You Always Wanted to be a Math Teacher... Now What? 🎧

Ten (or More) Professional Activities for Mathematics Teaching Faculty (of All Ages!)

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Abstract:

• After landing their dream job, new teachers may ask, “Now What?”

• Or, after 28 years, veteran teachers may ask, “Now What?”

• This talk will present 10 (or more) professional growth opportunities for Mathematics Teaching Faculty.

• These opportunities span a wide spectrum of teaching experience level, so all attendees can benefit!
Why Discuss Professional Activities/Development?

• The goal of mathematics professional development is to improve instruction in order to improve student learning ....Professional development is effective when it promotes teachers’ growth.

Why Discuss Professional Activities/Development?

• Building expertise and exhibiting leadership in the teaching and learning of mathematics, enhancing personal growth, and improving teaching methods and effectiveness as a personally initiated life-long responsibility.

**AMATYC**: *Core Values, 2006*
Why Discuss Professional Activities/Development?

• Departments should provide regular opportunities for and support the professional development of faculty members to learn of the most recent findings about teaching and learning in the mathematical sciences and of the most recent developments in technology that support teaching and learning.

MAA: Guidelines for Programs and Departments in Undergraduate Mathematical Sciences, 1993
This talk is like an all can eat buffet—you can’t eat everything!

This talk is also a microcosm of an AMATYC conference—you can’t attend/do everything!

This talk is also likely to elicit some heavy eyerolling among the more “seasoned” attendees.

Hopefully this talk will spark at least one good idea!
1. Preserve your health and well-being (Regardless of numbers 2-10!).

• Preserve your wellness—both physical and mental.
• Preserve time for family, friends, recreation....
• Learn to balance work and home.
• Learn to say “No” when your plate is full.
2. Participate in teaching-improvement opportunities.

- Observe another teacher within your department.
- Discuss teaching ideas with colleagues.
- Participate in faculty development day or other local opportunities.
- Take courses that are teacher/learner centered.
- Always look to adopt one good idea!
3. Participate in activities that increase your mathematics expertise.

• Sit in on classes that stretch your knowledge.
• Discuss math concepts with colleagues—use the whiteboard in the break room.
• Solve problems in professional organization publications, e.g. NCTM Calendar, AMATYC Student Math league, MAA team competitions, etc.
• Take a course that challenges you—preferably with colleagues, e.g. Combinatorics!
4. Learn how things work at your school.

• Read everything on your school’s website.
• Participate in faculty senate or union activities.
• Attend all the required *boring* meetings.
• Ask good questions.
• Get involved in committees that interest you—but not too many!"
5. Get involved in your community.

• Follow your interests.
• Support and participate in spouse/kids’ activities.
• Make yourself known to the math teachers at the local high school(s).
• Volunteer for community events such as science fairs, fund raisers, etc....
• But remember #1: Preserve health and well being!
6. Pursue an advanced degree.

• If possible, use coursework for promotion.
• Explore research in mathematics.
• Explore research in mathematics education.
• Explore education leadership or administration.
• Take advantage of online options and opportunities.
7. Pursue leadership roles at the college.

• Look for leadership roles within the department, e.g. coordinator roles.
• Run for program manager or department chair.
• Volunteer to chair a committee that interests you.
• Serve as a chair for an accreditation committee.
• Leadership can be frustrating, but very rewarding!
8. Participate in professional organizations.

- Actually pay the annual dues!
- Start local...for example...FTYCM...
- I have membership forms!
- Run for office—organizations always need fresh ideas and leadership.
- It is a great way to learn new ideas.
- It is a great way to realize you are not alone in your problems!
9. Preside and/or present at conferences.

• Presiding is a great way to participate at a conference.
• Presiding may get you to attend a session you normally might not attend.
• Presenting forces you to focus on a topic at a much deeper level.
• Presenting is a great way to learn from your audience!
10. Get involved in publishing.

• Talk to the publisher representatives that visit your college.
• Share your thoughts about the materials you are using.
• Put your name in to perform reviews.
• Put your name in to participate in focus groups.
• Participate in writing projects or authoring.
Or More....?

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References

2. AMATYC Core Values: http://www.amatyc.org/?page=AMATYCVision
3. MAA Guidelines for Programs and Departments in Undergraduate Mathematical Sciences: https://www.maa.org/programs/faculty-and-departments
4. NCTM Calendar Problems: http://www.nctm.org/Publications/Mathematics-Teacher/
5. AMATYC Student Math League: http://www.amatyc.org/?page=SMLPastQuestions
6. MAA Team Competitions: http://sections.maa.org/northcen/teamcomp.html
7. Land of Confusion, Genesis: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKrsAje9lxg
8. I Can See Clearly Now, Johnny Nash: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsclgtDJFXg

THE END!
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