

MSCS Mess

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Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science

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This Week's Colloquium

Title: How a throwaway idea became a dissertation

Speaker: Alfred Furth

Date: Thursday, November 10th

Time: 2:30pm

Location: RNS 310

About the Talk: Finding a new application for an old concept is a tried and true method for developing research projects that lead to theses and dissertations. This talk describes how a solution to a business problem morphed into a dissertation research project. Forecasting closure and default rates for CAPITAL's client bank portfolios is a key component of our business. The historical models and algorithms used to predict these rates were unable to capture changes in the portfolio due to the limitations of their base assumptions. To solve this problem, a data driven approach using macroeconomic conditions and account level information within a survival model framework improved estimates which resulted in improved profitability for CAPITAL's clients.

Biography: Alfred Furth serves as Vice President of Portfolio Analytics and Risk at CAPITAL Card Services, Inc in Sioux Falls, SD. He leads the statistical analysis and risk management activities at CAPITAL including proprietary scorecard development and management, marketing activities and account management.

Dr. Furth brings over 11 years of analytical experience to CAPITAL. He has been published numerous times including his own self-directed research in predictive modeling and clinical trial analysis. His extensive knowledge and experience with analytical tools and techniques began during his tenure at the Mayo Clinic providing support to the Cancer Research Center.

Alfred graduated from St. Olaf with a Mathematics degree and Statistics concentration. He has an Master's in Statistics from Iowa State University and a Doctorate in Computational Science and Statistics from South Dakota State University. Alfred enjoys reading, sports and spending time with his wife and three children.

Students interested in meeting with Dr Furth following the colloquium should email Prof Ziegler-Graham (kziegler@stolaf.edu).

Please Return Settlers of Catan

If you have borrowed this game since last spring, it is time to return it. No questions asked, just please return it to the bookcase on the 6th floor of the math building in the middle of the night sometime. The game is expensive and is intended to be available for all MSCS students to enjoy, not just a few.

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