1046-C1-408   **Suzanne I Dorée*** (`doree@augsburg.edu`), Mathematics Department, Augsburg College, 2211 Riverside Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55454. *"I'd rather be approximately right than precisely wrong": moving beyond mathematicians' natural obsession with the exact in college algebra.* Preliminary report.

Too much of what we teach in a traditional college algebra course is based on our obsession with exact answers. But realistic problems based on real data are, at best, approximate by their nature. In such settings, not only are graphical and numerical methods now sufficient, but how we work symbolically must change as well. This talk will give concrete examples of solving linear, quadratic, and exponential equations when the goal a good approximation of the solution. This work is based on our 14-year record of teaching a highly successful, 100% contextual, modeling-based "Applied Algebra" course to diverse learners. (Received September 01, 2008)