

MSCS Mess

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Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science
St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057

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This Week's Colloquium

Title:	Mining Text Networks
Speaker:	David Banks
Date:	Monday, March 9
Time:	3:30 - 4:30 pm
Location:	RNS 310

About the talk: Many applications (the Internet, Wikipedia) concern networks of documents. In this talk, Professor David Banks will mine the corpus that consists of all U.S. political blog posts in 2012. The intent is to use recent advances in dynamic network modeling to improve the topic discovery, and recent research on text mining to improve the network modeling. Banks will describe a preliminary analysis based on the subset of blog posts that concern the shooting of Trayvon Martin, and then a full analysis of the entire corpus, at a lower level of resolution.

David Banks is a Professor of the Practice of Statistics at Duke University. He specializes in data and text mining, Bayesian risk analysis, and public policy. He also serves on the Human Rights Data Analysis Group.

Student Workers Needed

A few years ago a friend of the college donated a large collection of books to the department, which are currently stored in RMS 600. The MSCS department wants to catalog the collection and is looking for two students to help with the project.

Job requirements: Attend a two hour training session provided by Rolvaag Library staff and then work 4-6 hours a week until the job is done. Preference will be given to students who have work study awards.

For more information or to express interest in the position contact Kay Smith at smithk@stolaf.edu or stop by her office, RMS 504.

Pi Day!

Next Friday (March 13) is Pi Day Eve! To celebrate the occasion, Pi Mu Epsilon will be providing pies on the 3rd floor of the math building. The celebration begins at community time and will last until the π runs out!

Also, don't forget to celebrate Pi Day with your friends next Saturday, March 14! (Bonus points if you celebrate at 9:26 a.m.!)

MSCS Recital

Just a reminder that this year's MSCS Recital will be held at 7:00pm on Wednesday, March 18th, in Ytterboe Lounge. If you would like to perform, please contact Prof. Steve McKelvey (mckelvey@stolaf.edu). Performances of all types of skills are welcome, assuming at least a minimal level of tastefulness.

The event is a relaxed evening of food, fun and amusement. The point is for everyone in the MSCS department, students, staff, faculty, to enjoy each other's company for the evening. Nothing that happens will be on the test, we promise.

We hope all of you MSCS enthusiasts will join us! Again, if you'd like to perform, please let Steve McKelvey know.

Math & Music Summer Online Course

Do you have a burning passion for both Math and Music, but don't know how to combine them? Whether you do or you don't, UW-Eau Claire's summer class: Math 307, Mathematics and Music, might be the class for you!

The course applies basic mathematics to understanding, appreciating and creating music. It will be

offered online from May 26 - July 6. Students need not be in Eau Claire to take it, and can work at their own pace, even finishing early.

For more information, visit <http://people.uwec.edu/walkerjs/MandM/>

and for Your Reading Pleasure...

a Math Joke

An engineer, a physicist, and a mathematician are trying to set up a fenced-in feeding area for some sheep, but they have a limited amount of building material.

The engineer gets up first and makes a square fence with the material, reasoning that it's a pretty good working solution.

"No no," says the physicist, "there's a better way." He takes the fence and makes a circular pen, showing how it encompasses the maximum possible space with the given material.

Then the mathematician speaks up: "No, no, there's an even better way."

To the others' amusement he proceeds to construct a little tiny fence around himself, then declares: "I define myself to be on the outside."

a Math Quote

"Mathematics may not teach us how to add love or how to subtract hate. But it does give us every reason to hope that every problem has a solution"

-*Unknown*

a CS Joke

Q: How did the programmer die in the shower?

A: They read the shampoo bottle's instructions:
Lather. Rinse. Repeat.

and some Riddles!

What has three feet
but no legs?

A man leaves home,
turns left three times,
and returns home
to face two men wearing masks.
Who are those two men?

(Find the answers in next weeks Mess!)

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If you would like to submit an article or event to be published in the MSCS Mess, e-mail greimann@stolaf.edu