for the data and have students solve related problems, while others require students to develop the models before solving the problems. For some topics, students work in small groups to find appropriate real data, to make a scatter plots and create the best models, to use the models to solve problems, and to provide written reports. (Received July 25, 2000)