For Your Information

CBMS Survey Forms to Arrive in September

Every five years the Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences (CBMS) conducts a survey on undergraduate mathematical sciences education in the United States. The eighth such survey, called CBMS2000, is being carried out this year. In September 2000 survey forms will be mailed to a stratified sample of about 600 of the nation's 2,400 mathematical sciences departments. Department chairs are urged to watch for the arrival of the survey forms and to return them promptly.

—David Lutzer and James W. Maxwell, CBMS2000 co-directors

Group Issues Principles on Scholarly Communication

Concerned by rising costs of scholarly communication, a group of academic, library, and professional society leaders has issued a statement about the future development of scholarly publishing. The statement, issued in May 2000, contains nine principles aimed at transforming publishing in ways that would make scholarly communication more affordable and more widely available.

"The current system of scholarly publishing has become too costly for the academic community to sustain," the statement says. "The increasing volume and costs of scholarly publications, particularly in science, technology, and medicine, are making it impossible for libraries and their institutions to support the collection needs of their current and future faculty and students."

The principles address a wide range of issues, including archiving of electronic materials, copyright, publication time lags, and privacy in the digital environment. There is also a suggestion that faculty evaluation be based on quality rather than quantity of publications. The statement calls for universities and their faculties to become much more actively engaged in addressing pressing issues of scholarly communication. For example, the explanatory text accompanying one of the principles states: "All faculty members should know the cost of journals to libraries and should consider refraining from submitting their work and assigning copyright to expensive journals when high-quality inexpensive publication outlets are available."

The statement grew out of a meeting held in Tempe, Arizona, sponsored by the Association of American Universities, the Association of Research Libraries, and the Merrill Advanced Studies Center of the University of Kansas. Among the signatories is AMS president Felix E. Browder.

The full statement is available on the Web site of the Association of Research Libraries at `http://www.arl.org/scomm/tempe.html`.

—Allyn Jackson