
For Your Information

JPBM Task Force on Educational Activities of Faculty

The Joint Policy Board for Mathematics (JPBM) has created a task force whose mission is to provide the postsecondary mathematical community with resources for enhancing the educational activities of faculty. Its goal is to help institutions and departments reflect on their educational missions, determine the range of educational activities that should “count” in the promotion and tenure process given their missions, and document educational activities in reliable and meaningful ways. We want to help faculty do the job well and be rewarded appropriately for their efforts.

The task force, which is funded by the Exxon Education Foundation, will produce two books. One will describe the state of the art, providing a statistical survey of current practices at different kinds of institutions. It will say what we know about reliable methods for enhancing, documenting, and rewarding faculty’s educational contributions (e.g., through student evaluations, peer review, and documentation of instructional efforts via course and teaching portfolios).

The second will provide descriptions of models that work. It will offer case studies showing how institutions as different as community colleges, small colleges, and public and private universities help faculty, graduate students, and administrators develop institutional cultures and procedures that enhance and reward educational efforts. There will be no prescriptions, but rich examples to learn from.

The task force is looking for information and ideas.

- What issues should we address? Are there things you want to know about or you think the field should know about?
- What resources, ideas, or programs should we be aware of?
- What departments would be good candidates for site visits?

Please contact the task force chair, Alan Schoenfeld, with this or any other information and suggestions. Write to Alan H. Schoenfeld, Chair, JPBM Task Force on Educa-

tional Activities, School of Education, EMST, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-1670. Or send e-mail to alans@socrates.berkeley.edu. Information will be welcome at any time but will be most useful if received by April 30, 1998.

—Alan H. Schoenfeld

Call for Manuscripts on Mathematics Teaching

The February 2000 issue of *Teaching Children Mathematics*, an official journal of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), will focus on children as mathematicians to highlight the engagement of children as discoverers and inventors, as well as users, of mathematics to understand the world. The editorial panel wishes to highlight pre-kindergarten through sixth-grade examples of young mathematicians at work, classrooms that exhibit a community of inquiry, tasks that require powerful thinkers, and methods to assess children’s thinking. Teachers and mathematicians are encouraged to collaborate on and coauthor manuscripts. Topics of particular interest include engaging all children as mathematicians, learning environments for mathematical work, children’s mathematical discoveries, and assessing the thinking and dispositions of young mathematicians.

The complete call for manuscripts and guidelines for submitting manuscripts is published in the April 1998 issue of *Teaching Children Mathematics* and is also available from the NCTM Web site at <http://www.nctm.org/>. For more information contact Daniel Breidenbach, telephone 703-620-9840, e-mail: dbreidenbach@nctm.org.

—Daniel Breidenbach

VideoMath Festival at ICM-98

In an effort to reach out to the general public, the organizers of the International Congress of Mathematicians 1998 are going to offer, in addition to the scientific pro-

gram, several cultural activities related to mathematics designed to appeal to a broad audience beyond the ICM attendees. One of these events is the VideoMath Festival.

Short high-quality videos on mathematical topics will be combined into one or two films of about two hours' length and will be shown in the movie theater of the Urania, a center for popular science presentations in Berlin.

The collection of videos to be presented will be selected by a program committee. A prize of 5,000 DM will be awarded to recognize the most outstanding contribution.

Further information is available at the VideoMath Web site, <http://www-sfb288.math.tu-berlin.de/VideoMath/>. Submissions should be sent to ICM-98—VideoMath Festival, c/o Ms. Saida Grase, Konrad-Zuse-Zentrum (ZIB), Takustr. 7, D-14195 Berlin, Germany; e-mail: video-math@zib.de. The deadline for receipt of submissions is **April 3, 1998**. Submissions that arrive after this deadline will not be considered. Please consider that customs delays of up to two weeks can occur.

The ICM will be held in Berlin, Germany, August 18–27, 1998. Further information is available at the Web site <http://elib.zib.de/ICM98/>.

—from ICM-98 Announcement

ICMI Study on University Teaching and Learning

The International Commission on Mathematics Instruction (ICMI), which operates under the auspices of the International Mathematical Union, has initiated a study, "On the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics at University Level." The ICMI has recently released a Discussion Document (ICMI Bulletin 43) relating to the study. As part of the study there is to be a conference in December 1998, and the Discussion Document invites submissions from people who might be interested in attending that conference.

As a result of the changing world scene, ICMI feels that there is a need to examine both the content and future of the teaching and learning of mathematics at university level. The primary aim of this study is therefore to pave the way for improvements in this area for all students.

In order to achieve this aim the study will attempt to

- identify, review, encourage, and disseminate research in educational matters at the tertiary level;
- identify and describe major approaches to tertiary mathematics teaching within different cultures and traditions;
- identify obstacles which might prevent the learning of mathematics;
- discuss equity and other issues relating to mathematics education at university level;
- discuss the goals of teaching mathematics to a range of students with different backgrounds and needs and discuss who should be responsible for that teaching;
- find ways to meet changing needs without compromising the integrity of the subject;

- identify, publicize, and expose to scrutiny new teaching methods and the positive use of technology;
- discuss the transition and the relations between secondary school and university;
- consider ways to improve the preparation of teachers of mathematics at university level.

The work of this study will take place in two parts. The first consists of a conference which is to be held in Singapore from December 8 to 12, 1998. English will be the language of the conference. The conference will be a working one where every participant will be expected to be active. Current planning is for a limited attendance of about seventy-five persons.

Given the style of the conference, we anticipate a variety of types of contributions that will be presented in plenary sessions, working groups, panels, and short presentations. Presentations may include position papers, discussion papers, surveys of relevant areas, reports of projects, or research papers of an educational nature.

We invite you to make a submission for consideration by the International Program Committee no later than **May 1, 1998**. Submissions should be up to three pages in length and may be e-mailed, faxed, or sent as hard copy. They should be related to the problems and issues identified in this document but need not be limited to these alone. You might also draw to the attention of the committee the names of other people whom you feel ought to be invited, stating the type of contribution they might make. We would appreciate knowing the nature and results of related studies in this area.

Participation in the conference is by invitation only. Invitations to those whose submissions have been accepted will be made in July 1998. At the same time invitees will be asked to produce a longer version of their submission for publication in the preconference proceedings. The study organizers are seeking funds to provide partial support to enable participants from nonaffluent countries to attend the conference, but it is unlikely that full support will be available for any one individual. The second part of the study is a publication that will appear in the ICMI Study Series. This publication will be based both on the contributions requested above and the outcomes of the conference working group and panel deliberations. The exact format of the publication has not yet been decided, but it is expected to be an edited, coherent book that it is hoped will be a standard reference in this field for some time.

The Discussion Document and information relating to the conference can be found on the ICMI Web site, www.nie.ac.sg:800/~wwwmath/, and at <http://emmy.otago.ac.nz:800/Maths.html>.

All contributions, suggestions, and enquiries concerning the study should be sent to Derek Holton, Chair, IPC, ICMI Study, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Otago, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand; e-mail: dholton@maths.otago.ac.nz; fax: (+64-3)-479-8427.

—Derek Holton