COLLOQUIUM

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Lexical Ambiguity in Statistics: The Cases of Random and Spread

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10:20 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Refreshments: 10:00 a.m.

Abstract

Language plays a crucial role in the classroom. The use of specialized language in a domain can cause a subject to seem more difficult to students than it actually is. When words that are part of everyday English are used differently in a domain, these words are said to have lexical ambiguity. Studies in other fields, such as mathematics and chemistry education suggest that in order to help students learn vocabulary instructors should exploit the lexical ambiguity of the words. This talk will present results from parts of a sequence of studies designed to understand the effects of and develop techniques for exploiting lexical ambiguities in the statistics classroom. The presentation will focus on research results from pre-and post-testing students' definitions, both everyday and statistical, of the words random and spread and will present suggestions and activities that instructors can use to exploit the lexical ambiguity associated with the words random and spread.

To request an interpretor or other accomodations for people with disabilities, please call the Department of Statistics and Probability at 517-355-9589.