

OK-AR MAA Section

Department Chairs Meeting

April 9, 2021

Attendees:

Narayn Thapa (CU), Carolyn Eoff (HSU), Myron Rigsby (UAFS), Jeanine Meyers (ATU), Nickolas Zoller (SNU), Chris Francisco (OSU), Sarah Marsh (OBU), Matt Meyers (UO), Michael Lloyd (HSU)

The first item of discussion was how we can enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion of under-represented groups our mathematics departments. Most reported mixed results with some success achieved in different areas. Dr. Thapa indicated that his department had more success since their position announcements began to include strong encouragement to applicants from diverse backgrounds. Dr. Francisco reported that a mentoring plan at OSU had helped recruit under-represented groups for graduate student, but the pandemic had put it on hold for the time being.

One common issue was that women were disproportionately represented in the instructor ranks with more men in the tenure-track ranks. The logistical difficulties of pursuing a doctorate for many women with young children were noted, due to the residential requirements at reputable universities. It was suggested that the doctorate-granting institutions could help more women earn doctorates with distance learning, something we have all become adept at during the pandemic. Dr. J. Meyers noted that Indiana University had an online graduate mathematics certificate that allowed people to earn eighteen graduate hours of mathematics to satisfy the HLC requirement for teaching college level mathematics. Dr. Rigsby suggested that having a graduate school fair at section meetings would be good way to connect undergraduate students with graduate programs.

The second item of discussion related to the future of online instruction. One of the major problems discussed was that of preventing cheating for assessments. Some use testing centers or approved proctors. The method of using the Zoom app on students' phones to view their work space while they take the exam using a lock-down browser.

The third and last item of discussion was that of the growing use of a co-requisite model to accomplish remediation during the completion for college level courses. Dr. Thapa suggested that collaboration between institution and sharing of information and methods would be useful. Dr. J. Meyers noted that there is a "Strong Start to Finish" initiative in Arkansas that provides support in this area. Dr. Francisco shared that they have had success with the co-requisite model for a number of courses, including calculus, at OSU. It seemed that it was not uncommon to have higher success rates in the co-requisite sections than the regular sections.