

# Smalltalk: A Student-Faculty Colloquium

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# What this talk is about

- Smalltalk (2008) — our department's colloquium
- PD Points (2009)— a means for ensuring attendance at Smalltalk and other events

# Why PD Points?

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- Many of our students won't do things unless required
- Provides a socially acceptable reason to participate in department activities

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# Sample form

|  |
|--|
| <b>Class:</b> Comp.<br>Security/Applied Stat |
| <b>Semester:</b> Spring 2015                 |
| <b>Goal:</b> 8 PD Points (****)              |
| <b>Due:</b> May 1, 2014                      |

| PD Activity  | PD Point value   |
|--|------------------|
| attend an approved* short talk                       | 1                |
| attend an approved* longer talk                      | 2                |
| attend the SPARC festival poster session             | 1                |
| attend the SPARC festival lightning talks session    | 1-2**            |
| attend a professional conference                     | 3-5**            |
| be an active member of MAA/ACM                       | 2                |
| be a member of the national MAA/ACM                  | 1                |
| present a Smalltalk                                  | 4                |
| present a poster or lightning talk at SPARC Festival | 4                |
| present at a professional conference                 | 8                |
| participate in the COMAP competition                 | 6                |
| participate in an approved competition               | To be determined |
| other pre-approved activity                          | To be determined |

\*Approved talks are Math, CS or Science. They can be off-campus talks.

\*\* 1 point for 1/2 hr, 2 points for 1 hour or more

\*\*\* 3 points for one day, 5 points for entire conference

\*\*\*\* The required points correspond to 5 percentage points of your course grade. Every PD point beyond the requirements adds 0.2 percentage points to your course grade, with a maximum of 15 additional PD Points.

| Activity                 | Date | PD Points |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|
| Visualization Small talk | 2/12 | 1         |
| COMAP Presentations      | 2/25 | 1         |
| Jacobian Conjecture      | 3/19 | 1         |
| SPARCKeynote speaker     | 4/22 | 2         |
| SPARCLightning Talks (4) | 4/22 | 2         |
| SPARCLightning Talks (3) | 4/23 | 1         |

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- Nearly every class in department requires them
- Minimal amount of extra work for professors

# Point Values

- Attend a Smalltalk – 1 point
- National ACM or MAA student member – 1 point
- Attend SPARC Festival activities – 1-2 points each
- Active member of math or computer science club – 2 points
- Attend an hour-long invited speaker talk – 2 points
- Attend a professional conference – 3-5 points
- Give a Smalltalk or presentation at SPARC – 4 points
- Participate in COMAP – 6 points
- Present at a professional conference – 8 points

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- Get students involved in something outside the classroom
- Promote informal interaction between faculty and students
- Give students a venue to present their work
- Give students practice in public speaking

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- About 55% of student talks are on topics of their own interest
- Student reasons:
  - Enjoy giving talks
  - recognize benefits
  - 4 PD Points for talk
  - ducks

# Ducks



- Student talks:

- BLAND: A More Interesting Method for Crystallographic Data Analysis
- Unit Bar Visibility Number of Graphs
- Maple's Magic Money Tree
- The Imitation Game
- The RSA Algorithm: A Method of Public Key Cryptography
- Ex uno plures: Virtualization using VirtualBox
- Windows, Through Time: A Look at the Evolution of the Windows Operating System from 1985 Onward
- A Series of Unfortunate Events: If the Trees Were Glass
- Introduction to Circuits
- The COMAP Math Modeling Competition

- Faculty/Other talks:

- Questions of Prime Importance
- The Hardest Problem
- Two Planar Curves: Geometry and Simulation
- The Mathematics of Bitcoin
- Minimal Surfaces: An Exploration with Soap Films
- The Perfect Poker Player
- Logic: Axioms, Logical Systems and Completeness

# Scene from a Smalltalk



# Helpful things to know for coordinating talks

- Responsibilities (less than an hour per week):
  - Help in finding topics for students
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- Coordinator should be a faculty member
- Helps having a few people who can give talks on short notice
- Students are more willing to present when a professor suggests it to them
- Best talks are by students presenting material they enjoy; worst talks are by students required as part of a course

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- PD Points: A way to ensure attendance at events
- Also easy to administer
- I hope you will consider this as a way to increase student engagement in your department.