

# THE SEAWAY CURRENT

Newsletter of the Seaway Section of the Mathematical Association of America

LATE SPRING 2020

VOL. 43, No. 4

## IN THIS ISSUE...

- **Section Election Results**
- **Announcements & Notices**
- **2020-2022 Committees**
- **Reflections on the Transition to Remote Learning**
  - **Angelynn R. Alvarez**
  - **Brad Emmons**
  - **Ryan Gantner**
  - **Olympia Nicodemi**
  - **Christine Uhl**
  - **Elizabeth Wilcox**
- **Reports & Minutes**
  - **Treasurer's**
  - **Executive & Ext. Executive Committees**
  - **Business Meeting**

## THE SEAWAY CURRENT

The Seaway Current is published at least twice per year by the **Seaway Section** of the **Mathematical Association of America** (MAA) for the benefit of its members. Its pages are open to all members of the MAA and, by invitation to others, for the exchange of information and opinion. Contributed announcements, articles, and editorials are welcome and should be sent to the editor.

Material may be submitted to the editor by e-mail. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor or of individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the MAA or of the Seaway Section.

### Editor

Elizabeth Wilcox, Assoc. Professor  
Department of Mathematics  
Oswego State University of NY  
tel. 315-312-6586  
[elizabeth.wilcox@oswego.edu](mailto:elizabeth.wilcox@oswego.edu)

Check us out on Facebook!  
[@MAASeaway](#)

## Introducing the **NEW SEAWAY OFFICERS**:

- **Chair Elect** – Leah Bridgers (SUNY Oneonta)
- **Program Chair** – Brad Emmons (Utica College)
- **Treasurer** – Gordon Craig (Sheridan College)
- **At-Large Member** – Elizabeth Wilcox (SUNY Oswego)

CONGRATULATIONS & WELCOME, new officers!

## SEAWAY SUMMER SERIES = $S^3$

Five virtual events, roughly one every two weeks, to support and engage folks in need of low-key Seaway time.

Monday, June 15 at 11 am: “Lessons from Spring for Fall” – a panel discussion

Join panelists Brad Emmons (Utica College), Robin Sanders (Buffalo State College), Bronlyn Wassink (Michigan State University), and others, for a reflection on Spring 2020 and how that informs our course design plans for Fall 2020 (to the extent that we can have plans!).

**RSVP** to get the joining info and share this short link with colleagues:

<https://bit.ly/3eWjZdE>.

Next event: Monday, June 29 – a workshop by Keith Jones (SUNY Oneonta). Stay tuned for more details but here's a hint: ~~TEX~~!

ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!

## LATE SPRING 2020 NEWS & NOTES

- **MAA Mathfest 2020 CANCELLED:**  
Originally scheduled for July 29 - August 1, 2020 in Philadelphia, PA, the MAA announced via email on May 29 that MathFest would be cancelled. Plans are underway for Project NExT to continue virtually. **More information is available** on the MAA website.
- **Looking to Connect?**  
Check out **MAACONNECT**, the online community for MAA members. MAA members are automatically enrolled in MAACONNECT and can sign in using their MAA log-on credentials.
- **Virtual Math Seminar Listing:**  
Visit [mathseminars.org](http://mathseminars.org) for a listing of math seminars that have gone virtual. Many are free to attend, but registration and joining info varies by series and software.

---

# REFLECTIONS ON THE TRANSITION TO REMOTE LEARNING

## SPRING 2020

---

### Reflections: Teaching Future Elementary School Teachers via Zoom

Angelynn R. Alvarez (SUNY Potsdam)

At SUNY Potsdam, Math for Elementary Education I and II is a two-semester course sequence that helps prepare Early Childhood Education majors to teach in elementary schools in New York state. In Spring 2020, I taught a class of 17 future elementary school teachers in Math for Elementary Education I. Such a course involves very little lecture, and a lot of group discussions, short student presentations, self-discovery and learning, and the use of hands-on manipulatives such as base-ten blocks.

When the news came that we were required to switch to online and remote teaching, Math for Elementary Education I was the class I was most worried about. I wanted to make sure that all of my students had access to the material, would be able to keep up with the work, and if possible — since the students worked very effectively together — also have some resemblance to the classroom structure and student engagement that we had face-to-face.

Before online classes started, I sent my students a Google Form regarding technology and availability. Fortunately, all my students said they had reliable internet and/or enough data at home, and that they were available during the original class hour that met 3 times a week for 50 minutes.

With that said, I decided to have a mix of asynchronous lectures and synchronous meetings, which I called “pre-class videos” and “Discussion/Q&A Session” respectively. At least 24 hours before each synchronous meeting, I posted a 10-minute long video lecture that introduced them to a new topic or concept, where students were asked to watch them before they came to the Discussion/Q&A Session. At the end of some videos, I posted some exercises or motivating questions that would tie into the group work in the live sessions. I also posted a PDF of the notes from the video lecture so students have access to the material without having to watch the video. Students could watch the video as many times as they want and come with questions to ask at the beginning of each live session before diving into group work and discussions. I also recorded the live sessions so students who were unable to make it could still see what was covered.

I used Zoom to record my asynchronous lectures and to meet during the live synchronous sessions. The main pieces of hardware I used for online teaching this semester were my iPad and Apple Pencil. I created PDFs on my laptop using Microsoft Word or LaTeX, and used the app GoodNotes to annotate the PDFs on my iPad. After I connected . . .

(Continued on page 5)

### Reflection

Brad Emmons (Utica College)

Incoming Seaway Section Program Chair

I had a couple of basic tenets that I followed which guided me through the last several weeks of the semester.

One, I was going to take care of myself by establishing a routine and sticking with it. This involved waking up early, showering, dressing, and getting to work first thing in the morning. Each day was going to require a lot of work, and I needed to be as focused as possible. And without the structure of a work day scheduled around class times, I was going to have to maintain this structure on my own. I did make sure to set aside some time during the day for walking breaks, even though April proved to be much colder than I had anticipated.

And two, I was going to be extra flexible when it came to my students, many of whom were working through their classes under much less than ideal circumstances. Whether it was a slow internet connection, the power going out at their home during an exam, or even a fire at their apartment complex. These are problems that we deal with on a regular basis, but under these circumstances, the problems they pose are only worsened. I was going to have to be just that much better.

I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish during those last weeks of the semester. I personally picked up a few skills that I did not previously have, just to figure out a way to deliver content, since I had never taught online before. We as faculty often try to do the best we can for our students with a minimal budget. It is the fact that we have to find creative workarounds to do our jobs in the first place which allowed us to persevere.

### One Course in Detail: Basic Statistics

I created an Engage Shell [*Engage is the Utica College learning management system*], and communicated with my students primarily from this platform. I bought a Wacom writing tablet and created videos (a total of 4 hours, 20 minutes, 13 seconds for this class alone) using the screenshot capabilities that come with Windows 10 (Xbox), and downloaded and used Autodesk Sketchbook to create videos, similar to that seen on Khan Academy. Note that each video involved planning the workspace in Sketchbook, with the appropriate layers and timing. My process was:

(Continued on page 6)

## Was class better when nobody showed up?

Ryan Gantner (St. John Fisher College)

I'm going to assume that most of you reading this newsletter found themselves in a situation similar to the one that I was in this past March. We were informed that in-person classes had been suspended and that courses would resume online. At that point we weren't told that online would be for the rest of the semester, but everyone was fairly confident that it would be. There was a little transition time between the in-person classes and the beginning of online class. During that time, I worked like crazy to make a plan for the rest of the semester for the courses, make it mesh with what we've already done, develop online content (including videos, worked examples, worksheets), rethink assessments, and alter due dates.

For each of my courses, I decided that I would minimize the role of synchronous learning. This was intended to mitigate against technology issues (What if Zoom can't handle the entire country going online at once?). It was meant to help foster equity for students whose connection to the internet was difficult due to poor connectivity, who had competition for computers by siblings or parents, or who experienced in-the-moment distractions from family, pets, neighbors, or anything else beyond their control. But I wasn't prepared to move totally away from the class meeting times. So, I continued to conduct classes at their scheduled times, but with a reduced agenda or emphasis. This produced mixed results. Let me compare two courses, Calculus 2 and Business Analytics, to illustrate my point.

In my course in Business Analytics, the course was scheduled to meet two days per week. When the course went online, I split the students into a Tuesday group and a Thursday group. Half of the students could come to Zoom class on Tuesday and the other half on Thursday. At Zoom class, we would basically go over the same sort of thing that was posted online, but the students would have a chance to ask questions and work together in breakout rooms on their assignments.

*(Continued on page 6)*

---

## Reflections on Online Teaching Experience

Olympia Nicodemi (SUNY Geneseo)

In the spring semester of 2020, I taught Math 324 (Real Analysis, mostly juniors and seniors), Math 239 (Introduction to Proof, mostly second year students), Math 222 (Calculus II, mostly first year students). Going on line, my goals were to:

- a.) To cover the learning outcomes of each course
- b.) Accommodate asynchronous needs
- c.) To take advantage of synchronous opportunities
- d.) Keep things familiar by maintaining the pre-online modus operandi of each class in so far as possible
- e.) Maintain a sense of community

I assumed (I think correctly) that most students would be able to join live sessions. Since we were a bit past mid-semester, all students were accustomed to the expectations and obligations of the classes. They were already a learning community.

What I did:

- a.) For each class, we held a zoom-like meeting at the regular class time. Each was recorded.
- b.) As in the flipped-classroom model, before almost every session, I assigned a video or screen cast that covered essential new concepts with examples. (These were already available for Calculus, and for Proofs. I made my own screen casts for Real Analysis.)
- c.) Before each session, I assigned readings from the text as well as a problem set based on the readings and videos. These were to be done before the upcoming session.
- d.) Unlike the flipped-classroom model, each session was dedicated to going over almost all of the assigned problems, with time for questions and interactions. Unlike office hours, it was very structured. I made spaced out pdfs of the assigned questions. We then filled in responses and proofs in "real" time on a tablet app with as much call-and-response as possible. It was not a lab nor was it the time to work on things together as it would be for the flipped model. The session was recorded and available soon after.
- e.) In addition to daily assignments, there were regular collected assignments. Tests and quizzes were given on an honor system, with generous time allowed.

It seemed to work well. Attendance was very good, comparable to normal. We greeted with names and occasionally faces. Many voices were heard. It kept the community together. Students appreciated the dual scheme of the pre-session video followed by a recorded class session. They seemed prepared and they asked questions. Moments of laughter seemed important pedagogically. I received many positive (unsolicited) affirmations from the students, all to the effect that our routine made the experience a good one.

Our learning outcomes were met and, in the end, students' achievements were comparable to normal, with their grades distributing much like their midterm grades. (Unexpectedly, a few students ...

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Reflections

Christine Uhl (St. Bonaventure University)

I think that I will always remember the day that our school went online, as our Pi Day celebration was the last in person activity allowed on campus. We took extra precautions including gloves and preslicing/plating the pie. The turnout was low as students were already leaving/preparing to leave campus.

We then had 4 days to prepare to go online. I opted to only take two days and start online classes on Monday. I think this was good for both my students and me. It got us started quickly in a routine that could continue until the end of the semester.

I have to say that I've never suffered from depression before, but there were many times in the last two months where I was depressed. And how could I not be? The home arrest, the lack of physical touch, the stress of learning how to teach online, and the weight of the world on our shoulders all pushing me to stay in bed in the morning. But I survived. We survived. And though many of our futures are unknown, some of us can take a deep breath and regroup before facing the next hurdle.

On a more positive note, I have also seen the motivation of my colleagues and students to rise to the challenges set before them. I have reconnected with friends via zoom happy hours that I haven't seen or talked to in years. I have been encouraged by the conversations that are happening involving topics like equity in the classroom, academic integrity, and mercy. I look forward to the day where we are not solving a challenge, but where we have time to thrive and improve.

## Professional and Personal Reflections on Spring 2020

Elizabeth Wilcox (SUNY Oswego)

I'm not known for keeping calm and carrying on. In my family, I'm the one who thinks we should have an underground bunker with a 2-year supply of non-perishable stores, and a survival plan for after the revolution comes (also, I have separate one for when Canada invades, it involves politely asking to be spared and offering refreshments from the bunker in return).

So when a calculus 2 student asked me, in the middle of the class after a call for questions about the upcoming exam, "Are we all going to die from the coronavirus?" and a second student quickly replied, "No, only your parents and grandparents will," I could feel the familiarity of panic frothing in the classroom and I decided then and there to be calm, flexible, communicative, and truthful, and only stock up on onions and potatoes in the privacy of my personal life. I told the student, "I don't know but I don't think so. This is a brand new virus, so we don't know or understand everything about it." and discussed how illness affects people differently and the known risk factors for complications, and explained how culturally-defined behaviors and community structure factor into transmission rates. I also explained that the principles of epidemiology discussed wouldn't be on the exam, only techniques of integration.

For the next 8 weeks, I worked endlessly to clearly communicate with and provide numerous options to students. A colleague and I teamed up to provide content and community in our calculus 2 sections; I made the videos and she produced the worksheets to accompany the videos, as well as searched the internet for videos made by others to accompany our work and set up online homework assignments for all of the classes. In addition, I reached out to colleagues, students, coworkers, and others — checking in, saying hello, setting up "tea times" and meetings, polls, Facebook posts, etc. In 12 weeks, I sent over 1500 emails to students, colleagues, the Seaway NExT listserv, my department, and more. I learned so much new stuff that for the first time ever, I was afraid of learning more.

But the most important thing that I learned from the last 8 weeks of my semester can be summed up with: *I can't do a full semester like this.* Maybe I can stay calm and communicative, maybe I can find a colleague to work with on my classes, but I can't do classes and work the way I did for the second half of the semester. You may think stay-at-home orders a blessing for an anxiety-ridden introvert, but you would not realize that five days a week people invaded my home — my retreat from the world — over Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, and the like. There was no privacy and no escape. It was impossible to count the number of virtual meetings, impossible to count the number of hours spent online — well, possible, but such counting would spiral me into depression and away from the calm, communicative front shared with others. My brain melted and I definitely lost my cool more than once. A friend shared an article, "[Why Zoom Calls Are So Draining for Introverts](#)" by Jenn Granneman with the note: *This made me think of you.* It made me cry with both relief and a sinking feeling of eternal punishment, to finally understand why everything was so awful and yet to know that there was another month to get through, somehow.

And that leaves me in a quandry: I need time to recuperate, but I need time to figure out how I'm going to make it through a whole semester of remote learning. And this summer there just isn't enough time for both.

### *(Reflection of Olympia Nicodemi continued)*

did much better on all fronts. When I asked why, a response was “There is nothing else to do!” When “frat”ernizing is not an option, is math the go-to alternative?)

Of course, I lost the nuances, special examples, references to history — the detours that make things interesting (at least for me, the instructor). I lost the ability to scan the faces. But the main thing I lost was the IBL component — those invaluable moments of student learning together at the boards by listening to themselves and to each other. I could not find the time nor the technology in my scheme (my shortcoming).



Going forward, I would maintain a similar model for online teaching even though the initial conditions would be quite different. Our administration, rightfully concerned with access and equity, urged against a synchronous model such as mine. Paradoxically I designed my classes with those same concerns in mind. The high degree of structure guaranteed the relevance of each recorded session in a way that the office hour could not. Most importantly, through the session recordings, students not in attendance would hear real peer questions and dialogue, a dimension of our learning environment that I find indispensable for both knowledge acquisition and community. Even if extenuating circumstances were to drop the attendance rate significantly, I feel that the corollary benefits would maintain.

Zooming out, we might now ask how our experiences in the spring of 2020 inform what we do in “normal” times at the classroom, program, and institutional levels.

---

### *(Reflection of Angelynn R. Alvarez continued)*

my iPad to my laptop using a cable or AirDrop, I used Zoom’s “Share Screen” feature to show participants what was on my iPad. I recommend the GoodNotes app as it is not only easy to use, but the annotated PDFs can also be easily uploaded to a cloud (e.g., OneDrive, Dropbox.) or be sent via email.

It was a pleasant surprise that the mix of asynchronous lectures and live sessions worked very well. Students watched the videos ahead of time before class, came with questions, and then discussed solutions to exercises in groups using Zoom’s “Breakout Rooms” feature. In each group, students used the “Whiteboard” feature to type and/or draw their solutions. As they worked, I moved between the Breakout Rooms, which resembled how I circulate the room during face-to-face instruction. If students needed some help, they used the “Ask for Help” button on Zoom.

Each group of students saved and/or took a screenshot of their work on their virtual whiteboard. When we all congregated back in the main meeting room, each group took turns and used the “Share Screen” option to share their work, and members from each group then unmuted themselves to provide an explanation to the class. I asked that students took turns speaking so everyone was engaged. When work was shared, students in the “audience” gave their input/comments by using the chat-box, and by using the “Raise Hand” feature, where they were then unmuted to speak.

Since we started face-to-face, students already had good rapport and communication with each other and the instructor, which helped make this online format work well. Also, reliable internet and being available during the class hour were crucial for this learning experience. Unfortunately, since not all students will have the technology and availability, such a format would not work for every class.

In the future, if not all students have reliable internet and/or is not available for live sessions, I would lean more towards asynchronous learning, and Q&A sessions that do not meet 3 times a week. Moreover, some recommendations and possible adjustments are:

- Make asynchronous lectures contain not only a short introduction to a new concept or topic, but have several examples. This can be achieved by recording one or several 10 to 15-minute long videos.
- Continue posting PDFs of notes from the video lecture, and include supplemental notes, in case students cannot watch the videos due to connectivity or hardware issues.
- At the end of some video lectures, have short online quizzes, or exercises the students can try on their own, to help reinforce their understanding. Solutions can then be discussed during live sessions or be presented by the instructor in an asynchronous recording.
- Use online tools, such as Mathigon’s Polypad, so students can use manipulatives, such as tape diagrams and base ten blocks, even without physical access.
- If the class starts off online, involves group work, and students do not know each other, I recommend doing online icebreaker activities that are math related and help build community — such as “Two Truths and a Lie” or a scavenger hunt where they have to find math-related objects in their homes.



### *(Reflection of Brad Emmons continued)*

1. Plan the lesson in sketchbook : This took the most time. Writing using the tablet is a delicate process. I decided to pre-plan my writing, as the writing was often slow and sloppy, and I did not want the videos to include all of these mistakes. Plus, there is a learning curve to using the tablets.
2. Recording the lessons. Often I would have to record multiple “takes” to get something that was passable.
3. Zipping the files and uploading them to Engage.

I should also note that some of the lessons involved using Simulation Software from the Art of Stat website. In these screen captures, I discussed the sampling distribution via simulation. For these lessons, I created worksheets for the students to fill in, and experiment and explore on their own. The results of these worksheets were discussed in future videos. But, because I was not interacting with the students in real time, I could not make use of their simulation results, but had to rely on my own, and note that their results should be similar.

For this class, I administered Quizzes and Exams in Engage: My decision to do this was based on the fact that this would be as close to what we were doing in class before the break. I wanted to keep the course as consistent as possible to what the students were used to. In all, this is a total of 163 questions that I created. Some of the questions were multiple choice, and some of them were fill in an answer. The interface for Engage quizzes is quite infuriating. For each quiz, I would have to change the quiz options, and there did not appear to be an easy way to change the default settings. It was also not easy or obvious to “see” what my students would see when they would take the quiz. I believe it took about 4 or 5 quizzes before I settled on a method, thought it was difficult to edit a question, write questions with multiple parts, and test the grading of questions.

I had 21 students in this class. Almost all of them performed a manner which was consistent with what I would expect based on their performance in the first half of the semester. I did have a couple of students who struggled with the transition to online learning, but with some effort, encouragement, leniency on due dates, etc., they did manage to make it through the course. A couple of students did not do as well as they were doing before the break, and a few students ended up performing much better. This happens every semester in an on ground course, so it is difficult to attribute this to the transfer. Overall, as an average, the students did better in the online environment in this class. Note also that it is much easier to cheat online than in face-to-face. I did not catch any cheaters this semester, mostly because I was so pre-occupied with putting together content, and I do not have the skills to catch cheaters in an online environment.

---

## Miss the chance to submit a reflection?

There’s still time.

Just [email the editor](#) with your reflection  
and it’ll go in the next edition of the Current.

---

### *(Reflection of Ryan Gantner continued)*

For calculus, the course only had 19 students in it, so there wasn’t a need to break it into two groups. The class had been meeting 4 days per week (MWF at 10:00 and Tuesdays at 8:00am). I scheduled Zoom classes on Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:00, and left Fridays for review/questions. All of the sessions were dubbed as optional, and during the Zoom classes we went over material that was posted online, did activities in the breakout rooms, and made progress on the homework. At least, that was the plan.

But here’s what happened. In Business Analytics, the students didn’t really show up for Zoom class. After a few weeks, I gave up on the “split into two groups” concept, because there was no need; only about 15% of students showed up on a regular basis. Class became more like office hours, with students doing their homework in class and asking each other questions, with me being there to answer questions (usually with questions of my own!) and give advice. The people who showed up found it valuable, and the people who didn’t show up could get the information they needed from the online materials. It actually worked out pretty well.

In calculus, however, *all of the students kept showing up*. While I intended the Zoom classes to be primarily a space for the students to work on activities and homework without much structure, I soon felt a bit conflicted: if everyone is here, maybe I need to conduct this more like a class? Maybe the activities need to be more organized and directed? Then I started doing that. But once I started doing that, I (and I assume the students as well) lost understanding of the online framework of the course. Were the Zoom classes optional or were they required? Were the students supposed to be able to get all they needed from the information posted online, or did that need to be supplemented by mini-lectures and activities performed live on Zoom? These were questions that, by the end of the semester, I didn’t really know the answer to. In some sense, if the students had simply *not showed up for class*, I would have had a much clearer picture of the role that Zoom class played in the online learning environment here.

Therefore, the next time I have to do this (which may be very soon or may be never again), I will think much more about the role that synchronous meetings have in an online class and make sure that the class doesn’t stray from that role throughout the evolution of the course.

## E.W. EMAIL EXCERPTS

**Date:** Wednesday, March 11 at 5:30 pm  
**Subject:** MAT 220: Tomorrow and Friday Proceed

Hey there, Calculus 2 classes,

Today's news was very sudden (and not that sudden) and I am sure many of you are anxious about your preparations to leave campus, as well as your loved ones at home and your lives after you return home. Despite all of our concerns, we are having class tomorrow and we are completing our exam before you leave for spring break — we have worked hard up until this point, there is no way we can waste that hard work and there's no telling when we'll have the opportunity to take another exam. It's not the best circumstances and I know that you are not going to be able to do your best work on the exam. Yet we have to make the best of the situation and proceed as calmly and deliberately as possible. ...

I look forward to meeting with you tomorrow. In the meantime, feel free to reach out with concerns regarding our class and I will do the best I can address them.

Take care,

Elizabeth

**Date:** Friday, March 13 at 4:19 pm  
**Subject:** MAT 220

Good afternoon,

Thank you for sitting for your exam today. I know how anxious we all feel, how hard it was to study, and how much the thought of "going online" scares each of us. Yet you took an exam today (or yesterday), and turned the corner on a big chunk of calculus 2. ...

Take care, travel safely, and enjoy a small amount of break to celebrate your academic progress. You've earned it.

Regards,

Elizabeth

**Date:** Sat, Mar 21, 8:36 PM  
**Subject:** Classes Resume Monday; Chancellor Confused

Good evening!

Apparently the Chancellor sent out an email to students saying that spring break was extended; this isn't true — classes resume Monday. I'm looking forward to seeing some of you, even virtually, and I hope that you all are looking forward to resuming progress on your course work. May is just around the corner!

Take care,

Elizabeth

## E.W. EMAIL EXCERPTS

**From:** Unnamed Student  
**To:** Elizabeth Wilcox  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 11 at 5:34 pm  
**Subject:** Stupid Virus

...

**Date:** Monday, March 23 at 8:58 pm  
**Subject:** Calculus 2 Today: Recap, Courtesy Rules, Prep for Wednesday, and Tech Troubles

Good evening, Calculus 2 Folks!

Thanks to those of you who participated in today's class meetings with maturity and seriousness; I hope that you continue to come as you are able because you contribute positive value to the class meetings. The 11:30 class went on like a dream! (Of course, we all would have preferred to meet face-to-face.) The 12:40 class was an unfortunate waste of time, though it started off well enough for the first problem or two, and many of those in attendance attempted to persevere despite technical difficulties and childishness on display. ...

### Courtesy Rules for Continued Welcome at Class Meetings

In order to make class meetings more effective and valuable for all who make the time to come, here are some ground rules for courteous and considerate behavior with online classes. Many of you were incredibly courteous and considerate, and inspired the formation of these rules today. Thank you!

1. When you are not asking a question, mute your microphone.
2. When you are not actually writing an answer or asking a question, do not touch the bitpaper.
3. If you don't actually care, don't bother to come to the meeting. Go watch a video instead. Class meetings *\*are\** optional.

I'm sure there are other good rules for being courteous and considerate to others while engaging in online communities; feel free to share those with me in a separate, private email.

I'm also quite sure that some of the breakage of those rules that occurred today was simply because people had never used video conferencing software or were thrilled at the versatility of bitpaper. We are all bound to break those rules by accident from time to time, and this doesn't make us bad people.

Those who break them consistently or intentionally will wear out their welcome at the class meetings. No one wants to waste their time, especially those students who are trying hard to do well in an online class after intentionally choosing a face-to-face class to avoid the online BS. ...

### What the F\*\*\* Happened with Google Meet Today?

I suspect traffic was heavy in the afternoon and that's why I kept getting booted, even into office hours. If that continues then I will have to transition the 12:40 class to a different platform. We'll give it another try on Wednesday. The alternate platform is one-sided, meaning that you can see me but I can't see you and it's a little weird — but it works. The bonus is that I can post video of the meeting and stream it live on the alternate platform (assuming I can overcome a difficulty with a link thing). ...

**Thank you for persevering in your coursework, for taking college seriously, and for contributing to a better academic experience in these troubled and trying times.**

Take care and be well,

Elizabeth

# SEAWAY SECTION COMMITTEES

2020-2022

## Executive Committee

Chair – Cheryl Chute Miller  
Secretary – Gary Raduns  
Section Representative – Charlie Ragozzine  
Two Year College Rep – Steve Kilmer  
Chair Elect – Leah Bridgers  
Program Chair – Brad Emmons  
Treasurer – Gordon Craig  
At-Large Member – Elizabeth Wilcox

## Program Committee

Brad Emmons (Program Chair)  
Marlo Brown  
Jeff Johannes

## Gehman Lecture Committee

Darren Narayan (current Chair)  
Shay Fuchs  
Kathleen Kavanagh  
Gordon Craig  
(Leah Bridgers, ex-officio)

## Randolph Lecture Committee

Blair Madore (current Chair)  
Jane Cushman  
Joe Rusinko  
Jayleen Wangle  
(Steve Kilner, ex-officio)

## Clarence Stephens Distinguished Teaching Award Committee

Keary Howard (current Chair)  
Laura Person  
Cheri Boyd  
Hossein Shahmohamad  
(Gary Raduns, ex-officio)

## Student Program Committee

Keiko Dow (current Chair)  
Keith Jones  
Ahmad Almomani

## Educational Policy Committee

Jane Cushman (current Chair)  
Tedi Cox  
Sarah Hanusch  
Katelynn Kochalski  
(Charlie Ragozzine, ex officio)

## Nominations Committee

Gary Towsley (Chair)  
Ryan Gantner  
Patti Frazer Lock  
Jolie Roat

## Seaway NExT Advisory Committee

Dan Visscher (current Chair)  
Keiko Dow  
Nate Reff  
Adam Giambrone

## Seaway Distinguished Lecturer Committee (Ad Hoc)

David Brown  
Joel Louwsma  
Jeff Johannes  
(Gordon Craig, ex-officio)

## Committee on Website and Registration (Ad Hoc)

Ryan Gantner (current Chair)  
Luis Mareno  
Anurag Agarwal  
Nate Reff  
Gary Towsley

## Additional Section Positions

Elizabeth Wilcox, Seaway Current Editor  
Jeff Johannes, Liaison Coordinator  
Christine Uhl, Public Information Officer  
Anurag Agarwal, Webmaster  
Bob Rogers, Committee on Venues

---

There is no time like the present to get involved in your community, especially the *mathematical* community here in the Seaway Section. Looking for a way to get started? Talk to anyone on this list!

---



**MAA**  
MATHEMATICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

**MATH VALUES**

<https://www.mathvalues.org/>

A blog from the MAA that explores “the diverse voices of mathematics and discusses topics related to and affected by mathematics.” (From *Math Values, About Us*; accessed June 2, 2020)



# REPORTS & MINUTES SINCE FALL 2019

## 1. TREASURER'S REPORT – SPRING 2020

Gary Towsley, Seaway Section Treasurer

Balance as of 9/12/2019	\$16,448.60
Meeting Receipts (From PayPal and Square)	\$2,300.11
Includes Fall Meeting registration payments, merchandise purchases, and Spring Meeting registrations.	
MAA Subvention	\$1,435.00
Distinguished Lecturer Program	(\$649.07)
Section Merchandise	(\$1,234.52)
Expenses from the Fall Meeting at Ithaca College	
Speaker Expenses & Honoraria	(\$459.00)
Resolution of Meeting Expenses	(\$1,154.01)
Refunds to Square (Registrations for cancelled Spring Meeting)	(\$469.24)
Technology Expenses	(\$181.79)
Donation for Project NExT	(\$2,500.00)
Balance as of 6/1/2020	\$13,536.08

## 2. THE EXECUTIVE & EXTENDED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES MEETING – November 1, 2019

Present: Cheryl Chute Miller, Gary Raduns, Charlie Ragozzine, Elizabeth Wilcox, Jane Cushman, Steve Kilner, Jonathan Cox (from 3:30), Ryan Gantner (from 3:30).

Minutes of the Spring 2019 Executive Committee Meeting were approved by consensus.

### REPORTS

- Charlie Ragozzine, the Section Representative, reported on the Congress convened at MathFest in Cincinnati. See his written report for additional detail, but his report highlighted:
  - Sylvia Bozeman was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Inclusivity Award from the Mathematical Association of America.
  - MAA's investment performance: net gain \$858,000 versus project loss or \$309,000 attributable to two generous bequests. MAA total assets are approximately \$14,000,000.
  - MAA membership growth.
  - New member benefits including PRIMUS, CHANCE, and Math and Art.
  - Reduction/elimination of student travel funds from the MAA for MathFest. They have achieved the goal set for them — many student participants are funded now through the REUs on which they report.
  - New SIGMAAs.
  - Committee on Committees and Task Force on Governance are examining the committees of the MAA.
  - A summary of the Executive Director's response to concerns about the handling of the break between MAA and AMS in organizing future Joint Mathematics Meetings.
- Cheryl Chute Miller, Chair of the Seaway Section, reported her excitement over the Year of Diversity that the Section is celebrating 2019-2020. In addition, she deferred to others for updates on other concerns:
  - Jane Cushman, Chair of the Education Policies Committee noted that we were able to provide CTLE credits through Ithaca College for K-12 teachers attending this meeting. Curriculum vitae were required only from the plenary speakers and we are able to offer 7 hours of credit. There are high school teachers registered for the meeting.
  - Ryan Gantner reported on Website and Registration:
    - \* The committee gathered information at the Spring 2019 meeting to guide what they want out of the website.
    - \* Explored options for subscribed hosting services. They examined about a dozen and selected Cognito;

- however, Ithaca College had already developed the meeting site in-house.
- \* The committee tried, unsuccessfully, to use Incognito for the t-shirt sales.
- \* The Section has acquired a “Square” credit card scanner which will be in use at the meeting for t-shirt sales and will work with Cognito.
- \* He also noted that we are one of two Sections that do not have our sites hosted by the MAA. The Association might soon support registration and payments for Section meetings.
- Cheryl led discussion of financial goal for t-shirt sales: Are they a fund-raiser? Do we seek only to recover costs? Do we try to recoup most of the costs, since some will be given as prizes? Consensus was in the direction of recovering most of the costs. We will return to pricing later in the Extended Executive Committee meeting.
- Jonathan Cox, Past-Chair, used his report to highlight the need to have good nominees for the Clarence Stephens Distinguished Teaching Award. The call for nominations will be included in announcements in the program.
- Elizabeth Wilcox, Program Chair, provided a written report. Highlights of the Fall Meeting include an IBL Workshop, a RUME Special Session, a broad spectrum of plenary speakers, and a Chair’s Listening Session. As of October 24, there were 151 registered for the meeting (105 for the banquet, 8 for the workshop). Eighteen student presentations, 16 contributed papers round out the program. We look(ed) forward to the next meeting at University of Waterloo scheduled for May 1-2, 2020 with local organizer Brian Forrest. The Spring 2020 meeting will include a poster session on the history of mathematics with option judging for posters by undergraduates.

## OLD BUSINESS

The only item of old business was the question: DO we need a tax ID number for sale of merchandise? The (tentative) conclusion is “no” since clothing is exempt from New York State sales tax.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. Prices for Section merchandise:
  - i. T-Shirts, \$10.
  - ii. Stickers and magnets, \$1.
  - iii. Totes, \$8.

These prices are slightly over our costs. “Square” transaction costs are 2.6% plus 10 cents per transaction.
2. Gift a t-shirt as a prize for the photo contest, a tote or t-shirt to each of the plenary speakers, and a t-shirt to the logo designer.
3. The program committee opted not to print abstracts for all participants, rather the online schedule includes links to the abstracts. Get feedback to the chair on this experiment.

The meeting transitioned to Extended Executive Committee meeting at 4:38.

1. Elizabeth Wilcox gave a review of this meeting and plans for the Spring 2020 meeting.
2. Keith Jones highlighted student involvement in the program including 17 talks, photo contest, and game show. The Spring 2020 meeting will include a poster session “Celebrating Diversity in the History of Mathematics” with a juried prize for undergraduate posters.
3. The Randolph Lecture Committee reports the selection of Allison Gibbs, University of Toronto, as the Randolph Lecturer for this meeting. The committee has not yet begun selection for Fall 2021.
4. The Gehman Lecture Committee reports they are still working to identify the Gehman Lecturer for the Spring 2020 meeting at University of Waterloo.
5. Jane Cushman, chair of the Educational Policies Committee, brought forward a concern regarding “worrying phrases” in the Seattle Public Schools Math Ethnic Studies Framework. Discussion, but no resolution.
6. The Distinguished Teaching Award Committee did not report.
7. The Nominations Committee had no report.
8. Dan Visscher (Seaway NExT) is working on a topic for the spring workshop, possibly addressing placement issues.
9. The Distinguished Lecturer Program Committee provided a written report.
  - a. Bob Rogers will serve as the 2019-2020 Seaway Section Distinguished Lecturer with talks to be given at Union College, SUNY Geneseo, Niagara University, York University, Utica College, and SUNY Potsdam.
  - b. The Committee is waiting to see if Bob Rogers is willing to serve a second year before soliciting nominations for 2020-21.
  - c. Developing an assessment plan for the program.
10. Website: No report.

11. Jeff Johannes, Liaison Coordinator, attended MathFest and sent a written report. He highlights:
  - a. Upcoming changes in the MAA Lecturer Program (increased frequency of Association sponsored lecturers for each section).
  - b. MAA Connect
  - c. We are doing better than similarly situated sections at incorporating our Canadian membership.
12. Seaway Current: Recently produced and posted. The Current now features a correspondent reporting on meetings and conferences he attends.
13. Webmaster: Not present
14. Christine Uhl, Public Information Officer, reports plans for a photo contest at this meeting and live tweets.
15. The Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for four positions to be elected at the Spring meeting and has two nominees at this time: Program Chair (Brad Emmons has accepted nomination), Treasurer (Gordon Craig has accepted nomination), Chair Elect, and At-Large member.
16. Treasurer's Report:
  - a. Costs associated with the Distinguished Lecturer Program for last year and two visits to date this year total approximately \$1550.
  - b. There was a small deficit for the meeting at Saint John Fisher College although not as large as previously reported due to late transfer of PayPal receipts.
  - c. Otherwise, the Section's accounts are healthy with a balance of approximately \$16,000.
  - d. Money has not yet been sent to the Association for our Project NExT sponsorship.
  - e. Questions remain concerning currencies and our ability to sell merchandise at the Spring meeting at Waterloo.
17. Elizabeth Wilcox, Program Chair, raised questions about the Friday afternoon workshops. There is an ebb and flow to participation. The Sections goals and expectations of the workshop are not clear and should be formalized. The current Program Chair and Program Committee have taken this on, but it might be helpful to augment the committee with a member(s) to direct this specific effort (select workshop leader/speaker, organize, meet the speaker, arrange for refreshments, etc).

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Gary L. Raduns, Jr. (Roberts Wesleyan College), Seaway Section Secretary*

### 3. THE BUSINESS MEETING – November 2, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 9:42 AM with approximately 25 in attendance.

Minutes of the Business Meeting, April 2019 were approved by consensus.

Chair's Report (Cheryl Chute Miller): Cheryl highlighted that 2019-2020 is the Seaway Section's Year of Diversity. She noted that t-shirts, stickers, magnets and totes with the Section logo are available for sale during the meeting. She also called for nominations for the section's Clarence Stephens Distinguished Teaching Award.

Section Representative's Report (Charlie Ragozzine): Charlie referred to the Seaway Current for details, but noted that our Year of Diversity was reported in the Intersection Newsletter (a newsletter for section officers across the MAA). He also noted that there was discussion at the last Congress regarding the Association's decision to withdraw from organizing and financially supporting the Joint Mathematics Meetings. He reports that representatives and sections felt "blindsided" by the decision. The MAA hopes to divert funding that would have gone toward JMM to efforts to support sections and he gave examples of BIG Career/PIC Math funding grants, MAA Connect, and hosting a registration and payment system for section meetings.

Treasurer's Report (Gary Towsley):

- See the Seaway Current for the financial statement.
- We lost a little on the last meeting, but not as much as reported — some PayPal receipts were recently found.
- We've spent about \$1600 on the Distinguished Lecturer program since its inception.
- Money will be sent to the Association to support an MAA Fellow.

Student Program Committee (Keith Jones): Keith highlighted student involvement in the program including 17 talks, a photo contest, and a game show. The Spring 2020 meeting will include a poster session "Celebrating Diversity in the History of Mathematics" with a juried prize for undergraduate posters. If you are teaching a history of mathematics course, please encourage your students to participate.

Randolph Lecture Committee: Allison Gibbs is speaking this today and gave the workshop yesterday afternoon.

The Student Program Chair reported 125 students registered, 48 student presentations and 19 posters. There is also a BIG Event now for students.

The Gehman Lecture Committee is working to identify a speaker for the Spring meeting.

Educational Policies Committee. Jane Cushman reported discussion of the Seattle Public Schools equity framework. She also noted that we are offering CTLE credits at this meeting and are investigating the possibility of the Section sponsoring these credits in the future rather than rely on the local host.

The Nominations Committee is currently seeking nominees for Program Chair, Chair Elect, Treasurer and at-large member of the Executive Committee.

Liaison Coordinator (Jeff Johannes): If you don't know who your liaison is, see Jeff. The Seaway Current is out. We send an email to all liaisons. If you don't get the Seaway Current, see your liaison.

The Seaway Current has a correspondent (Gordon Craig) reporting on conferences and meetings he attends. The Seaway Current is also interested in news from the campuses.

Distinguished Lecturer Committee notes that hosts are needed, especially schools that are typically underrepresented at Section meetings.

The ad hoc Website committee noted changing mission and vision of the committee to focus more on online registration and meeting sites.

The Webmaster had no report.

The Public Information Officer (Christine Uhl) encouraged attendees to join the Section's FaceBook page and to Tweet the meeting.

The Webmaster was not present to give a report.

Upcoming Venues:

- Spring 2020: University of Waterloo, May 1-2
- Fall 2020: Siena College
- Spring 2021: St. Bonaventure University

The Business Meeting adjourned at 10:18.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Gary L. Raduns, Jr. (Roberts Wesleyan College), Seaway Section Secretary*

MAA SEAWAY SECTION SUMMER SERIES

# Lessons from Spring for Fall

a panel discussion

Mon. June 15 @ 11:00 am via Zoom

We are all concerned about university coursework under current circumstances, and also the long-lasting effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on mathematics & statistics courses. Let's start the conversation and stay connected!

[RSVP at https://bit.ly/3eWjZdE to participate](https://bit.ly/3eWjZdE)



Panelists include:

- Brad Emmons (Utica College), Seaway Section Program Chair
- Robin Sanders (Buffalo State College)
- Bronlyn Wassink (Michigan State University)

FOR ?S OR MORE INFO, CONTACT: [ELIZABETH WILCOX](#) (SUNY OSWEGO).