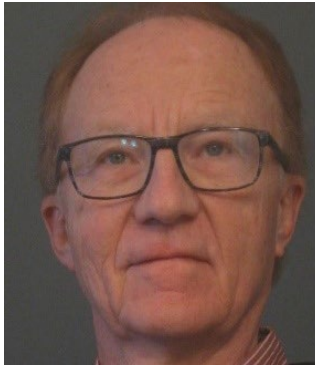


## Variation Explains Function

Don Vander Klok, Lambton College

The concept of *function* is often taught in a separate course unit in an abstract, formal way. In Ontario colleges, this contradicts the applied nature of the mathematics courses. This approach does not help students understand the fundamental importance that we mathematics teachers proclaim about functions. In this article, I present an alternative presentation to function that integrates it with the topic of *variation* --varies directly and varies inversely. This approach presents function in applied contexts that embrace both equation work and graphic illustration.



**Don Vander Klok** ([don.vanderklok@lambtoncollege.ca](mailto:don.vanderklok@lambtoncollege.ca)) has taught mathematics for over thirty years. Fifteen of those were in Ontario community colleges. He is past president of the Ontario College Mathematics Association and has recently retired from Lambton College in Sarnia.