

LA/MS SECTION NEWSLETTER

Winter 1999

Volume 22, No. 2

Spring 2000 Meeting Info:

- [Registration](#)
- [Accommodations](#)
- [Call for Papers](#)
- [Call for Student Papers](#)
- [Student Team Competition](#)

[Governor's Report](#)

[Section Chair's Report](#)

[Member News](#)

SPRING 2000 MEETING INFORMATION

REGISTRATION INFO

Dates for the Spring 2000 LA-MS Section meeting are February 25-26, 2000. The University of Louisiana, Lafayette will be the hosting institution. A registration form and other information regarding the meeting is available on our section web site. A registration form will be included in the printed version of the newsletter.

ACCOMMODATION INFO

The meeting will be held on the University campus. The Best Western Hotel, Acadiana will serve as the meeting headquarters. The hotel is 1.6 mi from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette student union where most of the sessions will take place. Several rooms have been reserved at a special room rate of \$59 plus 10.5% tax for a double or king. Reservations should be made by Feb 3. Contact details:

- 1801 W Pinhook Rd, Lafayette, LA 70508
- Phone 318 233 8120
- FAX 318 232 3932

Contact the section website for information on alternate accommodations.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Several contributed paper sessions will be held in conjunction with the section meeting in Lafayette. For any faculty interested in presenting a talk, send your name, school, and title of talk to any member of the Contributed Papers Committee. If possible, include a short abstract (50 words or less) for possible inclusion in the program.

For more information, see <http://www.mc.edu/~travis/maa/meeting/papers.html>.

Deadline: February 11, 2000

CALL FOR STUDENT PAPERS

The LA-MS Section of the MAA will hold its annual Student Paper Competition on Friday, February 25, 2000, at the section meeting in Lafayette, LA. Papers are solicited in two categories; graduate and undergraduate. The graduate category is limited to master's students. Interested Ph.D. students are encouraged to submit for the contributed paper sessions listed above. 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 committee chair Gary Walls at USM 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.

For more information, see <http://www.mc.edu/~travis/maa/meeting/papers.html>.

Deadline: February 11, 2000.

STUDENT TEAM COMPETITION

The Seventh Student Team Competition will be held on Friday, February 25, 2000 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 [Darren Wick](#) at Millsaps College.

For more information, see <http://www.mc.edu/~travis/maa/meeting/competition.html>.

Deadline: February 11, 1999

Governor's Report

Being Governor of the Louisiana-Mississippi Section of the MAA is indeed a wonderful job. On or about the first of August 1999, my wife, Kathleen, and I left Natchitoches where the temperature was around 95 degrees and traveled to Providence, Rhode Island where the temperature was in the high 70s to participate in the summer meeting of the MAA that is called Mathfest. The summer before we traveled to Toronto, Ontario

and attended Mathfest and vacationed afterward. This is truly a tough job, but someone has to do it. I am enjoying being your Governor, and I recommend it to anyone who is lucky enough to be considered in the future.

The Board of Governors meeting was the day before the beginning of Mathfest this summer. The one issue that seems to form a theme for recent meetings of the Board is membership. The MAA creates programs, publications, and services to attract and keep members from colleges, universities, and industry. Since becoming your Governor, it has become evident to me that there are many people working very hard to serve the membership of the MAA. I encourage you to continue your membership, if you are a member. If you are not a member, please join the MAA and become a part of an organization that is devoted to issues that are important to you as a college teacher. Someone at the last meeting said that the AMS was for research and teaching and the MAA was for teaching and research. The MAA is concerned about the teaching of mathematics. If you attend a national meeting, and I encourage you to do so, you will find many topics that interest you. There are two national meetings each year, one in January and one in late July or early August. The January 2000 joint meeting with the AMS is in Washington, D.C. See the [MAA website at www.maa.org](http://www.maa.org) to register and look at the program.

This is a message to chairs and department heads of mathematics. We need more institutional memberships. Talk with your faculty and administration. If you need any details about the process, you can find those at the MAA website. Also, we need to recognize those faculty members who spend their time and money supporting the MAA. Encourage your faculty to join and keep your administration apprised of the importance of a faculty member belonging to the MAA. If the mathematics faculty see that the MAA can speak to their administration concerning issues about curriculum, teaching, and faculty loads, then they will want to join.

Make your plans to attend our section meeting in the Spring. If you are fortunate enough to have enough travel money, please plan to attend the national meeting in January. Spend a few minutes some time soon perusing the MAA website. Again, I am very pleased to be your Governor, and if I may be of service to you Please contact me at chadick@nsula.edu.

Stan Chadick

Section Chair's Report

Serving as Section Chairman has been a lot of fun so far. A big thanks to all of you who so readily agreed to serve on committees. I don't recall receiving a single "no". To anyone who is interested in getting involved in helping the Section function -- it's easy. Just notify someone on the Executive Committee. There is plenty of work to go around.

At the end of July I had the opportunity to attend the MAA MATHFEST in Providence R.I. Our section was also represented by Executive Committee members Stan Chadick, Leigh Ann Myers, and John Travis, and by former MAA president Dick Anderson. At the national meeting for section officers, chairman David Stone, who was an invited speaker at our 1999 meeting in Jackson, made particular mention of how successful the LA/MS Section has been in promoting student involvement in the MAA through our programming and competitions.

In late September the Executive Committee, joined by Dr. Anderson, met on the campus of UL Monroe. Steve Richters graciously provided us with coffee and a meeting room. We

spent much of the session kicking around ideas for our annual meeting in February. One issue that came up was our Section Bylaws. They are badly out of date and need revision. A plan is in place to take care of this.

The committee is in total agreement on the importance of recognizing and rewarding superior teachers. Our section presents an annual Outstanding Teacher Award. Not all sections do this. Nominating a colleague for this award involves a little work but it is important and satisfying. Worthy candidates deserve the honor of being nominated, and educational administrators and the media should be made aware of this honor. I truly hope that this year's selection committee will be inundated.

Arrangements for our annual meeting seem to be going well. The facilities have been booked, a worthwhile program is taking shape, and the crawfish have been ordered. I hope to see you in Lafayette on Feb. 25-26.

Roger Waggoner

Section Proceedings to be Published

Following some discussion at last year's section meeting, the Executive committee has formed a committee to consider publishing proceedings of the annual meeting. Michael Pearson of Mississippi State University has been selected to chair this committee. Other members include Bradd Clark from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Ken Li from Southern Louisiana University, James Reid from the University of Mississippi and John Travis from Mississippi College.

Preliminary plans are to announce at the spring meeting the deadline for submission of papers presented at meeting to be submitted for publication in proceedings. When papers are submitted to the committee, they will be refereed and the author will be notified of the status. Committee members will take responsibility for certain areas, and find qualified individuals to help them referee papers. Papers that are accepted will be published electronically on the section website.

Any section member who would like to comment on this is encouraged to contact the committee via Michael Pearson at pearson@math.msstate.edu.

Section Mailing List

Interested faculty are encouraged to utilize the section mailing list for sharing pertinent information with fellow members of the section. Information on section meetings and other section activities will be routinely broadcast via the list. If you would like to join the list or if you have something to share with the list, send an email to [Web Coordinator](#).

Member News:

From the University of Louisiana at Lafayette:

An institutional name change received final approval in September. We are now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, or UL Lafayette instead of USL. Activities celebrating our Centennial are ongoing throughout the year. Such activities include the hosting of scholarly meetings. The Mathematics Department is doing its part, with the MAA Section meeting on Feb 25-26 and an AMS sectional meeting on April 14-16.

Retiring Mathematics faculty: (at the end of the Fall 1999)

- Awad Iskander
- Charles Sheumaker

Mathematics faculty awarded tenure:

- Lan Ke
- Qin Sheng

From the University of Southern Mississippi:

Dexuan Xie joined our faculty this fall as assistant professor. He came to us from the Courant Institute where he was an associate research scientist during the past three years. He received his Ph.D. in applied mathematics from the University of Houston in 1995. He will contribute needed expertise to the scientific computing doctoral program.

Both Porter Webster and Alice Essary will retire this year, effective May. Porter will have 39 years of service and Alice will have 36. Both have been mainstays to the department, and the feeling here is that they are irreplaceable.

Karen Rhea is spending this year at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor as a visiting lecturer. She was invited to help with UM's TA training program and participate in a new program designed to strengthen the bond and increase communication between secondary teachers and professors.

David Betounes and Mylan Redfern have received a two year NSF grant with an award of over \$300k. Their project will aid and facilitate the integration of the computer algebra system Maple into math, science, and engineering curricula. The major emphasis will be two new courses that use Maple as a programming language. The courses are designed to reinforce basic concepts learned in the calculus sequence as well as to stress the logic and algorithms inherent in programming. In addition, David and Mylan will develop calculus computing labs which will correspond to but be independent of the freshman/sophomore courses in the calculus sequence. It is expected that materials resulting from the grant will have at least two forms: a special purpose lab book designed to analyze and record results from computing experiments in the calculus labs and a textbook on programming in Maple.

Stephen Joubert is presently a visiting professor with us this fall. He comes to us from South Africa's Technikon Pretoria where he is head of the Department of Mathematical Technology. Stephen and Temple Fay are long time collaborators in algebra and mathematics education. Both are instrumental in running USM's master's program at the Technikon Pretoria.

Jiu Ding attended by invitation the International Conference on Optimization and Numerical Analysis held in Nanjing during September 27-30. He was a member of the program committee, co-organizer of a special session, and a presenter as well.

Susan Ross has just concluded hosting the annual meeting of the Mississippi Council of Teachers of Mathematics. The meeting was held at Hattiesburg's new convention facility during November 4-5. Susan Ross is MCTM's president this year.

From Mississippi State University:

Corlis P. Johnson was promoted to Associate Professor of Mathematics, effective Fall 1999.

From Mississippi University for Women:

Mississippi University for Women's Division of Science and Mathematics in conjunction with the Division of Education and Human Sciences received a grant to host an Ohio State Technology Short Course on the W campus October 22-23, 1999. University faculty and in-service teachers from around the state attended Mathematics Teacher Educator: Middle School. Modules about algebraic thinking, probability and simulations, geometry and measurement, middle school geometry, data analysis, and connecting algebra and geometry to the underpinnings of calculus were explored using TI-73s, TI-92s, CBRs, and CBLs, courtesy of the TI loan program. Dr. Christing Browning from Western Michigan University led the sessions. Dr. Bonnie Oppenheimer initiated the grant.

From Louisiana State University at Eunice:

Chris Devillier will be joining our faculty in the Spring of 2000.

Bill Dean will be leaving in order to return to graduate school on a full-time basis.

From LSU-Baton Rouge:

The department was selected as one of twelve departments in the university to receive priority funding for new positions and graduate stipends. We have received funding for special graduate scholar enhancement awards that will enlarge the stipend for some of our graduate fellowships to between \$20,000 and \$25,000 for superior students. We are currently recruiting to fill a senior position (at the full professor level) in applied mathematics, with the intent that the person filling the position may also help to select the people to fill one or two additional new assistant professor positions in applied mathematics. We have started to implement a new applied mathematics concentration for our masters degree and are offering several new applied graduate courses in addition to our traditional curriculum. We have revised somewhat our curriculum for our first-year graduate courses and modified the timing and content of the comprehensive exams, in

order to get our Ph.D. students focused on research earlier in their studies. We are in the process of completely overhauling our undergraduate program, with three additional concentrations for our math majors and some new courses at the sophomore level. Most of these courses have been approved and will appear in the LSU 2000-2001 catalog. We have started an "Applied Math Clinic", a course for advanced undergraduate and graduate students that deals with projects proposed to us by local industry.

Retirements:

Nicholson Professor Pierre Conner retired this past year. Our chair Ron Retherford will retire on July 1, 2000; he continues to have debilitating back and leg pain. After Ron's retirement Guillermo Ferreyra will be chair of the department.

Promotions:

Jimmie Lawson was named a Boyd Professor.

James Oxley was named a Bud Davis Alumni Professor.

Padmanaban Sundar was promoted to full professor.

Hong Zhang was granted tenure as an associate professor.

Dirk Vertigan was promoted to associate professor with tenure.

Michael Tom was promoted to associate professor with tenure.

New Grants:

The department received two new grants for computing equipment; one allowed us to replace our aging NeXT machines in our undergraduate computer lab with Sun workstations (Neal Stoltzfus, PI), and the other allowed us to buy new PCs for a lab to support the applied math program (Peter Wolenski, PI). Robert Perlis, William Hoffman, James Madden and Neal Stoltzfus received funding to run an REU program here last summer. A number of faculty received new grants from various sources to support basic research. These include: Dan Cohen, Guoli Ding, William Hoffman, Michael Tom, Steve Watson, Steve Weintraub, Peter Wolenski and Hong Zhang. The total amount of external grant funding received by the department in FY1998 was \$444,527. This brings the total since 1990 to over five million dollars.