

December 23, 2015

Robert Beezer  
Mathematics and Computer Science Department  
University of Puget Sound  
Tacoma, Washington 98416

Dear Dr. Beezer,

I am writing to apply for participation in the UTMOST project. I am an Associate Professor of mathematics at York College of Pennsylvania, where I have taught for the past 7 ½ years. York College of Pennsylvania is a private, 4 year, regional college with 4600 full time undergraduate students. It offers 50 undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences (including majors in math, computer science, chemistry, mechanical engineering, and electrical engineering), and master's programs in business, education, and nursing.

I have experience teaching both Linear Algebra and a two-semester sequence of Abstract Algebra. I will have taught Linear Algebra five times and the Abstract Algebra sequence three times by the end of the spring 2016 semester. Students in Linear Algebra are typically math, secondary education math, computer science, and economics majors. Students in Abstract Algebra are almost exclusively math and secondary education math majors. Sections of Linear Algebra are capped at 25 students, while sections of Abstract Algebra are capped at 20.

I have used various java applets and WileyPlus in my Linear Algebra course. I have been interested in using a computer algebra system in the course for some time, but a lack of experience on my part and a high cost to my students have prevented me from doing so thus far. As such, participating in your project would be a great aid to meeting this goal in my Linear Algebra course. I haven't used any technology in my Abstract Algebra classes. I have taught the sequence twice using a standard lecture format, and once as an inquiry-based course. I have no experience with Sage or SageMathCloud, although I have used Maple in the past.

Below is a list of which courses I would be available to teach during the 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic years.

Fall 2017: Linear Algebra, Abstract Algebra I (Groups)  
Spring 2018: Linear Algebra, Abstract Algebra II (Rings, Fields)  
Fall 2018: Linear Algebra  
Spring 2019: Linear Algebra

For the reasons I detail in the paragraph above, I would prefer to participate in the project for my Linear Algebra course, although I would be willing to do so for Abstract Algebra as well. Since I will have the opportunity to teach the course multiple times over the course of the grant, it would also be possible for me to teach both control and experimental sections of Linear Algebra (or an experimental section multiple times, or other combinations that might be useful).

I have included a letter of support from my chair below. Please let me know if I can provide you with any additional information. I appreciate your consideration of my application.

Sincerely Yours,

Frederick Butler  
Associate Professor of Mathematics  
York College of Pennsylvania  
fbutler@ycp.edu



December 23, 2015

Robert A. Beezer  
Mathematics and Computer Science  
University of Puget Sound  
Tacoma, Washington 98416

Dear Dr. Beezer:

This is a letter of support for **Dr. Frederick Butler**, Associate Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Physical Sciences, York College of PA. He is applying to be part of a research study conducted within the UTMOST project.

Our department is excited about the opportunity for Dr. Butler to be part of this important research. For many years now, we have offered MAT 260 (Linear Algebra I) in both the fall and spring semesters. We will continue to do so in the time period of the planned study (2017-2019).

I hope you can give consideration to Dr. Butler's request. Good luck with your overall goal to promote the use of open source software in teaching mathematics.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'James B. Foresman'.

James B. Foresman, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Chair

JForesma@YCP.EDU