



FOOD FOR THOUGHT SERIES

(Lunch table conversations)

Coordinator:

Dr. Agashi P. Nwogbaga

Professor of Mathematics & Data Science, and Former Chair of Mathematics Department,
Wesley College, Dover, Delaware (Agashi.Nwogbaga@wesley.edu)

These lunch table conversations are intended to provide an opportunity for people to meet with other colleagues from around the region to discuss topics that interest them while they eat. Participants have the choice to self-assign themselves to topics and tables of their choice. So, those who do not wish to be involved or who want to just catch up with math friends will have plenty of opportunity to do that as well. Here is a list of the topics for this EPADEL meeting:

Is Teaching Epsilon-Delta Proofs in Calculus Irrelevant? In a calculus course where the students are predominantly non-math majors, is it still relevant to teach epsilon-delta proofs, such as “Given specific $f(x)$ and the numbers c and L , use epsilon-delta argument to prove that the limit of $f(x)$ as x tends to c is L ”? Do you usually teach it? Are those who usually teach this topic simply living in the past or are they doing us a big favor by keeping the torch alight? Or are those who often skip teaching the topic (and rather focus only on applications) doing our students a disservice or a great favor? Why and how is this topic still relevant? Any other questions or ideas about it?

Requiring Algebra is a Civil Rights Issue? – A Mystifying Claim. A college chancellor recently claimed on National Public Radio (NPR) that requiring students to take algebra is so unfair that it is a civil rights issue. What are your thoughts on this? How will you respond to your colleagues from other disciplines at your institution if any of them makes this claim or a similar one? The link for the article is at <http://www.theblaze.com/news/2017/07/21/college-chancellor-requiring-students-to-take-algebra-is-a-civil-rights-issue/> What experiences, suggestions and challenges do you have with debunking these kinds of misconceptions about math? Any other questions or ideas about it?

Undergraduate Research: Faculty members enhance their teaching and contributions to society by involving undergraduates in research (Council on Undergraduate Research). What are the challenges of undergraduate research? Do you have suggestions for addressing these challenges? What recent undergraduate research projects have taken place at your school? Can you suggest examples of potential undergraduate research ideas/topics from the different areas of mathematics? What other questions or ideas do you have for this topic?

Technology in the Classroom: Appropriate use of technology in the classroom is becoming more important in facilitating teaching and learning. What recent technologies have been developed for the math classroom? What specific technologies have you used? What benefits or drawbacks have you found? What prevents you from using technology more fully? How are you dealing with technological challenges? What other questions or ideas do you have for this topic?