

A Faculty Profile

By: Donna Solinski
Special Staff Reporter

Professor M. Vali Siadat has just been awarded a second doctorate degree, a Doctor of Arts (D.A.) in mathematics, from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). This is a new addition to his other graduate degrees, including a previously awarded Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in pure mathematics from UIC and two other master's degrees. He did his undergraduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering and computer science.

Dr. Siadat is not only a teacher but is also a scholar and researcher. He is the author or co-author of

several research papers in mathematics education which have been published in professional journals. His most recent article, co-authored with educator researchers such as E. Pascarella, A. Nora and L. Hagedorn, is concerned with an analysis of success in college mathematics with regard to gender and ethnicity. The article is now published in the Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering.

The study profiles the problems of low mathematics scores and is broken down by gender and differences in ethnicity. Although mathematical performance is very complex, the paper shows that male students continuously out-perform female counterparts in geometry and measurements, while female

students are better at numbers and operations. A possible explanation for the gender gap is that female students have a feeling of lower self-esteem when it comes to mathematics and it is perceived to be an area for male students to excel in.

Aside from his mathematical and teaching roles, Dr. Siadat also performs administrative duties. He is Chairman of the Mathematics Department, of Daley College.

Professor Siadat has also worked in other scientific areas. He is the Director/Co-Principal investigator of Proyecto Access/Chicago PREP, a federally funded grant awarded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in partnership with Hispanic Asso-

ciation of College and Universities (HACU). The grant brings talented minority and low income students on campus for an eight-week summer mathematics pro-

gram which is academically challenging. The program aims to improve the current minority under-representation in the areas of science and engineering.

