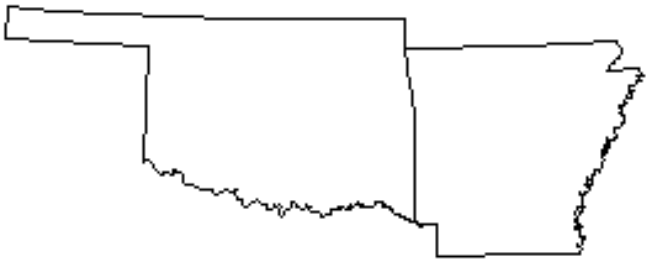
# *NEWSLETTER*

MAA

MATHEMATICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



## OKLAHOMA/ARKANSAS SECTION

Volume 35, March 2014

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Get up-to-date information from http://sections.maa.org/okar/.
(The 2013 business meeting minutes are under the History tab.)

## *Newsletter Sponsors*

The Section extends its appreciation to the following entities who paid a sponsorship fee to help offset the cost of publishing the newsletter and mailing the postcards. These advertisements are displayed in order with the earlier submission appearing first.

**The University of Tulsa**

# *Graduate Programs in Mathematics*

**MS in Applied Mathematics.** This is a professional mathematics degree designed to prepare students for careers in a variety of areas, including business and industry.

**Joint M.S. in Finance/Applied Mathematics.** The curriculum allows a student to complete requirements for both degrees by completing 54 credit hours, including 30 hours of Masters of Science in Finance courses and 24 hours of graduate level math courses.

**PhD in Mathematics.** This degree combines in-depth study in mathematics fields such as applied analysis, numerical analysis, probability and statistics, and mathematical biology with the opportunity for interdisciplinary research in engineering, computer science, bioinformatics, neuroscience, finance, and mathematical physics. To be admitted to the PhD program, students must show exceptional promise to do independent research in mathematics in a field consistent with the research interests of current mathematics faculty and/or faculty in related disciplines.

**Assistantships and Fellowships.** Competitive teaching and research assistantships provide stipends and tuition waivers for qualified students at the MS and the PhD level.

**For further information contact:**

Dr. Shirley Pomeranz
Graduate Program Coordinator
(918) 631-2990
pomeranz@utulsa.edu

Department of Mathematics
The University of Tulsa
800 South Tucker Drive
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74104-3189
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# *Section Governance*

**Oklahoma-Arkansas Section Officers**
Fred Worth, Past-Chair
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Andrew Wells, Chair
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Mary Harper

**Resolutions Committee**
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Douglas Aichele
Farrokh Abedi

**Section NExT Coodinator**
Jill Guerra

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Darryl Linde

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(J.C.) James Price
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**Student Workshop Committee**
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## *Distinguished College/University Teacher of 2013!*

Congratulations Benny Evans from Oklahoma State University! Here is Benny's teaching philosophy in his own words:

All mathematicians share a deep appreciation for the beauty and utility of mathematics, but it took a number of years for me to fully appreciate the fact that the average U.S. citizen is not of a like mind. Far too many view mathematics as a silly abstraction that has no affect their daily lives. It is clear to every mathematician I know that nothing could be further from the truth. As my career progressed, I became ever more passionate about explaining mathematics in a fashion that a wider public could understand and appreciate. I have never lost my enthusiasm for teaching engineers, mathematics majors, and graduate students, but the wider audience is before calculus. I envisioned a text that explains common applications of mathematics to students who are likely to enroll in a single mathematics course in their college career. With the help of my friends and colleagues, Bruce Crauder, Alan Noell, and Jerry Johnson, and three texts later, my passion for this project continues unabated. Indeed, we are working on a fourth text, and the end is nowhere in sight.

Teaching mathematics at all levels is at the heart of my career, and my teaching style is to get the student involved. When students participate in the learning process, they invariably succeed. I have learned so much about how to teach from an excellent mathematicians who taught me and from truly outstanding colleagues who do it much better than I. That is what makes this recognition so special.

## *Campus News*

The following appear in the order in which they were submitted with the earliest submission appearing first.

### Northeastern State University

*Submitted by Joan E. Bell*

In fall 2013, **Demitri Plessas** joined the Mathematics and Computer Science Department as a tenure track faculty member. Demitri received his Ph.D. in combinatorics and optimization from the University of Montana. **Deborah Carment**, **William King**, and **Dorothy Radin** announced they will be retiring May, 2014.

**Martha Parrott** founded and operates the Mathematics Clinic at the NSU Broken Arrow campus. The clinic provides authentic teaching experience for future elementary, middle school, and high school mathematics teachers.

Those future teachers reach out to the community by working one-on-one with elementary, middle school and high school students providing the help they need to succeed in mathematics.

**Martha Parrott** is the Northeastern State University on-site coordinator of "The Oklahoma Geometry and Algebra Project," a professional development opportunity for high school teachers, funded by the State Regents.

This past year, 19 NSU students were initiated into the Oklahoma Alpha chapter of Kappa Mu Epsilon. The members of the Student Chapter of the MAA meet concurrently with the KME students. The student groups KME/MAA sponsored several speakers this year. **Elwyn Davis**, of Pittsburg State University, spoke on "How to Draw a Straight Line." **Tone Slagle**, a Collinsville High School mathematics teacher, spoke on "Presenting a Math Lesson Reflecting the Common Core Standards." The third speaker was **Mark Buckles**, of Northeastern State University. He spoke on "The Mathematical Basis for Microchip Design." The last speaker was **James Sherrell**, a NSU student. He presented his Honors Program research. The title of his talk was: "RISK: Developing Tools to Assist in the Strategic Decision-Making Process." Fund raisers included bake sales and selling honor cords for graduation. Students and faculty submitted solutions to problems in *The Pentagon* and *Math Horizons*. NSU students **Joshua Killer**, **Rho Middleton, Taylor Pride**, **Ryan Berkley**, **Philip Halpern**, **Shanna Vice**, **Taylor Murray**, **Skylar Wapato**, and **Connor Allen** attended the 75th annual Oklahoma-Arkansas meeting of the MAA.

## Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City

*Marcel Maupin*

Our Math department has a new department head, **Randall (Randy) Key**, who started in the fall 2013 semester. **CJ Frederick** was a finalist for the L.E. 'Dean" Stringer Excellence in Teaching Award.

In an effort to increase success in College Algebra, we have reconsidered our approach to developmental mathematics, in particular, Intermediate Algebra. We are now principally focusing on algebraic skills for the intermediate algebra course by teaching strictly out of the early chapters of a College Algebra textbook. The material covered is considered review material for our College Algebra students, but is critical to their success in our college algebra course. By strengthening their skills in these areas, our Intermediate Algebra completers will be better prepared to tackle the critical material in College Algebra.

## Oklahoma Baptist University

*Sarah Marsh*

In May 2013, Dr. **Eileen Hargrove** retired after 23 years of service to OBU. Dr. **Krista Hands** succeeded Dr. Hargrove as department chair, and Dr. **John Nichols** took over as faculty advisor to the Mathematics Club. The Department of Mathematics was thrilled to welcome Dr. **Tanner Auch** and Dr. **Cherith Tucker** to OBU in fall 2013. Dr. Auch comes to OBU from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he recently completed his dissertation in the area of difference equations. Dr. Tucker was most recently at the University of Oklahoma, where she earned her Ph.D. while studying low-dimensional topology.

Dr. **Tanner Auch** was selected to be a 2013–14 Project NExT Fellow. In conjunction with this program, he attended MathFest 2013 in Hartford, Connecticut and the 2014 Joint Mathematics Meetings in Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. **Sarah Marsh** completed her 2012–13 Project NExT Fellowship year at MathFest 2013, where she helped organize a panel discussion on math-anxious and underprepared students. We strongly encourage all new mathematics faculty to apply for the Project NExT program.

At the 2013 OK-AR MAA Section Meeting, OBU had a student team compete in Math Jeopardy for the first time in several years. Dr. **Krista Hands** also gave a talk entitled "Enhancing Teaching with an iPad" at this meeting.

The United States Navy recently recognized OBU as a Tier 1 university for its physics and mathematics programs. Although we are honored by this designation, we continue to revise and strengthen the requirements for both our mathematics major and our mathematics education major. Our department is growing in numbers and in student involvement, and we look forward to watching this growth persist in years to come!

## University of Tulsa

*Bill Coberly*

### New Faculty

Dr. **Eunha Shim** joined the faculty this year. Dr. Shim received her Ph.D. in Mathematics and Statistics from Arizona State University and has held positions as Postdoctoral Associate at Yale University and Assistant Professor at University of Pittsburg, both in departments of Epidemiology. Dr. Shim's research interests are in mathematical modeling of infectious

diseases, pathogen evolution, and the application of game theory to applications in public health policy.

**Kimberly Adams** joined the faculty as Instructor of Mathematics. Kimberly holds an M.S. in Applied Mathematics from the University of Tulsa.

### Student Awards

Mathematics majors **Caleb Lareau** and **Conor Fellin** were named as 2013 Barry M. Goldwater Scholars. Seniors **Tricity Andrews** and **Ahmed El-Kishky** were awarded NSF Graduate Research Fellowships; **Stephen Macke** was named as NSF Honorable Mention.

### New Programs

The TU Mathematics Department has joined regional mathematics teachers and professional mathematicians in forming the Tulsa Math Teacher's Circle. This group meets bi-monthly to discuss and solve problems in mathematics after a light meal. A three day retreat for about 25 middle school math teachers is planned in June at Post Oak Lodge in Tulsa. This event is funded through a grant by the Shusterman Foundation. Startup support has also been received from MSRI and University of Tulsa. For information contact **Marilyn Howard** at marilyn-howard@utulsa.edu.

### Conferences

The 13th International Conference on Integral Methods in Science and Engineering will be held July 21-25, 2014 in Karlsruhe, Germany. Dr. **Christian Constanda** continues to organize the biennial conference.

## University of Arkansas at Monticello

*Farrokh Abedi*

In the spring of 2013, the mathematics major **Kelby Snow**, received the Outstanding Freshman Mathematics Award in Calculus I. Kelby is a native of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, but has spent most of his life in McGehee, Arkansas where he enjoys spending time with his daughter Lilly who he considers the heart and soul of his life. He is very serious student and is well respected by his professors and classmates. Kelby has made the Chancellor's List once and Dean's List twice. He has been a math tutor in the Science Center since the spring of 2013. Kelby usually spends a couple of weekends each month traveling the state to compete against the best bowlers in Arkansas.

**Laura Barton** joined our faculty in fall 2013 as an Instructor of Mathematics. Laura received her Master of Mathematics from Louisiana

Tech University in 2010 and a Master of Arts of Teaching in Secondary Education from University of Louisiana at Monroe in 2006. Laura is from Bastrop, Louisiana.

Dr. **Sam Snyder** is well known to the UAM campus for teaching math and physics, for research in his fields of expertise, and for collaborations with the faculty in the School of Forestry. Sam decided to rejoin his colleagues this past fall after having taught at UAM from 1990–95. Dr. Snyder received his Ph.D. and M.S. in Physics from the Florida State University at Tallahassee, Florida. Sam completed his undergraduate degree in Physics and Mathematics from University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. After leaving UAM, he taught in various universities including Emporia State University in Kansas where he completed his master's degree in mathematics in 2002. Sam's wife, Mayetta, is a retired Presbyterian minister.

Dr. **Victoria Lynn Fox** completed her Ph.D. in Applied Science in Mathematics in December 2013 from University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Lynn joined UAM faculties on August, 2009 as an instructor of Mathematics. Lynn received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from UAM in 1998 and a Master of Arts in Teaching with emphasis in Secondary Mathematics from UAM in 2004.

On January1, 2014, **Lowell F. Lynde, Jr.** retired after a teaching career of 45 years. Lowell taught one year at Jonesboro-Hodge High School in Jonesboro, LA before joining the faculty of Arkansas A&M in 1969 as an Instructor of Mathematics. He progressed through the academic ranks and retired as emeritus Associate Professor of Mathematics at the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Over the years, Lowell's role in the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences evolved into the teaching of the history of mathematics and courses for pre-service teachers. Lowell's interest in developmental mathematics lead to his writing two textbooks, one for Intermediate Algebra and one for Survey of Mathematics, that are currently being used at UAM. At the state level, he worked with the Arkansas Math Crusade, the Applied Math Program, and the Connected Mathematics Project. He has been an active member of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Arkansas Council of Teachers of Mathematics, making numerous presentations with his colleagues and students for both organizations, and serving for many years as the regional director of the ACTM math contest. Lowell worked part-time as a math consultant for the Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative. He was recognized by Alpha Chi with its Teacher of the Year Award and by UAM with its Silver Award for Faculty Excellence. In

his retirement, Lowell plans to pursue his passions of travel and duplicate bridge.

**Guy T. Nelson, III** died on Friday, June 7, 2013. Guy was on medical leave in January 2013 and was going to retire at the end of July 2013 due to health issues. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to pick up his summer salary. Guy started his college teaching career at the University of Arkansas at Monticello in 1989. He received a B.S. and a M. S. degree in Mathematics from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Guy was recognized by Alpha Chi as the Teacher of the Year in 2001. One of his most enjoyable experiences has been serving as the faculty advisor/coach to the UAM Chess Club from 1992 to the present. Guy has also served as advisor to the Knights, a UAM honor and service organization for men. He was one of the original instructors in the Arkansas Math Crusade. At UAM, Guy has taught a number of courses ranging from developmental math to graduate courses in Mathematics education. Outside the classroom, Guy has shown a deep interest in issues both social and political. He was a participant at Camp Casey in Crawford, TX joining Cindy Sheehan and others in protesting the war in Iraq. Guy has been passionately involved with issues dealing with the 9-11 tragedy. His dedication to teaching and to his students will be greatly missed by his friends and colleagues in the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences at UAM.

## Arkansas Tech University

*Tom Limperis*

This past year, Dr. **Donald Carnahan** retired from the Department of Mathematics.

## Henderson State University

*Carolyn Eoff*

The HSU Department of Mathematics and Computer Science had a milestone year in 2013. We had an exceptional group of mathematics and computer science majors, both in quality and numbers; it was one of our largest graduating classes in several years. HSU's chapter of Kappa Mu Epsilon inducted four outstanding students. Both our Computer Science Club and Math Club had active years, with the latter hosting our second annual celebration of Pi Day at HSU. For the 10th consecutive year, HSU competed in the Arkansas Undergraduate Mathematics Competition, fielding two teams for the first time. Both teams turned in solid

performances, with one of our teams coming in fourth, just three points shy of taking third place.

We are excited about the growth of our new statistics program which includes a statistics track within our mathematics degree as well as a minor in statistics. We began offering advanced statistics courses in the fall of 2013.

Our department was disappointed to hear that one of our relatively new faculty members, **Leslie Shults**, will be relocating in 2014, due to her husband's job change. We have begun a search to fill this position; information regarding this can be found on our website: http://www.hsu.edu/mathematics/.

## Oklahoma State University

*William Jaco*

The Department of Mathematics is beginning its third year of the initiative to enhance student learning and success in mathematics. The initiative is being referred to as **S**uccess in **U**ndergraduate **M**athematic**S** (**SUMS**); it encompasses major facility expansions and renovations, personnel additions, administrative responsibility changes, along with several new pedagogy and curricular initiatives. More information may be found at http://sums.okstate.edu/.

**New Math Center**. A major component of the SUMS initiative is the new Mathematics Learning Success Center (MLSC), which opened in April 2013. It is a state-of-the-art, 7,500 square-foot math-tutoring facility on the fifth floor of the Edmon Low Library. The MLSC provides resources for all freshman and sophomore math courses to integrate classroom instruction with tutoring and supplemental instruction outside the classroom. This past fall term, 2013, student use surpassed our expectations with an average of over 1600 student sessions per week (nearly 24,000 for the term) and over 2300 students making use of the facility.

**New Faculty**. Since fall 2012, the Department has appointed 13 new faculty members: one tenured associate professor, seven tenure-track assistant professors, and five non tenure-track clinical faculty members. New members who joined our faculty in Fall 2013 are: **Jiri Lebl**, Ph.D. from the University of California-San Diego (Complex Analysis and Geometry); **Melissa Mills**, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University (Mathematics Education); **Danielle O'Donnol**, Ph.D., UCLA (Geometric Topology); **Ed Richmond**, Ph.D., University of North Carolina (Combinatorics); **Walter Rusin**, Ph.D., University of Minnesota (PDE); and **Jay Schweig**, Ph.D., Cornell

University (Combinatorics). Accepting appointments to join our faculty in fall 2014 are: **Paul Fili,** Ph.D. University of Texas-Austin (Number Theory); **Benjamin Harris**, Ph.D. M.I.T. (Lie Groups/Representation Theory); and **Mike Oehrtman**, Ph.D., University of Texas-Austin (Mathematics Education).

**Visiting Assistant Professors**. We have been fortunate again this 2013-14 academic year to have a number of Visiting Assistant Professors (postdoctoral appointments): **Sean Bowman**, Ph.D., UT-Austin (Geometric Topology); **Kwangho Choiy**, Ph.D., Purdue (Automorphic Forms); **Detelin Dosev**, Ph.D., Texas A&M (Functional Analysis); **Paul Fili**, Ph.D., UT-Austin (Number Theory); **Andrei Pavelescu**, Ph.D., USC (Group Theory); **Sivaguru Ravisankar**, Ph.D., Ohio State University (Complex Analysis); and **Trent Schirmer**, Ph.D., Iowa (Geometric Topology).

**Graduate Teaching Assistantships**. The Department is in the process of increasing its number of graduate students supported by graduate teaching assistantships. Funding is available to move from the 30 in 2011 to 44 for fall 2014–15 and is expected to increase funding to support 54 for 2015–16.

**Awards.** Professor **Jiahong Wu** was elected a **Regents Professor**; Dr. **Jesse Johnson** was awarded the **Sigma Xi Young Scholar Award**; Professor **Benny Evans** received the **Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics** from the Oklahoma-Arkansas section of the MAA. Professor Jim Choike was reappointed the **Noble Professor for Technology Enhanced Education**.

**Retirements.** Professor **Doug Aichele**, Department Liaison to the OK-AR Section of the MAA, retired May, 30, 2013 after 44 years of service; Professor **Benny Evans** retired January 10, 2014 after 42 years of service.

**Conferences.** The Department hosted the Annual Meeting of the OK-AR Section of the MAA on April 4–6, 2013. It was the Section's 75th Anniversary Meeting. We hosted the Texas-Oklahoma Representations and Automorphic Forms Conference (TORA V), September 19–23, 2013, and the 4th OSU PDE Workshop, October 26–27. The former is a joint project between Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma, and University of North Texas; both conferences have funding from NSF, which has been renewed for 2013–15.

**OSUTeach.** OSU has been selected as an implementation partner for UTeach, a highly successful program created to attract talented college students majoring in science, technology, engineering and mathematics to enter the teaching profession. It is a collaboration between the College of

Education and the College of Arts and Sciences providing students a strong focus of research-based learning in science and math, intensive field teaching experience, and personal guidance from faculty and a master teacher. Students interested in mathematics will receive a Mathematics B.S. Degree in Secondary Teacher Certification within the Department of Mathematics, College of Arts and Sciences. The University received a large implementation grant from the National Math and Science Initiative funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

**New Degree Options**. The Department introduced two new undergraduate bachelor degree options and one new bachelor degree track as part of the SUMS Initiative to broaden career path opportunities in the mathematical preparation of student. The new options are: B.S. Degree in Secondary Teacher Certification and B.S. Degree in Actuarial and Financial Mathematics. The new track is Preparation for Graduate School.

## *Section NExT*

The Oklahoma-Arkansas Section NExT is inviting applications for 2014–2015 Fellows. Project NExT is a program of the Mathematical Association of America to help new mathematics faculty adjust to their responsibilities as full-time faculty members. The Oklahoma-Arkansas Section NExT is a local version of this national program.

The 2014 program will take place on Thursday, April 10 and Friday, April 11, at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, as part of the spring meeting of the Section. The program will include various topics of interest to new faculty members from our Section. In particular, we will have sessions addressing teaching, research and service responsibilities. Fellows will participate in the 2014 and 2015 Section NExT meetings. For the 2014 meeting, lodging and dinner for fellows on Thursday, April 10 and a luncheon on Friday, April 11 will be provided.

Fellows must be full-time faculty in their first four years of teaching at the college/university level, or a graduate student completing a Ph. D. in the current year. Interested applicants should send a letter describing their teaching, research, and service interests, and how they hope their participation in Section NExT will help them to meet their career goals. In addition, applicants must submit a letter from their department head or dean expressing support and a commitment to provide funds for the Fellow's participation in both the 2014 and 2015 Section meetings.

Completed applications should be sent to

Jill E. Guerra (mailto:jill.guerra@uafs.edu)
Department of Mathematics
University of Arkansas Fort Smith
5210 Grand Avenue
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72913

## *SIMIODE Announcement*

We believe we can build a community and make the teaching of differential equations more reasonable and usable! Come join our merry band at www.simiode.org.

We would like to introduce you to an exciting project: SIMIOD—Systemic Initiative for Modeling Investigations and Opportunities with Differential Equations. SIMIODE is about teaching differential equations using modeling and technology upfront and throughout the learning process. Learn more at our dynamic website, www.simiode.org, where we offer a community in which colleagues can communicate, collaborate, publish, teach, explore, contribute, etc.

We are building a complete environment for teachers and learners—communication, groups across and intra/inter campus projects for students and teachers, models, data, videos. For the latter see our YouTube videos at http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4y1q6ShHIjRUm7NrM9_dOg where students can collect data on Torricelli's Law and model it with a first principle physics approach for building a differential equation.

Once inside www.simiode.org you can see all the material associated with the Torricelli's Law video in the Modeling Scenario section of our Resources found on our home page. Check out SIMIODE and also check out our very interesting way of starting a differential course with the student version of the Modeling Scenario on M&M Death and Immigration.

Join a group, start a group, begin a discussion, and then collaborate and communicate with others who are interested in teaching differential equations using modeling and technology. Join SIMIODE! It is FREE!

We also have a Manuscript Management system, FastTrack (http://simiode.expressacademic.org), which handles reviews of material submitted to SIMIODE. We need your help to build this community of innovative educators:

1. Please register as a referee.

2. Please contribute to this community as an author.

Brian Winkel, Director—SIMIODE, BrianWinkel@simiode.org

**Minicourse Announcement for MathFest 2014 Portland OR**

**Announcing Mathematical Association of America Four Hour Minicourse #6**
**SIMIODE - Systemic Initiative for Modeling Investigations and Opportunities with Differential Equations – Building Community**

**MathFest, Portland OR, 7-9 August 2014**

**See MAA *FOCUS* Magazine April/May 2014 issue for details or contact BrianWinkel@simiode.org.**

**Session 1 (2 hours):** Thursday, 7 August 2014, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM (20 minutes) Overview of SIMIODE—goals, operations, community.
(10 minutes) Participants will engage in classroom modeling experience.
(60 minutes) Participants will engage in two SIMIODE modeling scenarios acting as students in order to understand the learning approach available in SIMIODE community. (30 minutes each)
(30 minutes) Participants will work in small groups to prepare to use SIMIODE culture and materials in teaching differential equations through modeling and technology use throughout.

**Session 2 (2 hours):** Friday, 8 August 2014, 1:00 PM–3:00 PM.
(30 minutes) General discussion of modeling scenario goals and requirements
(40 minutes) In groups of two participant 1 will engage participant 2 in the development of a modeling scenario of interest to participant 1.
(40 minutes) In groups of two participant 2 will engage participant 1 in the development of a modeling scenario interest to participant 2.
(10 minutes) Wrap-up with plan and commitment to embrace SIMIODE community.

**Come join the SIMIODE community at www.simiode.org and participate in the Minicourse.**

Get up-to-date information from http://sections.maa.org/okar/.