

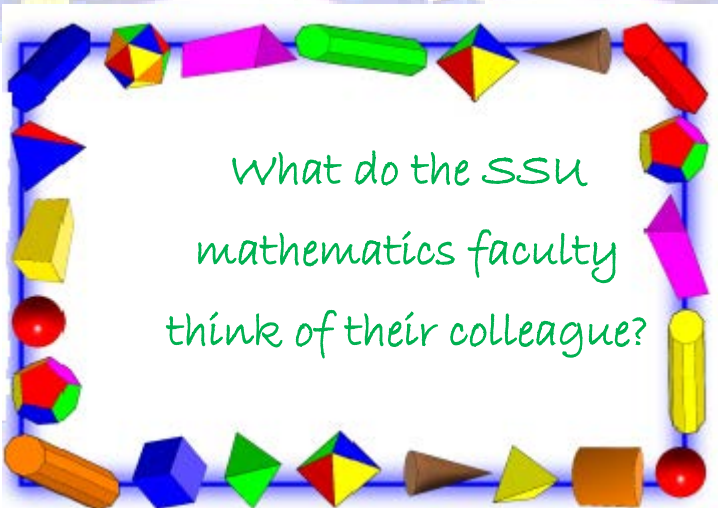
Dr. Martha Shott

“Give her a raise, tenure, a pony, whatever you need to do to keep her here. We all benefit from Professor Shott's presence at Sonoma State University. I have taken many mathematics courses over the years; but none have been as wonderful as hers.”

So wrote one student on an evaluation. (Most of this citation, including that sentence, is quoted directly from students' and colleagues' testimonials.)

Martha Shott received her Ph.D. in applied mathematics from the University of California, Davis, in 2011. Following that, Martha taught as a lecturer at Indiana University, Kokomo, for one year before she arrived at Sonoma State University, also to teach as a lecturer. In 2014, Martha was hired in a tenure-track position in the Mathematics and Statistics Department at SSU, where she currently resides.

At SSU, Martha has built an impressive reputation as an excellent teacher. She has taught a wide variety of courses that range from calculus to statistics, mathematical modeling and numerical analysis. Martha has even taught an innovative Freshman Year Experience Course that combines pre-calculus, biology, and critical thinking content as part of an interdisciplinary teaching team for the last three years.



What do the SSU
mathematics faculty
think of their colleague?

“It is wonderful to collaborate with Martha, who thinks first about what is best for students to learn and to apply their learning towards academic and personal development. Martha's impact as a teacher reaches beyond mathematics, partly through her integration of mathematical concepts into STEM disciplines and through her effect on her colleagues' teaching. It is a joy to overcome teaching challenges with Martha as my mathematics colleague.”

“Beyond the classroom, Dr. Shott engages her students in educational and research opportunities. She traveled with two of our majors to Thailand for six weeks as one of the faculty mentors in the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Global Awareness Program. She coaches multiple teams participating in the Consortium for Mathematics and its Applications (COMAP) annual modeling competition.”

“Dr. Shott has a calm and inspiring style of teaching. The minute she walks into the classroom, her strong effect on her students is immediately obvious. She has the respect and confidence of her students. She is personable, clear, enthusiastic, and poised. Under her leadership, the students are eager to explore new concepts together. They want to be in class to learn and grow intellectually, and Dr. Shott is extremely skillful and enthusiastic in facilitating the learning process. In addition, she has a great sense of humor.”

*In her teaching, Martha's enthusiasm
for mathematics is infectious.
She is also known for the extra effort that
she spends on her students.
In fact, here are what some students say:*

“Martha Shott is an amazing teacher. She's makes learning fun! You can easily tell that she has a love for statistics and it makes you want to learn why she loves it.”

“I have never missed a class, and I almost wish I was a Statistics major so I could take more courses with her.”

“She would extend her office hours and even devote parts of her lunch period to students who had questions about the previous lectures. Students were excited to learn and attend class because Dr. Shott was equally excited to teach it.”

“She continues to spread her math enthusiasm by helping high school students in the High School Mathematical Modeling Competition.”

At SSU, Martha's reputation extends beyond students and colleagues in mathematics. Physics Professor Jeremy Qualls, for instance, describes Martha in the following way:

“She clearly enjoys teaching and exploring new pedagogy. Her strengths are in her openness, her ability to connect with students, and her ability to think critically on her feet.... Dr. Shott is a passionate teacher and has a great deal of charisma.”

Martha knows, however, that to remain an excellent teacher, one has to “feed” oneself, and so Martha regularly takes advantage of professional development (PD) opportunities offered by the SSU faculty center. As a recent Project NExT fellow, Martha also benefits from MAA PD programs, and she shares her expertise with other NExT fellows.

Finally, we mention one more student comment:

“She makes math bearable... Great professor!”

And that says a lot! We are proud to present this year's Section Award for Distinguished College or University **New** Teacher of Mathematics Award to Dr. Martha Shott, an extraordinarily effective and inspiring teacher.

FEBRUARY 27 2016