March 2026

Message from the Chair

I am honored to begin my service as Chair of the Department of Mathematics and look forward to working collaboratively with our faculty, staff, and students in the years ahead. Having been part of this department for many years, I have always appreciated the dedication, creativity, and collegial spirit that define our academic community. As we move forward, my focus will be on supporting excellence in teaching, fostering research productivity across all areas of mathematics, and identifying opportunities to enhance our academic programs and student engagement. I welcome your ideas and perspectives as we work together to advance the department's mission, strengthen our collective achievements, and further elevate the visibility and impact of our department within the college, the university, and the broader community.

Events Calendar

Thursday, April 16 – MATH 1308 Service-Learning Presentations
The service-learning stats section of MATH 1308 will present their findings with Community Partners in PKH 308. We would love to see you there!

Friday, March 27 – Departmental Exams
6-8pm See exam schedule sent by Nadia.

Friday, March 27 – ASA Student Chapter, Tea Time
10-11am CPB 303, Chang, Keng-Yu

Friday, April 10 – ASA Student Chapter, Tea Time
10-11am CPB 303, Sangi, Maryam

Friday, April 24 – ASA Student Chapter, Tea Time
10-11am CPB 303, Ruan, Haoyao

Summer book club: Interested in teaching a corequisite college algebra course? Perhaps you are looking for ways to engage students differently in your course. Join Michelle, Deysi, and Heather this summer (online or in person) in reading through Building Thinking Classrooms by Peter Liljedahl with a guaranteed lively discussion. We will meet before the semester ends to plan when/where for our future discussions. Email or chat Michelle on Teams if you have any questions!

Sincerely,

This column is dedicated to uplifting our fellow mathematicians here at UTA. Here are some shoutouts from your colleagues!

"Shout out to Charles for going the extra mile to help faculty who are new to teaching stats!"

Spotlight

Our math students and faculty are up to big things!

- Dr. Kevin Barlow, retired Assistant Superintendent and UTA Adjunct Assistant Professor, presented a paper entitled "Understanding the Mathematics of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)" at the February annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association in New Orleans. This paper provides a brief proof of the relationship between SST, SSW, and SSB. The underlying mathematics of ANOVA is not always familiar to students working towards a doctoral degree in Education. The intent of this paper was to provide easy-to-understand mathematics of some of these ANOVA concepts for these students.
- Zahra Rahimi, Visiting Scholar in Mathematics Education in the Department of Mathematics at UTA, working with Professor Christopher Kribs, will present a paper titled "Beyond Algorithms: Deconstructing Power, Justice, and Learning in the Age of AI" at the SITE 2026 Conference in Philadelphia in March 2026. The paper explores how artificial intelligence is reshaping educational decision-making and learning relationships.

Beyond Algorithms: Deconstructing Power, Justice, and Learning in the Age of AI

Full Paper (F2F)   ID: 66210

Zahra Rahimi
University of Texas at Arlington

Abstract: Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping how education is designed, delivered, and governed, promising personalization, efficiency, and expanded access while raising concerns about bias, surveillance, and diminished human judgment. This conceptual paper examines how AI in education simultaneously disrupts and reproduces structures of power and exclusion. Drawing on Jacques Derrida's deconstruction—différance, logocentrism, and justice-to-come—the study identifies five paradoxes in AI-mediated learning: decentralization and control; teacher–student relations; the time–space of learning; the speech–writing boundary; and creativity and authorship. Through qualitative conceptual analysis of policy discourse and scholarly literature, the paper argues that each "promise" of AI is entangled with tensions that may amplify inequity and narrow educational possibilities. Justice in AI-mediated education is reframed not as a measurable endpoint but as an ongoing practice of vigilance, contextual interpretation, and inclusion.

- On February 28 - March 1, the Southwest Local Algebra Meeting (SLAM) was brought back to UTA after touring the southwest region of the US for the last 16 years since its inauguration at UTA in 2010. SLAM is a weekend conference oriented towards bringing graduate students together with researchers and is funded by the National Security Agency, with support from the UTA Math Department this year. Organized by Tatheer Ajani (UTA), Lars Winther Christensen

(TTU), Luigi Ferraro (UTRGV), and David Jorgensen (UTA), SLAM had over 60 attendees, and of those, almost 20 graduate students presented posters at the conference. The conference featured a variety of talks ranging from graph theory, to homological algebra, to number theory. For more information, please see the conference webpage: https://www.math.ttu.edu/~lchriste/slam2026.html

- UTA Putnam Exam Team Experiences Positive First Derivative on 2025 Exam This past December, during Final Exam week, nine UTA students voluntarily spent their Saturday taking an extremely difficult mathematics exam - the 2025 Putnam Exam. The Putnam Exam is a highly prestigious exam for undergraduates that is given at Universities across the U.S. and Canada each December. The problems are extremely difficult for most undergraduates. Only a few percent of students even sign up to participate. A score of 0 total points is a very common outcome for entrants. In the past, UTA has had students who have sat for the Putnam Exam but there was a break of a few years recently where UTA did not

have any participants. However, for the past two years, the student organized and led Putnam Study Team met weekly to sharpen their math skills and practice problems from previous Putnam Exams. In 2024 seven UTA students completed the Exam, but only one student had a positive score - 2 points. For the 2025 Exam this past semester, UTA had nine participates. One Team member, Lynn Greaves, scored a perfect score of 10 points on a problem. Three other Team members, Stephan Findley, Adib Kadir and Ibrahim Kamel, had scores in the 1 – 3 points range on different problems. As a result, UTA's Team ranking increased from 341 in 2024 to 213 in 2025 out of the approximately 500 schools that participated in the Exam. Spurred on by this year's success, the Putnam Study Team is already meeting weekly to practice for next year's competition. They are organizing a friendly problem-solving competition for anyone who wishes to participate this spring. The hope is to not only maintain the positive first derivative (divided difference) but to also have a positive second derivative!

- The Calculus Bowl was a big hit again! Nineteen high school teams showed up and put their brilliant minds to the Calculus-test. For those that don't know, the teams are presented with one question at a time and have 60 seconds to submit an answer. Submission times are recorded and points are awarded inversely proportional to the time it took them to respond, out of a maximum of 10 points. The team with most points win! This year's #1 team was Team 5-Flower Mound HS; #2 was Team 18-Grapevine HS ; #3 was Team 15-School of Sci & Eng . A big thank-you to all those that contribute to making this meaningful and fun competition a possibility.

Birthdays are worth celebrating! And better late than never...
We'd like to wish Dr. Kevin Barlow, Dr. David Jorgensen, Erica Calderon, and Wenqisi Pan a very Happy Birthday!

Committee Updates

Loading...

Math Jokes

- Why did the chicken cross the Möbius strip?

  - To get to the same side!

- What happens when you put root beer in a square glass?

  - It just becomes beer!

https://www.rd.com/list/corny-math-jokes-pi-day/

UTA Department of Mathematics
411 S. Nedderman Drive
Arlington, TX 76019

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