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Jeffery D. Sykes* (sykesj@obu.edu), Dept of Mathematics and Computer Science, Ouachita Baptist University, 410 Ouachita Street, Arkadelphia, AR 71998. *An alternative to intermediate algebra for liberal arts majors*. Preliminary report.

Many college students now take general studies mathematics courses that focus on appreciation of mathematics and quantitative reasoning skills. Many of these courses maintain the level of rigor of a college algebra course, but choose to cover historical, applied, and discrete topics that do not require mastery of algebraic skills. The traditional developmental mathematics curriculum, on the other hand, is designed to echo the algebra-focused high school curriculum that prepares a student for college algebra and eventually calculus. Is this the best approach to developmental coursework for students bound for these newer breed of general studies courses?

The author has been involved in the design of a new developmental mathematics course at the level of intermediate algebra, but focusing on problem-solving techniques instead of the mastery of algebraic skills. This course is intended to prepare students for success in a quantitative reasoning course that does not require algebraic mastery. The author will discuss the design of the course, implementation issues, and preliminary results from the course's first set of students. (Received September 18, 2009)