

KANSAS MATHEMATICS ASSOCIATION OF TWO-YEAR COLLEGES (KAMATYC)

by Steven Wilson

Imagine your surprise if you suddenly received a letter from one of the major universities in your state advising you that your first-semester calculus course would no longer transfer as their first-semester course. For the great majority of community college instructors in Kansas, no imagination is needed, as this actually occurred to most of us less than two years ago. The KAMATYC board perceived that they would be uniquely suited to assume a leadership role in this situation, and that has made a huge difference to the organization.

Hot topics increase attendance at affiliate meetings, and losing transferability was a very hot topic. The KAMATYC board requested email input from all community college math instructors in the state (whether KAMATYC members or not), and released a position statement later that year. Then they scheduled discussion time during the annual conference for the topic of transferability, so that ideas and concerns could be shared. They saw a four-fold increase in attendance at the annual meeting, with roughly 25% of all full-time Kansas two-year college math instructors present, representing 13 different institutions.

Yet many attendees stated that it was another hot topic in the conference program that drew them to attend. The Kansas state legislature and the Kansas Board of Regents both actively support dual credit, where high school students may earn college credit for courses taught by their high school instructor. The credibility of a college transcript is called into question if the quality of the courses offered is not kept to a high standard, and oversight of the dual credit programs varied greatly among the Kansas schools. A presentation and discussion time on dual credit proved to be big draws.

This year, the KAMATYC spring conference will be March 28 at Hutchinson CC. Once again, the board has considered the hot topics, and will have sessions on a local alternative to college algebra, on transferability for technical math, and on accreditation for dual credit. Unfortunately, they have not solved any of the hot topics to satisfaction (the loss of calculus transferability still haunts many), but the opportunity to work together on common issues has energized the Kansas affiliate.