

Northern Kentucky Algebra Community

Transitional Algebra Course Meeting Minutes NKU Department of Mathematics and Statistics August 12, 2009

- I. Attendance.** There were 13 people in attendance, including high school mathematics teachers, university professors, and one post-bac. Again, we had attendance from Harrison County.
- II. Opening remarks.** Mike Waters opened the discussion with the following objective in mind: Each group was to present the activities developed that could be used in a high school transitional algebra course. Steve Newman mentioned that the project is receiving some national attention. A New England committee is expected to release a document mentioning the Kentucky Online Testing Project (and the Algebra Community's role) as an exemplary program. Ted Hodgson mentioned that funding will be sought for research purposes to track those students who successfully complete a transitional high school algebra course and who transition to college, the idea being to discover if the transitional courses in the area are serving the purpose of successfully preparing students for college-level mathematics, especially the mathematics that requires a solid background in algebra.
- III. Summary of Discussions.** Each of the three working groups presented a summary of its developed materials. One group presented the beginning of a "bank of assessments" for solving linear equations, and the beginning of a bank of assessments for solving quadratic equations. More detailed lessons are expected to follow. A second group presented its materials developed for working with fractions – both numeric and algebraic. The different "levels" of work were identified representing increasing levels of difficulty: Numeric, Simple Algebraic, and Advanced Algebraic. An activity incorporating vertical asymptotes was presented as an example of working with rational expressions. A third group presented its materials on 2-variable linear equations, including activities associated with the concept of rate of change (slope), extending linear patterns, and methods of graphing equations. Constructive feedback was provided by participants to help improve these materials.
- IV. Plans.** An attempt will be made to organize these materials into a more cohesive set by putting them in a common electronic format and considering both scope and sequence. A WIKI may be created, allowing teachers to comment on the use of the materials in the classroom (what worked well, what didn't) and a search engine will be incorporated into the site so that the materials will be searchable. The next meeting will be planned for after Labor Day and will focus on scope and sequence, with an eye toward making the materials more cohesive.