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Edwin B. Smith

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Usefulness of Math Topic of February Science Cafe

UM professor Sandra Spiroff to discuss applications of mathematics

FEBRUARY 14, 2018 BY EDWIN B. SMITH

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UM mathematics professor Sandra Spiroff explains complex mathematical equations in the classroom. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – Practical uses for mathematical concepts is the topic for a monthly public science forum organized by the **University of Mississippi Department of Physics and Astronomy**.

The spring semester's second meeting of the Oxford Science Cafe is set for 6 p.m. Tuesday (Feb. 20) at Lusa Pastry Cafe, 2305 W. Jackson Ave. Sandra Spiroff, UM associate professor of mathematics, will discuss "When are we ever going to use this?: Some Applications of Mathematics." Admission is free.

"In 1623, Galileo Galilei wrote, 'Philosophy is written in this grand book (meaning the universe), which stands continually open to our gaze, but cannot be understood unless one first learns to comprehend the language and interpret the characters in which it is written,'" Spiroff said. "It is written in the language of mathematics, without which it is humanly impossible to understand a single word of it."

Spiroff's 40-minute presentation will explore the mathematics behind some of our everyday experiences.

"In addition, we will use technology to model the behavior we wish to understand," she said.

Spiroff earned her doctorate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research area is commutative algebra, which includes the study of rings, modules, fields, groups, and the maps and invariants associated to these constructions.

She holds a five-year grant from the Simons Foundation and is an advocate for underrepresented groups in the study of mathematics, including women and minorities. Spiroff is organizing a research conference at the Banff International Research Station in Canada for the former and participating in national and regional conferences in support of the latter.

Active in the university's globalization efforts, Spiroff will be traveling to China with a UM delegation to pursue partnerships with universities in Beijing and beyond. She is vice president of the UM Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa and faculty adviser of the American Mathematical Society Graduate Student Chapter.

For more information about Oxford Science Cafe programs, go to <http://www.phy.olemiss.edu/oxfordsciencecafe>. For more information about the Department of Physics and Astronomy, visit http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/physics_and_astronomy or call 662-915-5311.

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Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children's play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith's Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith's 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school's first African-American student.

“James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier,” a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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