



Gabriel Melendez

MVCC'S Mathematics Department - Serving Students in Every Program

Because the Mathematics Department serves nearly 2,000 of MVCC's students every term, in virtually every degree program, it offers an extraordinary range of mathematics instruction, often customized to meet the varied needs of students in different specific fields of study at the College.

Classes are offered day and night, in Utica and Rome, on-line, and in a number of high schools on a dual credit basis. The Department offers Intercession courses on both the Utica and Rome Campuses in January.

Math Majors, Too

Sometimes overlooked is the fact that the Department also regularly has about 20 students who effectively major in mathematics, enrolled in the Liberal Arts & Sciences: Mathematics & Science curriculum. When they graduate, these students often transfer to institutions such as Utica College, Rochester Institute of Technology, Clarkson University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a variety of SUNY campuses. They go on to earn Bachelor's degrees in not only mathematics, but also in computer science, engineering science, and secondary education.

At least one graduate has made a mark in local radio, Jerry "The Doctor" Kraus, of WOUP, who also went on to study economics at SUNY Oswego. There are two other mathematics majors who have earned a Ph.D., one in Computer Science and one in Electrical Engineering.

Importance of Developmental Mathematics Instruction

According to Department Head Donald Willner, "approximately 75% of the College's incoming matriculated students test into a developmental mathematics course. Because of that, we take very seriously our role in the developmental area, and spend a huge amount of time seeking to improve the quality of our instruction in these courses."

He cites creation of a relatively new course, MA045 Basic Math Skills, as an example, and says it is more structured than the self-paced MA050 Introductory Mathematics, to serve those students who feel they need more lecture and guided work.

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After Hours Reception and Gala Set for this Weekend

The After Hours Reception is being planned, food prepped, and the music lined up. What else do we need?

YOU in attendance!!!!

Tickets are available for the "Dance the Night Away" Employee After Hours Reception on November 19th.

They can be purchased for \$5 (employees) and \$10 (guests) at the following locations: CCED, AB154; Maria Salamida, PH347; Mary Ellen Hart, PH134; Norma Chrisman, PH220; Stephanie Verostek, PC113; or they can be purchased at the door.

The price of admission includes two tickets for adult beverages, a selection of delicious foods prepared by your illustrious colleagues, a chance at winning one of several gifts including jewelry, restaurant gift certificates and a \$150 cash prize, and an opportunity to dance the night away to music from the 50's, 60's and 70's!

You must be present to win the gifts.

On Friday evening you can view and bid on the silent auction items as well as purchase tickets for the Chinese Auction which will be awarded during Saturday night's Gala.

A special thank you to the PA, AMVA and Sam Russo for their generous donations to help support this event.

Gala

Saturday's Gala event will feature the music of "Classified" and the "Gap Mangione Quartet" starting at 6:30 p.m.

Elegant hors d'oeuvres, carving and pasta stations, specialty desserts and beverages will be served.

Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased by calling 792-5486.

Join us and "Dance the Night Away" at either or both of these great events!

Competitions Reward Top Math Students - in High School & College

Mathematics competitions are important in the Department. A regional high school competition held each fall usually attracts around 100 student competitors, from 14 different high schools. Every member of the Department is involved with the competition in some way. The top prize is a Presidential Scholarship at the College, provided through the MVCC Foundation. Other prizes include books and software, some donated by the College Bookstore. There are also occasional cash prizes. "Not only does the competition allow us to focus some positive attention on serious mathematics students, but it provides us with another way to interact with mathematics teachers," says Professor Willner. The next competition in the series is scheduled for November 16th.

The Department, represented by Professor Willner and Assistant Professor Robert Bernstein, also takes a lead role in developing and administering an annual statewide competition among community college students, in both the fall and spring. Last year nearly 30 institutions, in both SUNY and CUNY, took part, entering approximately 800 individual competitors. The fall part of the competitive exam will be administered during the week of October 25th. A second part will be given in the spring.

Mathematics Department Active Campus-Wide...

Members of the Mathematics Department faculty can also be found on committees throughout the College, often in leadership roles. Examples include Associate Professor Norayne Rosero, chair of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, and Professor Ann Smullen, who coordinates on-line instruction for the College. You'll find other members of the Department on the General Education and Curriculum Committee, and many others. Traditionally, members of the Mathematics Department have also been very active in the ranks of the MVCC Professional Association, a tradition firmly established by the late Professor Ted Moore, who served as the Association's president.

...and in Professional Organizations

The Department is also heavily involved in several professional mathematics education organizations. Assistant Professor Nelissa Rutishauser and former Associate Professor Linda Halligan have both served as president of the Association of Mathematics Teachers of Oneida County. Several are active with the New York State Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges.

Several members of the Department have taken part in summer workshops at BOCES aimed at improving instruction at the secondary level in pre-calculus, statistics, and in math courses A & B.

In addition to working with approximately nine high schools in dual credit arrangements, the

Mathematics Department also collaborates in a variety of articulation agreements with high schools, setting out learning objectives and providing the final exam, but allowing high school teachers to determine how the required topics will be covered.



MVCC Student Club Conducts Food Drive

The Public Policy Club at Mohawk Valley Community College is conducting a food drive to benefit the Salvation Army Food Pantry. Members of the Club will collect non-perishable food items from November 8-19. Donations will be accepted in the lobby of the MVCC Utica Campus Academic Building each day (Monday-Friday) between 12 noon and 2:00 p.m.

Students who contribute to the food drive will be entered into a lottery for prizes.

Financial Services Management New Name for MVCC Program

The Banking & Insurance program is now called Financial Services Management.

According to Department Head Bill Lewis, the new program name more accurately describes the courses in the curriculum as well as the business career opportunities for graduates. It also reflects recent changes in the financial arena, as activities and opportunities in banking, insurance, investment firms and other financial service organizations increasingly overlap.

Students in the curriculum take courses in accounting, business law, marketing, economics, property damage insurance, money and banking, financial management, investments, casualty insurance, as well as courses in mathematics, social science, natural science and English.

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Trends in Mathematics Instruction

Mathematics instruction nationwide has undergone significant change since Professor Willner joined the College in 1969. Back then, he says, an estimated 30% of high school graduates went on to college. Today the figure is more likely 80%-90%. "The audience for mathematics instruction has changed. Nothing is uniform. Students come to us with a wide range of starting points, and exit points. Some do not have a degree as one of their goals with us, but only wish to get themselves established as college students before transferring elsewhere."

He also says advancement in computer/calculator technology has had an impact, not always a positive one. "Many mathematics teachers will tell you that they would prefer students develop their skills more thoroughly before relying on technology to do the work for them. At the same time," he says, "technology does make it possible for us to show students solutions more readily, often with a higher degree of accuracy and providing a graphic display of the information. The National Council on Teachers of Mathematics has established a standard calling for three modes to approaching every mathematics problem with students: an analytical approach, a graphical approach and a numerical approach. When all three are provided, at least one will be the key to understanding for every student."

Nationwide, there continues to be concern about the state of mathematics instruction. "At the secondary level," says Prof. Willner, "the U.S. often does poorly in comparison with other industrialized nations. This may reflect the wide range of student ability and backgrounds at the elementary and secondary level, and the variety of pressures and distractions those students face. We do better nationally at the collegiate level, where the U.S. is often at the top."

Placement testing, and use of placement test scores, is very important to those in the Mathematics Department. "Our purpose in supporting the extensive use of placement test scores is to be sure we are putting students in classes where they can succeed. We want to avoid setting students up for failure."

Mathematics continues to affect everyone in some way, especially statistics. Almost every organization is called upon to evaluate its effectiveness and justify its funding --- through the use of statistics. News stories often make reference to statistical information.

Who We Are

There are 13 full-time faculty members in the Mathematics Department, in addition to Professor Willner. They include: Assistant Professor **Robert Bernstein**, Assistant Professor **Julie Dewan**, Assistant Professor **Mary Hartz**, Assistant Professor **Gary Kulis**, Associate Professor **Gabriel Melendez**, Assistant Professor **Mark Miller**, Instructor **Daniel Patten** (the newest member of the Department, joining the College this fall), Instructor **Russell Penner**, Associate Professor **Norayne Rosero**, Assistant Professor **Nelissa Rutishauser**, Assistant Professor **Thomas Schink**, Professor **Ann Smallen**, and Instructor **Guy Snedeker** (who teaches exclusively at the Rome Campus).

Department secretary **Sharon Benedetto** also plays a major role, assisting both faculty and students in addition to a sizable number of adjunct instructors.

We Love to Celebrate!

In addition to its outstanding work in mathematics instruction, the Department has another source of pride, well known to colleagues and neighbors in Payne Hall. They "lead the league" in celebrations! "Department members' birthdays are just the beginning," says Prof. Willner. We also observe Secretary's Day, Boss's Day - and many other 'days' - you name it, and we'll celebrate it, complete with decorations."

MVCC
Humanities
Professor
Alina
Mildred
Tries
Completes
Doctorate at SUNY
Albany



Instructor Alina Mildred Treis, of the Humanities Department at Mohawk Valley Community College, recently completed a Ph.D. degree in English literature and theory at the State University of New York at Albany. The degree will be conferred in graduation ceremonies on December 12th.

Upcoming Events

- Tuesday, 11/16
~ Mathematics Competition, 8:30am-Noon, ACC 116.
- Wednesday, 11/17
~ Hospitality Programs Luncheon, theme: "Exotic Morocco." Seating begins at 11:45am in RA 108, Rome Campus.
~ Poet's Recluse, 2:00pm-3:00pm, PH Lobby.
~ Placement Testing, 6:00pm, PCA10, Rome Campus.
- Thursday, 11/18
~ Psychology Club presentation of the film, "A Beautiful Mind," with discussion to follow, 6:00pm, PH 300.
- Friday, 11/19
~ "Dance the Night Away" Employee After Hours Reception, 4:00pm-6:00pm, IT Lobby.
- Saturday, 11/20
~ "Dance the Night Away," with Gap Mangione Quartet and Classified, IT Lobby and Theater.
- Sunday, 11/21
~ Ice Hockey vs. Ramapo, 2:00pm, Utica Aud.
- Wednesday, 11/24
~ Poet's Recluse, 2:00pm-3:00pm, PH Lobby.
- Thursday, 11/25
~ Thanksgiving



VP DiGiorgio Receives Award

Vice President for Student Services Denise DiGiorgio received the "Pride of Workmanship" Award from the Rotary Club of Utica on October 29th. The award recognizes people who make an "extra effort in the workplace..." and are "honest, caring, and contribute substantially to the success of their business, firm or organization..." and "who consistently achieve an overall high personal standard of work performance."

The "Pride in Workmanship" program was created in Australia in 1975, and was adopted by the Utica Rotary Club in 1991. The Utica Rotary was the third U.S. club to adopt the program.

VP DiGiorgio was recognized for her "professionalism and creativity in marketing, for being a team player from coach to cheerleader, who makes things happen, and serving above and beyond coordinating and volunteering for those in need."

MVCC Hosts NJCAA Division III Women's Soccer National Championships - Hawks Finish 2nd in Classic Contest

MVCC hosted the NJCAA Division III women's soccer national tournament over the weekend of November 6-7th.

The MVCC Hawks were one of four teams in the tournament, having won the Region III championship the previous week over HCCC, under the leadership of head coach Steve Senior and assistant Coach Jim Price. Other teams in the national event included Springfield Technical Community College (Massachusetts), Camden County College (New Jersey) and Richland College (Texas).



The Hawks, who entered the tournament as defending national champions, won their Saturday semifinal game with relative ease, downing Camden County College 6-0, while Richland defeated Springfield.

On Sunday, Camden County College came back to defeat Springfield for third place in the consolation game.

The national championship contest ended in dramatic fashion. The score was tied 0-0 after regulation and two overtime periods. The teams then took turns with penalty kicks, and Richland edged MVCC to take the national title, leaving the Hawks as runners-up.

MVCC player Sarin Cavallo was named the Outstanding Forward for the Tournament, having scored three goals and made two assists in the semifinal game.

Several other MVCC players were named to the All-Tournament



Team. They included Emily Galiulo, Stephanie Oyer, Janelle Luley and Erica VanWormer. The Hawks ended their season with an 18-3 record.

In attendance for Sunday's national championship game was W. Wayne Baker, executive director of the National Junior College Athletic Association.

MVCC Athletic Director Gary Broadhurst served as tournament director, with assistance from a number of departments and offices including numerous members of the Athletics Department, Campus Safety & Security, Facilities & Operations, and Public Information, as well as Sodexo.



Faculty and Staff In the News

Retired Associate Professor **Norbert Oldani** has produced a CD for Guenter Schroth, the director of Archegon Productions in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The CD contains a set of improvised electronic miniatures, a percussion work and a piece entitled "Rondeau", a study in combining various microtonal scales.

Phi Theta Kappa Offers Seminar

The MVCC Lambda Beta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa is offering a special opportunity to view the November 16th Satellite Seminar Series entitled "Sports in Popular Culture: Are We Winning or Losing?" on Tuesday, November 16th in IT 225 from 7-9 pm. The free seminar is an opportunity to explore various topics of popular culture and to examine the issues that shape and reflect who we are as a society.

This discussion will be presented by Dr. Richard Lapchick. Dr Lapchick is the Chair of the DeVoss Sports Business Management Program at the University of Central Florida and Director of the Institute of Diversity and Ethics in Sports.

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES
is proud to sponsor

A HOLIDAY
"DECORATION DRIVE"
NOV 10th - DEC 10th

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:
Decorations can be purchased for \$1.00 in the Rome Campus Library or Student Activities (PC L39).
You simply fill out your name on the attached tag and place the decoration on our "Holiday Tree" to show your support.
All proceeds go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. *
Decorations can be picked up to take home after December 10th in PC L39 *