

Domo arigato, Mister Baratto

Mike Kimberling
The Clackamas Print

For some students the only way to remember the math \geq torture. Clackamas Mathematics Department Chair Stefan Baratto desires to change that negative outlook by providing non-science majors with an alternative to simply suffering through math.

"We wanted to construct a math course that was relevant and would be fun for both students and instructors," Baratto said.

Baratto calls his creation Math 105 – a textbook-less course where students can gain many of the skills of Math 111, such as rigorous thinking, analysis and logic, while studying mathematics that they find relevant.

"I think that the biggest barrier to student success in math are knowledge retention and placement," said Baratto.

"Too many students are not prepared for the math courses that they enroll in," Baratto said. "A common complaint among math teachers is that students insist on enrolling in math 111 because this is a

transfer-level math course rather than 'waste their time' by taking Math 95, even when they need it. This leads to a situation in which a student fails Math 111 two or three times before finally passing it with a 'C.'"

If a student really learns the math as it happens in class they wouldn't need to study so hard for their final exam, according to Baratto.

"However, many students end up getting through a math class in part by cramming for their final," Baratto said.

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Stefan Baratto
Mathematics
Department Chair

"This leads to a situation where knowledge is gained in short-term memory, but not long-term memory. This student then enrolls in the next math course but no longer retains the prerequisite knowledge. Of course, entering a math course without a good handle on prerequisite material gives a student very little opportunity to succeed."

To the question of whether or not some students just don't "get" math, Baratto enthusiastically answers, "Everyone can learn a little more math!"

The relaxed atmosphere in

Math 105 does not come just from the textbook, but also from Baratto's style of teaching, which he calls a combination of passion, enthusiasm and a love for math and teaching.

"I tend to be rather informal in the classroom," Baratto said, "Students respond well and enjoy class or at least enjoy it as much as they can enjoy math. I have received some nice responses on student evaluations over the years. We have doubled the number of sections in Math 105 that we offer annually, giving students the opportunity to find an instructor whose personality and style work with them."

According to Baratto, his overall goal in teaching others mathematics is to have fun. He received his Bachelor of General Studies from the University of Michigan in 1988, began his teaching career in Brooklyn, NY, in 1989, and received his Master of Science in math from the University of Oregon in 1996. Baratto taught his first college course at the UO in 2003, and has been teaching at Clackamas Community College for six years.

"I love what I do and feel fortunate to have this opportunity," Baratto said. "My position here at CCC definitely is the best job I've ever had. This is a wonderful place to be and the people here really care about what we do, and it shows."



BARATTO

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THIEVES: thief-proof your ride

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"People will steal anything, but those are the primary ones we take report of, and of course they are left in plain view," he continued.

If valuables must be brought to school, Kandratieff advises students to keep them in the trunk of their car. Students aren't out of the clear yet, though.

"A lot of times, we don't know who these thieves are or what they look like," he said. "Students have to be aware of their surroundings. If you're going to store valuables in your trunk, do it before you

arrive at school because the thief might be watching."

Keeping valuables out of sight is important because car alarms and security devices might deter a thief, but "if someone wants in, they'll get in," according to Kandratieff.

However, many times students don't even take the first step in preventing break-ins by locking their car.

"The most recent theft occurred because the student's passenger-side window was rolled down," Kandratieff said. "A lot of criminals are looking for opportunities like that."

Another way students can

protect their possessions is by writing down the serial and/or model numbers of the items, as well as engraving their name and contact information somewhere on the surface. Then if the items are stolen they can be correctly identified if they are recovered or turn up in a pawn shop.

Overall, Kandratieff urges students to be on the lookout at all times.

"It's a community effort," he said. "If anyone sees anything suspicious in the parking lot, I highly advise them to report it."

To reach Campus Safety call (971) 563-0101.



PHOTO RE-ENACTMENT

Adam J. Manley Clackamas Print

A suspicious-looking character peers in through a windshield at a wallet left in the open. Many students leave their valuables in plain sight, turning their cars into targets for theft.