

Michigan Math Club

Thursday at 4pm in the Nesbitt Room

Free Pizza and Pop

A Brief History of the Least Time

Anthony Bloch

Abstract for 17 October

In this talk I will discuss aspects of the theory and history of variational principles in optics and mechanics including Fermat's Principle of the least time, the theory of the brachistochrone and cycloids, Maupertuis and the least action principle, Hamilton's principle, and modern work in optimal control and sub-Riemannian geometry.

