

## UNDERGRADUATE MATHEMATICS SEMINAR

Seminar, seminar, and seminar. That's right! Three seminars in succession. For details on each of the upcoming seminars, please check the announcements posted throughout Bailey Hall.

**DATE:** **FRIDAY, April 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Time &** **4:00pm** – Refreshments in the Math Common Room, **Bailey 204**

**Location:** **4:15pm** – Seminar in **Bailey 207**

**DATE:** **MONDAY, April 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Time &** **4:00pm** – Refreshments in the Math Common Room, **Bailey 204**

**Location:** **4:15pm** – Seminar in **Bailey 207**

**DATE:** **WEDNESDAY, April 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Time &** **4:00pm** – Refreshments in the Math Common Room, **Bailey 204**

**Location:** **4:15pm** – Seminar in **Bailey 207**

### Hudson River Undergraduate Mathematics Conference: A Huge Success!

The following article, by **Sara Block**, is reprinted with permission from the [Concordiensis](#).

Union College hosted the 16th annual Hudson River Undergraduate Mathematics Conference this past Saturday April 18. The conference is a one-day event held annually each spring at various colleges in New York and New England on a rotating basis.

The goal of the HRUMC as stated on its website is to “provide undergraduates with the experience of attending and/or presenting at a professional mathematics meeting designed primarily with the student in mind.” This year the conference hosted over 160 talks given by representatives of 29 institutions and was attended by more than 370 participants.

Registration began at 8:30 in the Nott Memorial and participants were invited to have breakfast at Hale House following check-in. The rest of the day consisted of three sessions of mathematics presentations with a variety of options to choose from. Each session had 17-18 different seminar options for participants to choose from and attend.

After the first session Union College President Stephen Ainlay gave a welcoming address in Memorial Chapel before Sarah Britton '09 and Ben Miles '10, student members of the HRUMC Steering Committee, introduced the plenary speaker Erica Flappan. Flappan came from Pomona College in Claremont, CA to give a talk entitled “When Topology Meets Chemistry.”

Mathematics Professor Paul Friedman chaired the Steering Committee with the aid of Britton, Miles, other Union College professors as well as professors from other New York and New England colleges and universities. Together, the group has been working on the conference for

over year.

“The Steering Committee chose the speaker a year ago because generally speakers need to be booked a year in advance,” Miles said. However, Britton and Miles did not take part in the selection of Flappan because they did not begin assisting with conference preparations until early January of this year.

Union College presenters and organizers were pleased with the social and intellectual opportunities afforded by the conference. “I really enjoyed the talks and learned new things,” said Union College mathematics Professor Jue Wang. She presented on ultrasound imaging and inverse problems, which allowed her to meet a professor from West Point who was working on the same research. She also chaired a four-person talk session in the afternoon about fluid flows.

“We had active interactions throughout the session,” she said.

However, “the conference has way more students than faculty giving presentations,” said Union College mathematics Professor Bill Zwicker. This conference is designed to allow undergraduate mathematics students a chance to present, perhaps for the first time. “One of the students told me that it was her first time giving presentation at a conference; she was nervous but definitely enjoyed it,” said Wang. There were six Union students who presented at the conference including Britton who presented her mathematics research from her senior thesis.

The conference organizers were also happy with the way the conference came together. “The conference went very smoothly,” said Miles.

“The conference was a great success!” said Wang, who attributes the success to the efforts of Union faculty, students, and volunteers. “Without their dedication and enthusiasm, we would not have successfully established at the conference an atmosphere that sends the message ‘Welcome to the mathematics community!’” she said.

## Union Student Scores Well in Rochester Olympiad

Congratulation to **Ben Miles, '10**, for his outstanding performance on the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual University of Rochester Olympiad, administered March 28, 2009. Ben had a near perfect score of 38 out of 40 points, good enough to tie for fifth place out to the 96 participants. Way to go, Ben!

## Problem of the Newsletter: April 24, 2009

Congratulations to **Schuyler Smith** for submitting a correct solution to the most recent Problem of the Newsletter – which was the first problem in the Rochester Olympiad. You can see his winning solution on the bulletin boards in Bailey Hall.

**Here is this week's problem:** Here's a quickie – try to solve within six minutes: Show  $4x^3+6x^2+4x+1$  is composite for all natural numbers  $x$ .

Professor Friedman will accept solutions to this problem until 12:00 noon Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Email your solution to him ([friedmap@union.edu](mailto:friedmap@union.edu)) or put it in his mailbox in the Math Department's office on the second floor of Bailey Hall.