Vassilis Dougalis

Vassilis Dougalis' area is Applied Mathematics (numerical analysis, nonlinear wave propagation, underwater acoustics.). He studied at Princeton (BSE 1971) and at Harvard University (S.M. 1973 and Ph.D 1976). Since 1995 he has been a professor at the Mathematics Department of the University of Athens, and since 2004 Director of the Institute of Applied and Computational Mathematics (IACM) of the Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH), a major Greek research center. Vassilis Dougalis had previously served in the faculty of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in the US, and at the University of Crete and the National Technical University of Athens in Greece.

He has always been interested in learning about and applying new ways to improve the teaching of mathematics at the university level. As an applied mathematician, he feels that it is important in teaching to stress the importance of mathematics today in interdisciplinary research and its status as a common language among scientists from almost every area. At the University of Athens Vassilis was head of the undergraduate committee for a number of years, during which a reform of the undergraduate program was undertaken and implemented. Through interactions and working on common projects with colleagues of the Mathematics Education section at the Math. Department in Athens and with the group of Educational Research and Evaluation at IACM-FORTH he tries to keep informed about new trends, techniques, and ideas on improving teaching of mathematics and science at the secondary level. In particular Vassilis thinks that enquiry-based learning in high school will certainly help to prepare students to apply their basic mathematics and physical science training to real problems that they will face in everyday life. In addition it will give them a set of habits of study and thinking that will ease the transition from high school to the rigorous approach to mathematics and science that they will face at the university level.