

Mathematics Session Notes

Moderators

Lara Couturier, Jobs for the Future

Jen Cullinane, Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin

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Math faculty began a conversation on the development of multiple math pathways. The creation of multiple math pathways will allow students to take courses that are more appropriate aligned with the math skills they need to be successful in their majors. The session was facilitated by Lara Couturier, Jobs for the Future, and Jen Cullinane, Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Faculty were organized by region and were asked to focus on particular math pathway (statistics, quantitative reasoning, calculus for STEM majors, business calculus, mathematics for math majors, and teacher preparation). Groups assessed whether they offered these pathways, which courses actually make up those pathways in their region, and which majors are served by these programs. Groups then rotated so they had a chance to examine the commonalities and differences across institutions and regions for the different math pathways.

During the debrief exercise, several issues surfaced:

- Transfer issues related to to Calculus 1 and 2
- Preparation sequences for Calculus
 - Two courses compared to three course sequences for Calculus (“college algebra” and “pre-calculus” versus “college algebra,” “trigonometry,” and “pre-calculus”)
- Wide variability in what was actually include in Topics in Math (the math for liberal arts/QR course) and statistics pre-requisites.

Moving forward, faculty agreed to adopt the following guiding principles:

- Aim for impacting the majority of students
- Flexible and willing to adapt
- Aim for 80% overlap
- Encourage camaraderie in the group
- Reward faculty participation

Faculty also agreed that it would be useful to explore the use of common course titles.