

Report of the
MAA COMMITTEE ON STUDENT CHAPTERS

This report was developed in response to the following charge by President Steen:

"To develop a plan for MAA student chapters (or clubs) for the purpose of attracting students to careers in the mathematical sciences and to encourage membership in MAA."

The following plan proposes procedures for developing MAA student chapters at individual colleges and organizing these student chapters into student sections that are part of the current MAA sections. We shall use the term "parent MAA section" to denote the MAA section to which the student MAA section belongs.

STRUCTURE -

It is proposed that MAA student chapters be established at college campuses by inviting each Mathematics Department to affiliate its existing mathematics club with the MAA as an MAA student chapter or, if no such club exists, to simply create an MAA student chapter. In either case the department will have to appoint a faculty advisor for the MAA student chapter and provide a list of its student members to the MAA annually. There should be no charge for creating an MAA student chapter and each chapter should be entitled to receive literature and assistance with projects that may be sponsored or supported by the MAA.

The MAA student chapters within an MAA section should constitute an "MAA student section" to be considered part of the "parent MAA section". The parent MAA section should have the responsibility of assisting with and coordinating the section activities of its student section.

It is proposed that the parent MAA section appoint a coordinator [or a coordinating committee] to work with the faculty advisors of its MAA student chapters to organize activities for its MAA student section.

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MEMBERSHIP -

Membership in MAA student chapters is intended primarily for full-time undergraduate students. However, it is recognized that deviations from this guideline may be appropriate for some colleges and the ultimate decision on the eligibility for membership should be left to the college. However, "interest" should be the primary qualification for membership -- academic record or other criteria that would tend to make the chapter an "honorary" group should not be considered.

The MAA membership category, "student member", should apply to all students who are MAA members, even if they do not belong to student chapters. Thus, if the MAA decides to provide some special benefit to student members, students at colleges with no MAA student chapter will not be penalized.

TRANSITION TO FULL MEMBERSHIP -

One of the goals of the MAA student chapters is to encourage membership in the MAA after graduation. To achieve this, the MAA should begin contacting students in their late Junior year or early Senior year about becoming full members. The current two-year discount policy for new members should apply to student members who decide to join the MAA after graduation.

JOURNALS FOR STUDENT MEMBERS -

Student members should receive FOCUS and be required to select at least one additional journal: Mathematics Magazine, The College Mathematics Journal, or The American Mathematical Monthly.

DUES -

We propose that student member dues be \$10.00/year plus charges for journal subscriptions: \$5.00/year for the College Mathematics Journal or Mathematics Magazine and \$10.00 for The American Mathematical Monthly.

In deciding on the dues structure, we wanted to ensure that membership in the MAA would not make it difficult financially for students to be members of other student organizations. Dues for some other student organizations are:

ACS (American Chemical Society) - \$10.00 per annum which entitles the student to membership benefits plus five months of a news publication. If desired, the student can choose not to receive the news publication and apply \$3.02 of the \$10.00 toward another publication.

ACM (Association of Computing Machinery) - \$15.00 per annum which entitles the student to a communications publication. If desired, the student can apply \$5.00 of the \$15.00 toward other selected publications.

PI MU EPSILON - \$4.00 one-time initiation fee which entitles the student to two issues of the Pi Mu Epsilon journal. (Fee may be raised to \$10.00.) Local chapters may also charge a fee (typical: \$5.50 one time). After the first two issues of the journal the student must subscribe to continue receiving it.

SIAM - \$14.00 per annum which entitles the student to the same benefits as a full member, i.e., subscription to a journal and a newsletter. In addition students receive substantial discounts on registration fees at meetings (typical: full member \$115.00, student member \$5.00). In addition, local organizations at universities may impose additional dues (typical: \$2.00).

JOURNAL SPACE -

It is recommended that the section newsletters be expanded, if necessary, to include space for activities of its student chapters and that Focus allocate space for articles of interest to students. Student members should be added to the mailing lists for section newsletters.

INITIAL ORGANIZATION -

It is proposed that a new standing "Committee on Student Chapters" be formed to oversee the initial organization and ongoing activities of the student chapters and sections. Responsibilities would include communications, publications, and assistance at the national level. This would be an extremely busy committee requiring sufficient manpower and budget to perform its duties. The work required of this committee is likely to be sufficiently extensive that it would not be advisable to include it within the Committee on Sections or other existing committees. Initial organization of MAA student chapters will require:

1. Preparation of a brochure describing the benefits of having an MAA student chapter and the procedures for creating such a chapter.
2. Preparation of application forms.
3. Creation of a student membership list for mailing purposes.
4. Publicity.

SAMPLE BENEFITS THAT THE MAA MIGHT PROVIDE TO STUDENT CHAPTERS -

1. Films
2. Speakers
3. Minicourses
4. Career information
5. Information about activities of other clubs
6. Discounts on MAA books

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES THAT PARENT SECTIONS MIGHT PROVIDE -

1. Speakers from section colleges
2. Student paper competitions
3. Mathematics contests
4. Career fairs with representatives from local industry and graduate schools
5. Student-oriented talks and activities at section meetings
6. Separate meetings totally devoted to student activities
7. Minicourses developed within the section
8. Cooperative activities with Pi Mu Epsilon and other student organizations

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS -

It is proposed that all records of student members be maintained at the national level rather than at the chapter or section level. This seems to be the safest and most reliable procedure given the importance of those records as a data source for future full members.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS -

1. There are currently approximately 3000 student members in the MAA. The new proposed dues structure for student members would reduce the present dues by approximately \$4.00 for each of these current members, resulting in a reduction of approximately \$12,000 in current income. Hopefully, the student chapters will increase the number of student members substantially and this will ultimately result in increased full membership over the years. Thus, this \$12,000/year may eventually be offset by increased revenue from the added members. However, the ultimate net financial effect seems unpredictable at present.

2. We believe that the work involved in maintaining the student chapters may be so substantial that a full-time staff may ultimately be required.
3. It is not clear whether it is less expensive to mail journals in bulk to student chapters and have them distributed locally or to mail them individually. The latter procedure seems more desirable, but it may be a significant financial consideration. Al Willcox will be looking into this question.