2014 was a year of great transformation and activity for the SIU Math department!
Read all about the changes and events below.

Faculty and Staff Retirements and Resignations
2014 was a year of transition for the faculty and staff of the Math department. We started the year with two of our distinguished faculty members deciding to retire. Both Philip Feinsilver and Salah Mohammed decided to retire at exactly the same time. What's the probability of that! We thank them for their many years of service to the Department. At the end of the semester Joe Hundley took a job at SUNY-Buffalo to be closer to his wife at Carnegie-Mellon, and our web-specialist, Rachel Kubiak, took a job in St. Louis after completing her Master's. Last, but definitely not least, Nancy Vale retired in May after over 20 years of service. Thanks Nancy!!

Philip Feinsilver  Nancy Vale  Salah Mohammed
New Faculty and Staff Join Us for Fall 2014
Welcome to our new faculty this Fall! Yaser Samadi is our new assistant professor in Statistics. He comes to us after earning his Ph.D from the University of Georgia. John Clemons joined as a visiting assistant professor in Algebra. Finally, one of our own graduates, Christy Parks, joined our department as a new lecturer.

We also added several new staff members. Naishon Patterson joined the department as the administrative assistant to the chair, while Anita Palmisano accepted the position of web-specialist. Rachel Smith joined our staff as administrative assistant for the STEM Education Research Center. Welcome Naishon, Anita, and Rachel.

Morris Library 6th Floor Opens State-of-the Art Math Labs and Classrooms
Construction was finally completed in early January on the 6th floor Math labs in Morris Library. The combination of the new labs and technology intensive classrooms gives SIU students a state-of-the-art learning environment. Click here to see some of the photos from the open house on the 6th floor.

2014 Little Egypt Math Week
Each Spring, the Mathematics Department sponsors a mathematics contest, called Math Field Day, for regional high school students. Schools from the southern part of Illinois, ranging from Edwardsville to Massac County, as well as a few schools from Missouri and Kentucky participate. Due to the ice storms of Spring 2014, Math Field Day was moved to April 1st, but there was no “fooling around” concerning the test. Over 1000 students took the Math Field Day exam! Congratulations to Anish Bhattacharya for having the highest overall score on the test! Anish is the son of our faculty member Bhaskar Bhattacharya.
Department Was Pleased to Welcome Bryna Kra for the 3rd Annual Langenhop Lecture

Bryna Kra earned her undergraduate degree from Harvard University in 1988 and her PhD from Stanford in 1995. Before her appointment to Northwestern University in 2004, she held postdoctoral positions at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel), the University of Michigan, the Institut des Hautes Etudes Scientifiques (France), and Ohio State University, and was an assistant professor at Pennsylvania State University. Kra works in dynamical systems and ergodic theory, with a focus on problems related to combinatorics and number theory. She was an invited speaker at the 2006 International Congress of Mathematicians, was awarded a Centennial Fellowship, also in 2006, and in 2010 was awarded the Conant Prize of the American Mathematical Society. See the lecture video.

Probability on Algebraic and Geometric Structures Conference Hosted June 2014

The Department of Mathematics at Southern Illinois University was pleased to host an international research conference celebrating the careers of Philip Feinsilver, Salah Mohammed, and Arunava Mukherjea, who have each made important contributions to understanding a wide range of topics concerning probability measures and the behavior of stochastic processes on algebraic and geometric structures. Mathematicians from across the U.S. and Europe came to present their research at SIU from June 5th-7th. The Proceedings of the conference has been accepted for publication by the AMS in their Contemporary Mathematics series.

New NSF Grant funded

Congratulations to MingQing Xiao and Jianhong Xu for receiving a new research grant from the National Science Foundation! Their proposal entitled “Numerical Approximation of Joint Spectral Radius by Lower Rank Matrix” was funded for three years.

Three Faculty Promoted to Professor

Three faculty members of the department received the recognition they richly deserved for their productive careers. Dubravka Ban, John McSorley, and David Olive were each promoted to the rank of professor. Dubravka Ban came to the department in 2001 as a visiting assistant professor after receiving her Ph.D from the University of Zagreb and became assistant professor in 2002. She was promoted to associate professor in 2005. Her research involves the p-adic groups and the Langlands program. John McSorley first came to the department in 1988 as a lecturer after receiving his Ph.D from the University of Oxford. After several academic positions in both the U.S. and England, he became an assistant professor in our department in 2004 and was promoted to associate professor in 2007. His research involves graph theory and combinatorics. David Olive came to the department as an assistant professor in 1999 after receiving his Ph.D from the University of Minnesota. He was promoted to associate professor in 2004. His research focuses on regression, statistical inference, and robust statistics. Congratulations to them all!
Expanding Your Horizons | 2014
Expanding your Horizons (EYH) in Math and Science is an annual all-day Saturday conference for girls in 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grades. The conference consists of hands-on workshops in a variety of subjects led by professionals working in the sciences. It is hosted by the SIU Math department and this past year was held on November 1st, 2014. For more information and videos concerning the event, go to http://www.math.siu.edu/eyh/index.php.

SIU Math Department Hosts MAA Sponsored IL-MO Undergraduate Conference
A great opportunity for undergraduate students to present mathematical research projects and expository papers, to meet with more established mathematicians and to network with their fellow students. The conference is organized jointly by Southeast Missouri State University and Southern Illinois University. This year the conference was held on the campus of SIU in Young Auditorium, Neckers 440 on Saturday, Nov. 8, 2014.

Greg Budzban Receives “Outstanding First Year Advocate” Award
Greg Budzban, professor and chair of the department, is receiving national recognition as an outstanding advocate for undergraduate first-year students. Budzban is one of 10 recipients in the nation chosen as “Outstanding First-Year Advocates” for 2014-15 by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. Budzban will be recognized for his commitment to student retention at the 34th annual “Conference on the First-Year Experience,” Feb. 7-10, in Dallas, Texas. Read more.

Math Department Giving Page Launched
Through the generosity of donors, the Math department support Math majors and grad students with scholarships. Donation to our Foundation accounts also help to enhance the research and teaching missions of our department. Please consider joining our list supporters! If you are interested in contributing, please visit: math.siu.edu/giving and donate today! There is a new Emeritus Faculty Scholarship Fund where contributions will go directly to scholarships for the top Math students in the Southern Illinois region.
Congratulations to Our New Graduates!
The Math Department celebrated graduations at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in 2014.
Join us in congratulating the following new Math Department alumni:

Undergraduates (Spring)
Nicholas Baskin (Education)
Ashley Cantrall (Science)
Daniel Dilley (Liberal Arts)
Adam Erlor (Education)
Sarah Fields (Education)
Caleb Fifer (Science)
Ian Ford (Science)
Allen Foster (Education)
Shandie Jarrett (Education)
Daniel Schall (Education)
Cameron Thomas (Business)
Undergraduates (Summer)
Taylor Griffith (Science)
William Torres (Science)
Undergraduate (Fall)
Derek Hostalek (Science)

Master’s Graduates
Ayed Alanzi
Bryan Callen
Tharaka Gamachchige
Rebecca Johnson
Olive Mbianda
Jamie Pfister
David Rhoads
Upal Pupassara
Mathew Walker

Doctoral Graduates
Siriwardena, Lochana - Asst. Prof., University of Indianapolis
Almarri, Barakah
Adatorwovor, Dayana - Asst. Prof., Shaw University
Kotteen, Suwanda - Asst. Prof., University of New Haven
Peiris, Thelge Buddhika - Instructor, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Al-Talib, Mohammed M.
Yi, Huijun