

# MSCS Mess

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St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057

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## This Week's Colloquium

<b>Title:</b>	From YouTube to the Riemann Zeta: Projects in Parallel and Distributed Computing
<b>Speaker:</b>	Xandra Best '15, David Crisler '18, Chris Hinton '18, Matthew Johnson '16, Joseph Jung '16, and Eric Oseid '17
<b>Date:</b>	Monday, March 16
<b>Time:</b>	3:30 - 4:30 pm
<b>Location:</b>	RNS 310

**About the talk:** Parallel and distributed computing is all around us, and has many faces. All of today's computers use parallel computing, for example when a computer has more than one "core," or uses a graphics card to show screen images. Also, we all rely daily on web services such as search or maps that are constructed using distributed computing, in which multiple networked computers interact with each other to perform operations. This talk features five presentations from the Interim 2015 Parallel and Distributed Computing course (PDC, CS 300) that demonstrate many faces of PDC, including multi-core, GPU, and cluster computing, with topics ranging from the Pi Calculus theory of message-based communication to applications to circle packing in Physics, machine learning/neural networks, scheduling of music lessons, and textual analysis of YouTube video comments.

Xandra Best is a mathematics and computer science major who spends most of her free time dancing and singing. David Crisler is a freshman Math major who plays oboe in the Norseman Band and likes a well-cooked omelet. Chris Hinton is a first-year Math and CS major who has special interests in computer languages, and will probably look into Linguistics. Matthew Johnson is a math and computer science double major who also enjoys foreign languages,

board and video games, and drawing. Joseph Jung is a math, physics, and computer science major interested in using computation to solve unique problems. Eric Oseid is a sophomore computer science major who enjoys reading novels and playing guitar in his spare time.

## MSCS Recital next Wednesday!

In case you forgot, this year's MSCS Recital will be held at 7:00pm on this Wednesday, March 18th, in Ytterboe Lounge. The event is a relaxed evening of food, fun and amusement, meant to bring the MSCS students, staff, and faculty together to enjoy each other's company for the evening. Come and marvel at the various talents of your favorite professors and peers! Nothing that happens will be on the test, we promise.

## GRE Math review sessions

**Who:** Junior and Senior Math Majors Expecting to Take The GRE Math Subject Test

**What:** An informal gathering to prepare for the exam.

**Where:** RNS 204

**When:** Every Monday, 7:00pm to 8:00pm.

**Why:** To make sure you get into the best possible graduate school.

## Kryptos 2015

Kryptos is a contest centered around the breaking, or cryptanalysis, of ciphers (secret writing). Each challenge presents contestants with a brief scenario together with some ciphertext (encoded message). The goal is to discover the original English plaintext message!

Any and all undergraduate students may compete as an individual or as part of a team with no more

than two other students. Each individual or team must have a faculty sponsor in order to register. The contest runs April 16-20, with contestants working and submitting answers remotely. For more information, visit <http://www.cwu.edu/math/kryptos/>.

## and in Honor of Pi Day...

### a lot of Pi Jokes

A mathematician was musing over her homework with her friend, the baker. As they worked, the mathematician mumbled:

"Pi r squared..."

The baker, wanting to be helpful, leaned in and said "No, pies are round, cakes are square!"

Who was the roundest knight of the round table?  
Sir Cumference... He ate too much Pi!

What's the mathematician's favorite animal?  
The PI-thon!

The worst thing about getting hit in the face with pi is that it never ends.

What do you get when you take the sun and divide its circumference by its diameter?

Pi in the sky.

4 and  $\sqrt{2}$  were at a party with some of the other numbers, having a good time, when they got separated.  $\sqrt{2}$  walked around, mingling with some integers and cutting a rug with a few complex numbers, before deciding to go to the bathroom. When  $\sqrt{2}$  got there, they found there was a line, and 4 was waiting at the back!

"Hey! I wondered where you'd gotten off to, how's it going?" said  $\sqrt{2}$ .

"Awful" replied 4, "I got stuck talking to Pi."

"What's so bad about that?" asked  $\sqrt{2}$ , "Pi's such a useful constant."

"Yeah, but he's a real bore in conversation. The guy's clearly irrational and he just goes on and on..."

What was Sir Isaac Newton's favorite dessert?  
Apple pi!

*(Answers to last week's riddles: a yardstick; the umpire and the catcher)*

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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](mailto:greimann@stolaf.edu)*