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## Front Matter

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# A Handbook for Directors of Quantitative and Mathematics Support Centers

© Grace Coulombe, Mary O'Neill, Michael E. Schuckers, eds.

August 25, 2016

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For QMaSC Directors.

- G.L.C.

For my grandchildren: Always in my heart.

- M.B.O'N.

For Daniel, Christopher and Gabriella  $\mathcal{FWMW}\mathcal{H}$ .

- M.E.S.





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## Part I

# Introduction



# Preface

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St. Lawrence University

This handbook is the culmination of something that started in the Spring of 2011 at a Northeast Consortium for Quantitative Literacy (NECQL) meeting at the University of Massachusetts Boston. For several years, Mary, Grace, and I, the editors of this Handbook, had had informal discussions about the lack of resources available for managing tutoring centers like the ones that we directed. This was especially of note to me since, in 2007, I had started the Quantitative Resource Center at St. Lawrence University from scratch. We wanted to create a source of information for the people who lead or direct or administer math-related centers like ours. In particular, we wanted to create something that would be very useful to someone just starting as a new QMaSC director.

Mary O’Neill, Grace Coulombe and I put together two panels on how to lead what we came to call a QMaSC or Quantitative and Mathematical Support Center: the aforementioned one at UMass - Boston and another the following January at the Joint Mathematics Meeting. We got some good comments and suggestions at those sessions and we joked about doing more. At the end of the next NECQL meeting, Mary stood up and said we were writing a book. Grace and I were a *little* surprised but we rolled with it. A couple weeks later, Mary and Grace came to St. Lawrence University for a couple of days and we put together an outline of a grant proposal. We pitched the idea of a national workshop to the National Science Foundation (NSF), they liked the idea and had some good suggestions. Specifically, they were interested in a diverse range of institutions being involved and challenged us to get commitments from center directors at research institutions and community colleges and at schools all over the country. This was in large part due to the fact that Mary, Grace and I all ran centers at liberal arts colleges in the northeastern United States.

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We reached out to many, many QMaSC directors around the country and we were able to build a diverse set of people willing to come to Hartford, CT for a day on July 31, 2013. The directors that participated can be seen in the photo from the workshop in Figure 1.



Figure 1: QMaSC Workshop Participant, July 31, 2013

Having built a list of committed QMaSC directors, we were fortunate to have NSF fund our proposal in late 2012. We spent the next year recruiting more QMaSC directors to be part of the workshop and organizing the details of the workshop. Our chapter authors all wrote a draft of the chapters to which they were assigned prior to coming to Hartford. (Hartford was chosen because MathFest started there the next day.) Before everyone arrived in Hartford, we forwarded these drafts to other directors, they read the drafts and at the workshop we discussed feedback on individual chapters. After the workshop, these critiques were collected and given to the chapter authors who then incorporated them and revised their chapters. What follows in this handbook is the result of that workshop. In addition, we had several QMaSC directors write case studies of their centers. Since the chapters focus on an individual aspect of directing a QMaSC, we thought that having these case studies would give readers a sense of how these various aspects of managing a center are accomplished within a single QMaSC.

At the workshop, the last item we discussed (before adjourning for some social time) was the possibility of a network of QMaSC directors. That network would be a way to continue the conversation but also provide recognition for the professional work that QMaSC directors do. Such a network is still a work in progress. We have yet to find even an imperfect way to make it happen, but we are hopeful that it will eventually happen.

We are excited to present this handbook to you and hope you will find it helpful.

-Canton, NY, June 28, 2016