



**Task Force on Undergraduate Retention and Graduation:
Meeting Documentation
March 3, 2011**

Part 1. Attendance

Committee Numbers:	Lisa Axe, John Bechtold, Joel Bloom, John Cays, Barry Cohen, Perry Deess, Norbert Elliot, Ian Gatley, Jack Gentul, Sharon Morgan, Judith Redling, Henry Ross, Cheickna Sylla
Meeting Aim:	“It is the purpose of the Task Force on Undergraduate Retention and Graduation to complete an analysis of undergraduate retention and graduation and to recommend tactics for implementation that will yield improvements on both areas.” President Altenkirch Charge to the Committee, February 3, 2011
Meeting Date:	March 3, 2011; minutes revised on March 17 to add John Bechtold’s analysis of admissions and placement tests in mathematics (note 6 in Part 3 added); minutes revised April 27 – figures removed.
Meeting Time:	3:00 pm
Meeting Location:	398 Fenster Hall
Chair:	Ian Gatley
Vice Chair:	Jack Gentul
Committee Guests:	Theodore Johnson
Meeting Purpose:	To design the first-year placement system; to review the ViSTA model for the task force.

Part 2: Agenda

Agenda Items	
1	Review of the present (fall 2010) placement system
2	Analysis of student impact
3	Recommendations for fall 2011 placement system
4	Distribution of ViSTA model

Part 3: Discussion of Agenda

Discussion on Agenda Items	
1	Review of analysis of present mathematics placement system, with focus on remediation rates and rates of success in courses.
2	Distinction between authentic mathematics placement and the idea of a “Saturday Test.” Lack of student awareness of academic career impact of mathematics placement test.
3	Analysis that testing is out of sequence. Placement tests should be thought of as assessment devices, given when students are enrolled in the courses, prepared for the work, and aware of the test significance
4	Issue of preparedness extends to the use of calculators (allowed on SAT Mathematics Section) yet not allowed on the present four separate tests for mathematics placement.
5	Questions about relevance of calculus for all NJIT students, regardless of majors; specific focus on relevance of calculus for students of architecture—if attending graduate school, there is relevance; yet calculus is not needed for all students in CoAD.
6	Caution needed when considering placement; student performance on decline in mathematics; national admissions test such as the SAT Mathematics section may not a valid test to use when placing students into calculus courses.
7	Questions raised about the construct being addressed in mathematics placement and mathematics common examinations; design of tests must reflect the construct to be tested
8	Relationship between major and placement test must be examined
9	Question of general need for an analysis of the kinds of mathematics skills students will need in the 21 st century.
10	Questions of the place of challenges to placement examinations
11	Analysis of correct placement as a grade of A, B+, B,C+, and C; discussion of rates of success in writing from 2008 to 2010: Honors (92-97%); Traditional Writing (81-85%), Basic Writing (77-88%), and ESL Basic Writing (85-91%). Analysis of decreased remediation rate after 2008 from a high of 39% in 2006 to the present rates: 2008 (11%), 2009 (9%), and 2010 (16%)
12	Discussion on allowing non-calculus students to take fall courses that do not include math
13	Need for more non-mathematics and non-science courses to fill our fall student schedules
14	Placement testing in mathematics will occur in the fall. The uses of the tests are to be discussed.

Part 4: Action Items from Agenda

Action on Agenda		Vote
1	Motion: “Students have access to timely and successful completion of an NJIT degree.”	Unanimous

Part 5: Remaining Questions for Resolution at Next Meeting

Questions to be Answered		Individual Best Able to Provide Answers
1	What is the model for correct placement in mathematics? Answer based on meeting discussion.	
2	What is the model for student placement and testing in mathematics?	
3	Is the SAT Mathematics section a valid source of information regarding student performance on both calculus and non-calculus based material? http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/sat-reasoning/about/sections/math	
4	What is the role of Maplesoft in the mathematics testing process? http://www.maplesoft.com/	
5	What is the role of the common examination in the mathematics testing process? http://math.njit.edu/students/mathexams.php	
6	How can a process be initiated now so that students admitted into the fall 2011 class benefit from the present discussion?	
7	How can the ViSTA model be refined so that the necessary vision, strategies, tactics, and metrics are in place so that the March 3 motion will be leveraged before the fall 2011 semester begins?	