

TO: Core Outcomes Committee for Mathematics
FROM: Executive Board for Kansas Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges
DATE: June 14, 2007

The Kansas Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (KAMATYC) strongly supports the policy of the Board of Regents that promotes transferability of equivalent courses between institutions of higher education in the State of Kansas. KAMATYC also applauds the efforts made by many faculty statewide in the construction of core outcomes for several mathematics courses. However, KAMATYC has concerns regarding the current status of the Core Outcomes Project and course transferability.

Core outcomes for three algebra courses and the trigonometry course were included in the Kansas Core Outcomes Project report dated March 20, 2006. KAMATYC supports the adoption of the outcomes for these courses by the Board of Regents, and that students in such courses be guaranteed transfer to other institutions having equivalent courses. Currently, some mathematics faculty that have participated in writing core outcomes are disappointed that these efforts have not achieved the goal of smooth transfers for students. A recent reevaluation of course transferability by one receiving institution - the University of Kansas - seems to suggest that meeting the core outcomes may not be sufficient.

In addition, although core competencies for individual courses at the calculus level have been problematic, KAMATYC recommends that a set of core competencies for the entire calculus sequence also be attempted. Currently, all of the Kansas community colleges and most of the Kansas Regent institutions teach calculus as a three-semester sequence, while some institutions nationally use a four-semester sequence. But KU is teaching substantially the same content in a two-semester sequence. Community college calculus enrollments are generally too small to offer a traditional sequence and an "honors" or accelerated sequence to their students. They are unable to offer the seamless transferability of individual calculus courses to every institution statewide as desired by the Board of Regents. Since community college students come from a broad spectrum of society, calculus courses at these institutions cannot be taught with any success at the accelerated pace used by KU. The Core Outcomes Project goal of seamless transferability throughout the State of Kansas has been made more difficult by the two-semester calculus sequence used at KU, and its recent reevaluations of the transferability of calculus sequences from other institutions.

Furthermore, course transferability is not enhanced when sudden changes to course transferability are made without sufficient lead time for students currently in the pipeline to react. KAMATYC recommends that Regent institutions announce changes in their transferability requirements early enough for currently enrolled students to be able to transfer within the next two semesters (excluding summer). An announcement made in March of a change effective in August does not provide sufficient lead time for students to seamlessly transfer.

The entire purpose of the Core Outcomes Project was to reach a consensus that would enhance transferability. KAMATYC urges the Core Outcomes Committee for Mathematics to adhere to the spirit of the Core Outcomes Project. KAMATYC wants the Committee to reaffirm the status of the current course competencies and to come to agreement on a set of core outcomes for the calculus sequence and its transferability.