

AMS Student Chapter Budget for Wesleyan University

December 22, 2012

1 Outline of Budget

The budget of \$500 will be used over the course of the spring 2013 semester in the following ways:

- \$200 for helping to support the graduate student seminar
- \$150 for funding travel to conferences and seminars
- \$150 for social events and community building, particularly for a trip to the Museum of Mathematics

These expenses are broken down below

2 The Graduate Student Seminar

The Graduate Student Seminar (GSS) was started several years ago by Wesleyan Graduate Students in an effort to provide the Mathematics and Computer Science graduate students with a forum to share their research with one another, discuss topics of general mathematical interest, or practice seminar talks, conference talks, and dissertation defenses. The format of this seminar includes a fifty minute talk by one graduate student followed by a ten minute discussion/question period. It is of great benefit to the speaker to have the opportunity to prepare and deliver a talk for a group of peers. Traditionally, the audience is comprised of only graduate students; however, the speaker is free to invite any faculty members or undergraduate students as guests if he/she deems it advantageous.

The most convenient time for the GSS to meet is during the lunch hour, when there are no conflicts with classes, teaching duties, or department seminars. Providing food is a major draw and often increases attendance. In recent years, the amount which the department can contribute to this budget has dropped. In response, the organizers have had to ask for contributions of \$25 per semester from the graduate students and seminar attendance has dropped a small amount. Having high attendance at these seminars yields increased collaboration amongst graduate students,

and an overall higher level of mathematical understanding. The \$200 from the AMS would help lower the cost per student, and would hopefully lead to regaining the 100% attendance which the seminar used to draw.

Over the past two years the GSS has reached out to other institutions to set up an exchange of speakers with their graduate student seminars. This led to the creation of a seminar at UMass-Amherst, and has led to Wesleyan students speaking at Yale, UMass-Amherst, UConn, and Central Connecticut State University. Speakers from those institutions have also spoken at Wesleyan, usually 2 per semester. This exchange program helps create collaboration across these institutions, gives speakers a chance to practice in new locations and in front of new audiences, and allows attendees at all these schools to hear about mathematics which they might otherwise remain ignorant of. This year the Wesleyan Mathematics Department was able to provide a small amount of funding to help offset travel expenses for visitors to the GSS. The \$200 from the AMS could also be used to help lower these expenses further, depending on how much the department contributes towards travel expenses for the Spring 2013 semester, and depending on how many outside visitors the organizers invite to speak. We anticipate inviting 2 external graduate students for the spring, and Professor Fabiana Cardetti of UConn has agreed to speak as well on issues related to mathematical pedagogy.

3 Travel to Conferences and Seminars

The leaders of the AMS Student Chapter plan to organize at least one trip to a mathematics conference in New England for Wesleyan students. Outings like this have been organized sporadically in the past and usually students either paid out of pocket for their travel expenses or the drivers went without any kind of reimbursement. Previous group trips to conferences include several years at the Spuyten-Duyvil conference in New York, several trips to the AWM fall conference, a trip to the AWM 40th Anniversary Conference, and a trip to the Joint Meetings last winter. With funding from the AMS Student Chapter, we hope to lead these trips more consistently, to increase the number of graduate students we can take, and to remove the financial disincentive which current drivers face. The \$150 will be used to reimburse drivers in the amount of 25 cents per mile and to cover registration fees.

Ideally, we would go to the AMS Sectional Meeting at Boston College on April 6-7. Other options which have been proposed include the annual Upstate Number Theory conference being held at the University of Buffalo this year and a logic conference in Binghamton. The choice of conference will depend on graduate student interest. Depending on how much the department contributes towards travel expenses, trips

to multiple conferences could be organized.

The \$150 may also be used to help offset expenses for the exchange program mentioned in the previous section, if funds remain after conference expenses and if the GSS funds are insufficient in this area.

4 Social Events and Community Building

A small liberal arts university which has a major focus on undergraduate life requires more efforts for outreach and community building within the graduate program itself. There is a need to both help promote the math program on campus and build up our own community from within. Seeing how mathematics is being popularized and promoted can be a major tool for any mathematician and especially helpful in making our department's work better known around campus. The opening of the Museum of Mathematics in New York City has been of particular interest to several members in the department. We would help support transportation fees and/or entrance fees to send a group of graduate students to see the museum. In doing so we would hope to build our own community in having a group trip while also seeing how our subject area is being popularized to the point of having its own museum.

The Graduate Liberal Studies Program on campus has recently reached out to the math department grad students to help promote mathematics within their program. They will be hosting a π -day event in which they will invite members of the community to come for an evening of food, lectures, and mathematical games. If there was a speaker or installation that was particularly interesting to the graduate program that the GLSP needed financial assistance to bring in, we would see if we can use some of this \$150 in that regard.

Any remaining funding would be allocated to look into subsidizing the creation of department t-shirts made for and by the graduate students.