

# LA/MS SECTION NEWSLETTER

**Fall 1997**

**Volume 20, No. 2 Fall, 1997**

---

*Editor's note: The dates presented in this newsletter for the Spring 1998 section meeting have been changed. By moving all dates one week earlier (February 26-28), you should have the correct date.)*

## **CALL FOR STUDENT PAPERS**

The LA-MS Section of the MAA will hold its annual Student Paper Competition on March 7, 1998, at the section meeting in New Orleans, LA. Papers are solicited in two categories; graduate and undergraduate. Presentations at the meeting will be limited to 12 minutes.

A written paper of 6 pages or less must be received and include the author's name, institutional affiliation and faculty advisor. If available, an e-mail address should also be provided. Late entries will not be considered. Contact Dr. Mohamed Mahrous, LA/MS Section Chair, University of New Orleans for more details.

Prizes will be awarded in each category separately, with no more than 3 prizes in each. The number of prizes awarded shall be at the discretion of the judges, and shall be determined depending on the number and quality of the entries in each category. The amount of the prizes shall be as follows: first prize, \$75.00, second, \$50.00, and third, \$25.00.

Each entry will be judged on the basis of both the written and oral presentation, with equal consideration given to both.

## **STUDENT TEAM COMPETITION**

The Seventh Student Team Competition will be held on Friday, March 6, 1998 from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. Each school is invited to enter one or two teams. Please encourage your students to attend the meeting and to participate in this competition. A team must have a faculty sponsor and shall consist of at most 4 students. Team members must be undergraduate students and must be currently enrolled at the institution they represent.

An application form for this competition will be included in the registration information which will be mailed to department chairs in January. If more information is needed, or if a faculty member is interested in assisting in judging the competition (including submitting problems and grading), please contact Dr. Mohamed Mahrous, LA/MS Section Chair, University of New Orleans for more details.

---

## **Meeting Preliminaries**

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

The 75th Annual Meeting of the Louisiana-Mississippi Section of the Mathematical Association of America will be held in New Orleans on March 6-7, 1998. The University of New Orleans is the host. Sessions of ten to twelve-minute papers will be held on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Anyone wishing to submit a

paper for one of these sessions should send the information requested below to: Dr. Mohamed Mahrous, LA/MS Section Chair, University of New Orleans. Contact him for the deadline for submission. The required information is:

- Name of the speaker
- Title of the paper
- Institutional affiliation
- Office telephone number
- An abstract of fifty words or less.

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS - FOR 1998 LA/MS SECTION AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY TEACHING OF MATHEMATICS**

The following letter was received from MAA encouraging nominations for the Section Teaching Award.

"Nominations for the seventh (1998) Louisiana-Mississippi Section Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics are now being accepted. The LA/MS Section Selection Committee will choose one of the nominees for the Section Award. The awardee will be honored at the 1998 Annual Section Meeting in March and will be widely recognized and acknowledged within the Section. The awardee will also be the official Section candidate for the pool of Section awardees from which the national recipients of the MAA Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics will be selected except that one of the national winners may be selected from another source. There will be at most three national awardees, each of whom will be honored at the national MAA meeting in January 1999 and will receive a \$1,000 check and a certificate."

"Anyone is entitled to make a nomination, but nominations from chairs or MAA liaisons in departments of mathematical sciences are specially solicited. For this reason, this call for nominations is sent to both department chairs and MAA liaisons so that the responsibility for nominations can be shared between them."

"We urge you to submit a nomination if you have someone eligible and qualified in your department in order that your candidate has an opportunity to be considered for the Section Award and, if so selected, also for the national award. Even if not selected this year, it is an honor for someone to have been nominated, your department will receive recognition for its commitment to excellence in teaching, and the work done in preparing a nomination folder for your candidate is not wasted since your candidate can be nominated again in a future year. Self-nomination is not permitted."

"In addition to discussing this memo with your colleagues, preferable at a department meeting, please post it in a prominent place in your department."

#### Eligibility

College or university teachers assigned at least halftime during the academic year to teaching a mathematical science in a public or private college or university (from two-year college teaching through teaching at the Ph.D. level) in the United States or Canada. Those on approved leave (sabbatical or other) during the academic year in which they are nominated qualify if they fulfilled the requirements in the previous year.

- At least five years teaching experience in a mathematical science.
- Membership in the Mathematical Association of America.

#### Guidelines for Nomination

- The nominees should be widely recognized as extraordinarily successful in their teaching\*
- have teaching effectiveness that can be documented
- have had influence in their teaching beyond their own institutions\*\*
- foster curiosity and generate excitement about mathematics in their students.

\* "teaching" is to be interpreted in its broadest sense, not necessarily limited to classroom teaching (it may include activities such as preparing students for mathematical competitions at the college level, for example, the Putnam Prize Competition or the Mathematical Contest in Modeling, or attracting students to become majors in a mathematical science or to become Ph.D. candidates).

\*\* "influence beyond their own institution" can take many forms, including demonstrated lasting impact on alumni, influence on the profession through curricular revisions in college mathematics teaching with national impact, influential innovative books on the teaching of college mathematics, etc.

Nominations must be submitted on the enclosed "Nomination Form" Please follow the instructions on that form precisely to assure uniformity in the selection process both at the Section and national levels.

If a file on a Section awardee significantly exceeds the prescribed limits, it will not be considered for a national award and will be returned to the Section.

Please send six copies of each nomination packet to

Professor Rose Strahan, Secretary  
 LA/MS Section  
 Box 3242  
 Delta State University  
 Cleveland, MS 38733

so as to be received no later than December 5, 1997.

The Section Selection Committee will select the Section awardee during January and communicate its selection to the national selection committee no later than February 1 so that the national Committee can then make its selections.

We look forward to your participation in this exciting MAA venture of taking substantive action to honor extraordinarily successful teaching. We want to see such teaching recognized at all post-secondary school levels. We depend on you to help us identify those who merit such recognition.

### **USM Weekend Algebra Conference**

17 - 19 April 1998

The Department of Mathematics of the University of Southern Mississippi will be hosting an algebra conference April 17, 18, and 19, 1998. In keeping with the tradition of these annual regional algebra conferences (the last being held at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, fall, 1996), talks in all areas of algebra are welcome. Graduate students are particularly encouraged to attend. All talks will be given in Southern Hall on the Hattiesburg campus. The conference organizers are Temple H. Fay, William Hornor, and Gary L. Walls.

Weekend algebra conferences are held yearly at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, the University of Southern Mississippi, and a third volunteer university (past hosts include the University of Houston, Baylor University, and Texas A & M University). Thus every third year USM hosts this popular conference.

USM hosted the conference in April 1995, for the third time and had over 45 participants. The conference format is simple, which might account in part for its popularity. Talks begin Friday afternoon at 1 pm and run to about 6 pm; each talk is approximately 30 minutes. Friday evening there is a dinner, but no speeches. Saturday talks begin at 8 am and run to about 1 pm. Thereafter, a picnic is held at Professor Fay's house for the conference participants and USM mathematics faculty and students. Sunday talks begin at 8 am and run to noon. Thus there are about 14 hours or so of talks on mathematics and some serious volleyball competitions, not to mention barbecued chicken and fresh boiled crawfish.

### **USA/USM Miniconference on Undergraduate**

#### *Research in the Mathematical Sciences*

20 February 1998

The Department of Physics of the University of South Alabama will be hosting the 7th annual USA/USM Miniconference of Undergraduate Research in the Mathematical Sciences on 20 February 1998. Undergraduate talks in computer science, mathematics, physics, and statistics are welcome. Faculty presentations are also considered although priority is given to undergraduate speakers if the program becomes crowded. Student talks are usually 20 minutes and faculty talks 45 minutes.

This miniconference alternates between the campuses of USA and USM. Last year at USM there were 8 student presentations and 4 faculty talks. The program generally begins with registration in the morning, a lunch for all participants, and talks begin at 1 pm and run to 6:30 or so.

Miniconference organizers are Professor Temple H. Fay, Department of Mathematics, University of Southern Mississippi and Professor R. Kent Clark, Department of Physics, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama. Potential speakers are asked to send a title and abstract to Professor Clark. Students and faculty are invited to attend regardless of whether they are speakers or not. Professor Clark suggests that participants come down for some interesting presentations on Friday and to enjoy Mardi Gras in Mobile over the weekend.

For further information contact either of the organizers.

E-mail: [thfay@mozart.st.usm.edu](mailto:thfay@mozart.st.usm.edu), or [clark@jaguar1.physics.usouthal.edu](mailto:clark@jaguar1.physics.usouthal.edu)

---

### **NEWS FROM AROUND THE SECTION**

#### East Central Community College

##### Faculty News:

- Mrs. Gary Ann Moore is a new faculty member

#### Hinds Community College

##### Faculty News:

- Ken Johnston was selected as one of five Outstanding Academic Faculty Members for the year 1996-97.
- Dr. Dan Hogan became Academic Dean for the Raymond Campus July 1, 1996.
- Dr. Ken Johnston was named Chair of the Raymond Campus Mathematics Department and Academic, Mathematics Coordinator for the district July 1, 1996.

## Meridian Community College

### Faculty News:

- Mr. C.O. Grace has retired June, 1997 after 35 years of teaching mathematics.
- Ms. Lisa Sullivan has joined the faculty this year. Her main teaching responsibility is in the area of remedial mathematics.

## Millsaps College

### Faculty News:

- Georgia Miller was promoted (from Instructor) to Assistant Professor.
- Connie Campbell was promoted (from Assistant Professor) to Associate Professor.

## Mississippi State University

### Faculty News:

- J. Morgan Moore has been named Instructor of Mathematics and Instructional Support.
- Jianping Zhu was promoted from Associate Professor to Full Professor.
- Hai D. Dang was promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor.
- Anthony Giaquinto was promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor.

## Mississippi University for Women

### Faculty News:

- Dr. Jean Ann Parra, Professor of Mathematics, retired June 1 1997.
- Dr. Dorothy A. Kerzel, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Ph.D. Washington State University, came to MUW from Washington State University.
- Dr. G. Beate Zimmer, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Ph.D. University of Illinois, came to MUW from College of William and Mary.

## University of Mississippi

### Faculty News:

- Dr. David Cook retired June, 1997.
- Dr. William Staton is on sabbatical for the 1997-1998 academic year.

### New Faculty:

- Dr. Mary Baggett (Statistics). Her Ph.D. is from Florida State University.
- Dr. Tristan Denley (Combinatorics). His Ph.D. is from University of Cambridge, England.
- Dr. Shirin Handjani (Probability). Her Ph.D. is from UCLA.

## University of Southern Mississippi

### Faculty News:

- Mylan Redfern spent fall 1997 on sabbatical leave at U.C. Berkeley, where she studied stochastic differential geometry with Bruce Driver of U.C. San Diego.
- Jiu Ding was on sabbatical leave in China during spring 1997. He collaborated with Aihui Zhou at

Academia Sinica in the writing of a research monograph on the Frobenius-Perron operator.

- Lue Bell is in the last year of her professional development leave. She is in the scientific computing doctoral program here at USM.
- Barry Piazza was promoted to full professor, effective fall 1997.

Other Items:

- Wright W. Cross, a 1951 graduate at this department made a gift in the form of a Charitable Remainder Unitrust to USM. The gift, presently valued at \$3.3 M, will be used to endow a chair in Mathematics and provide 10 undergraduate scholarships.
- We will be hosting the weekend Algebra Conference during April 17, 18 and 19, 1998. We will also be co-hosting the USA/USM Miniconference on Undergraduate Research on February 20, held this year in Mobile.

### Centenary College

Faculty News:

- Dr. Yvonne I. Yaz was awarded the "Natural Sciences and Mathematics Endowed Professorship" for the academic years 1997-98 and 1998-99.
- Dr. Yvonne Ilke Yaz was promoted to Associate Professor and received tenure. Also Dr. Yaz became the Chair of the Mathematics Department.

Other News:

- Senior Mathematics major Ms. Monique Cousins of Lafayette, LA has been accepted by REU sites at Carnegie Melon University and George Washington University. She chose George Washington and did summer research there.

### Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge

Faculty News:

New Hires:

- Associate Professor Hong Zhang
- Assistant Professor Stephen Watson
- Manoj Chari has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Other Items:

- Professor Luther Weide, Head of the Mathematics Department for 30 years, died November 20, 1996 at the age of 79.

### Louisiana Tech University

Faculty News:

- Dr. Bernd Schroeder has joined us as an Associate Professor of mathematics. He came to us from Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. His area of research interest is discrete mathematics.
- Dr. Muaijian Gu received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor.

Other Items:

- A former faculty member, Mr. Lester Garrison, died this summer. He was an Associate Professor of Mathematics. He was on the faculty from 1950 until his retirement in 1968.

### Nicholls State University

#### Faculty News:

- Laurette Simmons has retired.
- Fran Moss to Instructor.
- Sherri Belanger to Instructor.

#### Other News:

- We received an NSF/LEQSF grant for computer assisted classroom.

### Southeastern Louisiana University

#### Faculty News:

- Dr. Katherine Pedersen is the new Chair of the Mathematics Department. She was most recently at the University of South Dakota at Aberdeen.
- Dr. Steve Ligh retired January 1, 1997.
- Mr. James Morgan retired July 31, 1997.
- Dr. Marian Rummel died September 29, 1997.

#### There are five new instructors:

- Aimee Buckel
- Sara Clifton
- Rick Muscatello
- Bob Thebault
- Henry Smith.

#### Other Items:

- Regular colloquia are held on Friday afternoons. Interested parties can contact the department.
- The department is seeking to fill five new positions at the assistant or associate professor level.

### University of Southwestern Louisiana

#### Faculty News:

- Patricia Jones will be retiring at the end of the current semester, in December 1997.
- Carroll Guillory has been promoted to Full Professor.

#### Other News:

- Darren Alcock, W.Y. Chan, and Kevin Zhu received the departmental award given to Teaching Assistants for outstanding teaching.
- Bradd Clark and Vic Schneider are co-directing a LaSIP grant to prepare high school and middle school teachers to teach the new Louisiana mathematics curriculum. Over 50 teachers received training this past summer.
- With the support of LaCEPT, USL has created a new four-course sequence for prospective teachers.

The material developed by Pat Jones, Kathleen Lopez, and Lee Price for three of these courses has been accepted for publication.

Xavier University of Louisiana

Faculty News:

- Dr. Donna Stutson, Assistant Professor, is a new faculty member.
  - Dr. Gurthal Arors has been promoted to Associate Professor.
  - Dr. Vljako Kocic has been promoted to Associate Professor and is the new Chair of the department.
- 

**Section Officers**

Section Chair: Mohamed Mahrous, University of New Orleans

Newsletter Editor: Wanda Dixon, Meridian Community College

Past Chair: Connie Campbell, Millsaps College

Secretary - Treasurer: Rose Strahan, Delta State University

LA Vice Chair: Dorene Fox, LSU-Alexandria

MS Vice Chair: Bessie Tucker, Jackson State University

Section Governor: Charles Alexander, University of Mississippi