

Undergraduate Math Club

Winter 2007

2nd floor Nesbitt Common Room

Thursday, January 18, 4:10-5:00pm

(free pizza and pop, as always)

Describing Real Numbers

Professor Marty Weissman

(University of California, Santa Cruz)

Abstract

Unfortunately, there are far more real numbers than ways of describing them. Even worse, there are far, far more sets of real numbers than ways of describing them. So should we care about indescribable numbers?

We will approach real numbers from a constructivist point of view. Can we prove more, if we restrict our attention to describable things? This talk will provide an introduction to work of Tarski, and a recent conjecture of Kontsevich and Zagier.