Michigan Math Club

Thursday at 4pm in the Commons

Free Pizza and Pop

Counting Conics

Jesse Kass

Abstract for 30 September 2010

A classical problem in enumerative geometry is to count the number of conic curves that are tangent to 5 given conics. During the 19th century, Jakob Steiner proved the surprising result that there are exactly 7776 such conics. Later, he proved the even more surprising result that this result is wrong. In my talk, I will talk about how plane curves intersect and how Steiner came up with his count.