



### First Year in Maths Project

a joint project by the University of Melbourne, University of Adelaide, University of Sydney and Curtin University.

<http://fyimaths.org.au>



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**Workshop June 2014** We held a successful workshop on *Teaching Practices in Undergraduate Mathematics* at the University of Melbourne on 23-24<sup>th</sup> June. The workshop attracted 64 participants from across Australian and New Zealand, which was double the attendance of our first workshop in 2013. Participants were from a wide range of roles including lecturers, associate lecturers and tutors in mathematics, first-year coordinators, Deans of Science, research fellow, teaching associate, Director of Undergraduate Studies, learning advisors, Assistant Dean Teaching and Learning, Maths Support Coordinator, post-doctoral researcher, Professional Teaching Fellow, Head Of Mathematics and First Year Engineering Coordinator. [Presentations](#) covered a range of topics such as flipped classrooms, diagnostic testing, online resources and assessment, with the aim of sharing experiences and insights into trialling new teaching approaches. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive with strong support for an ongoing annual event that involves showcasing best practice as well as providing networking and discussion opportunities.

Throughout the project we have received feedback that the opportunities for mathematicians, maths teachers and learning support staff to meet colleagues from other institutions are very rare. We know that many work in isolation and feel their institutions are alone in the problems they experience in teaching mathematics. There is a clear need for a network that can provide information, facilitate collaboration and raise awareness of problems through organising events, maintaining a web presence and providing a contact point. We hope to continue this work through maintaining the website and network beyond the end of the project in November 2014.

**Website** The website has been developing slowly during the life of the project. Our aim has been to provide a contact point with the project team as well as timely information about events, news items, recent research and presentations and current issues. We have built a small collection of [Resources](#), focussing on things that are new, unpublished and not easily accessible or available on other sites.

We are conscious that developing a collection of resources on teaching undergraduate mathematics is a big task and involves regular reflection on what information is useful, how best to provide access and keep it up to date. We are investigating the options for continuing to build a collection of resources in the future and linking to other resources collections already developed.

**Network Future** The Office of Learning and Teaching funded FYiMaths project will finish in mid-November 2014. The project has established that there is a strong interest amongst mathematicians and maths teachers in universities in belonging to a mathematics network. The project has built a strong interest group, with a mailing list of over 130 people, over 4000 views of our website, over 200 participants at our workshops

and forum, strong connections with peak bodies in mathematics, education and science and has encouraged a number of successful grant applications. We hope to secure funding to continue our work developing the network.

**Network Membership** In order to support the ongoing development of the network we would like develop a members' page on our site. We currently have representatives in all states and territories and would like to list members' contact details publically so that people can identify local academics and teachers who have similar interests. If you would like to have your contact details listed on the site please [fill in the form](#) on our website and include the details you would like listed. We envisage that by providing contact points in each state we can facilitate the development of local chapters of the network.

**Presentations** The project team presented at the recent First Year in Higher Education Conference (FYHE) in Darwin and the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) conference in Hong Kong. We presented preliminary findings about the roles of first year coordinators and the key challenges for academics teaching mathematics in universities. The conferences also provided us with an opportunity to meet others working and researching in first year teaching and student support.

### Upcoming Events

- [Australian Conference of Science and Mathematics Education \(ACSME\).](#)  
29-30th September, University of Sydney.

This conference showcases research and best practice in teaching science and mathematics in universities and is also a great networking opportunity for those interested in building their expertise in teaching and learning scholarship in a supportive and cross-disciplinary forum.

- [ACSME Discipline Day.](#) 1st October, University of Technology, Sydney.

The ACSME Discipline Day is a free event that provides academics from a range of disciplines to meet with colleagues and consider discipline specific issues. The morning sessions are programmed around each discipline network, with the [mathematics program](#) featuring presentations and networking time. The afternoon workshops from 1-3pm feature a number of parallel sessions on recent projects and initiatives. You can register for the Discipline Day [here](#).

- [Australia and New Zealand Maths Convention.](#)  
8-12 December, 2014, University of Melbourne.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Australia and New Zealand Maths Convention is a combined meeting of the [AustMS](#) and [NZMS](#) held every six years. Deb King is organising a [special session](#) on tertiary mathematics education. Details will be available closer to the time.

**Special Journal Issue** We are currently editing the manuscripts submitted for the special issue of the International Journal of Innovation in Science and Mathematics Education (IJISME). The papers cover a range of issues relating to teaching mathematics in undergraduate programs, and adaptive responses to students diverse backgrounds in mathematics. We hope to have the special issue out in October 2014 to coincide with the Australian Conference of Science and Mathematics Education.

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The project's formal title is "Building leadership capacity in University first-year learning and teaching in the mathematical sciences".

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