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National Science Foundation in-service math institute at Montana State University

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Seventh and eighth grade mathematics teachers will be brought up to date on recent changes in mathematics curricula in the schools through an in-service institute to be conducted next year by Montana State University.

The University has been awarded a $19,590 grant by the National Science Foundation to operate the institute, which will be directed by Dr. W. R. Ballard, assistant professor of mathematics. Classes will begin Jan. 8 and continue until May 20, 1962.

The institute will offer instruction in the subject matter of the junior high school mathematics books prepared by the School Mathematics Study Group, Dr. Ballard said. The group includes teachers of mathematics in high schools, colleges and universities, representatives of science and technology, and education experts.

The sample texts prepared for junior high school combine old and new mathematics to lead to understanding of the basic concepts and structure of mathematics, Dr. Ballard said. They present mathematics as a living and growing subject and cover mathematics all well educated citizens should know, he added.

The institute is unique in that places of instruction, with the exception of Missoula, are far removed from the campus of the parent institution and high school or junior college teachers living in the instruction centers will teach the classes.

The classes will be conducted in Missoula, Kalispell, Great Falls, Miles City, Glendive, and Ellensburg, Wash. The last farflung outpost is included because an Ellensburg teacher is among those who will be trained in institute instruction at the University this summer, Dr. Ballard said. Participants in a four-year sequential program at MSU will be taking their second summer of work toward the master's degree and in addition will receive training for teaching in-service institutes, he explained.
The Kalispell classes will be taught by Frank McElwain of the Flathead County High faculty and the Miles City classes by James Forker of Custer County Junior College. The director will teach the Missoula classes and will meet with each of the other classes at least once. Appointments of teachers for other centers are pending confirmation, Dr. Ballard said.

Each class will have about 20 members, whose travel and book expenses will be paid by the NSF grant. The course will be offered through the MSU Extension Division and will carry five quarter hours of undergraduate credit.

Participants will be selected in the fall, according to Dr. Ballard. The only requirement is that applicants be seventh or eighth grade mathematics teachers, he said.

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