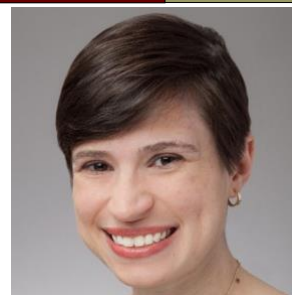


## UNDERGRADUATE MATH SEMINAR

The next math seminar on the term will be

**DATE:** THURSDAY, September 19  
**Time &** 12:30 – Refreshments in Bailey 204  
**Location:** 12:50 – 1:45 Seminar in Bailey 207



In this seminar, two Union College math alumna, **Mary Annese** (top picture) Actuarial Director, Regulatory & Contractual Reporting at Verisk, and **Melissa Epstein** (bottom picture) Senior Actuarial Analyst, Actuarial Procedures/Underwriting Solutions at Verisk, will present the following talk.

### Title: Actuarial Careers

**Abstract:** US News and World Report ranks Actuary among its 10 "Best Jobs", describing it as "actuarial science is a discipline that uses mathematics, statistics and financial theory to measure, manage and mitigate financial risk and uncertainty. Actuaries are essential to insurance companies, and they're increasingly finding niches in other businesses." (<https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/actuary>) Join us to learn more about the profession and the experiences of two Union graduates who became actuaries.



## Changes in Administration – in the Math Department

- **A new chair:** The math department is pleased to announce that as of July 1, 2024, **Professor Jue Wang** has assumed the post of chairperson of the department and has moved into the chair's office, Bailey 200A. Please join us in congratulating her on taking on this role.

In addition, we would like to thank and congratulate the outgoing chairperson, **Professor Leila Khatami**, for doing such a wonderful job leading the department for the last three years. Her chairship was a model for all who will follow. BRAVA!

- **A new administrative assistant:** In addition to a new chair, the math department has a new administrative assistant, **Sara Drummond**. Sara joined the college and the department near the end of this past spring term and has hit the ground running this fall. Sara sits in the nerve center of the department, Bailey 202 – the Bing Room – and ensures that matters big and small run smoothly in the department. To introduce herself, Sara wrote the following:

*My name is Sara Drummond and I am the new Math Department Administrative Assistant. I am thrilled and excited to serve the community here at Union College. My previous work experience ranges from an Administrator at a local medical college to a machine operator in the manufacturing sector. My hobbies and interests include world history, art, computer games, cooking, podcasts, classic literature, yoga and nutritional science. My door is always open and I look forward to working with all of you!"*



Sara Drummond

**TURN THE PAGE to read about retirements in the department and upcoming events**

**Calculus Help Center**

Sunday through Thursday nights, 7:30-10:00pm, Sorum House Seminar Room

## Math Department Retirements

- **Professor Kathryn Lesh:** After 23 years in the Union College Math Department, Professor Lesh has put down her whiteboard marker.



Professor Kathryn Lesh

After her undergraduate days at Swarthmore College and a year at Cambridge University as a Churchill Scholar, Professor Lesh received her PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1988. From there, she was at Brandeis University for three years and then went to the University of Toledo, where she became a tenured professor. In 2001, Professor Lesh came to Union College where she stayed until the beginning of this academic year.

At Union, Professor Lesh was a true teacher/scholar. In addition to teaching a wide range of courses and supervising student work, she helped bring WeBWork to Union and she introduced new courses in Cryptology. She also pursued and published her research interests, often with support from prestigious grants from the National Science Foundation. Per her cv, her research interests include unstable homotopy theory, unstable Adams spectral sequence, unstable modules over the Steenrod algebra, the Sullivan conjecture, classifying spaces, generalized homology theories, cohomology of groups, calculus of functors, the Whitehead Conjecture.

Please join us in wishing Professor Lesh well in her post-Union career and life!

- **Joanne Higgins:** As the math department's administrative assistant since 2013, Joanne was a constant bright light in the department. She assisted faculty and students alike, with tasks big and small: photocopying, emailing, maintaining aspects of the website, hiring and supervising work-study students, helping with scheduling, working with the Registrar's office, supporting the hiring process, working with finance for the department and its faculty, ... the list goes on and on. Quite simply, she helped run the department. She will be missed, and we wish her all the best in her retirement.

## Get Involved! The Math Club. Putnam Exam Preparation.

- **Math Club.** Do you like problem-solving, puzzles, or discovering the beauty behind mathematics? Whether you're a math enthusiast or just curious to learn more, the Math Club is the place for you!

The math club is a student-run organization aimed at exploring all areas of mathematics and engaging the Union community. You are invited to attend our first meeting at **1 pm on Friday, Sept. 20, in the Bailey Hall 2nd floor common room.**

Bring your curiosity, a friend, and an open mind! We look forward to seeing you there. If you are interest but cannot attend this opening meeting, please reach out to the Math Club's faculty advisor, **Professor Rylan Gajek-Leonard** ([gajeklr@union.edu](mailto:gajeklr@union.edu))

- **Putnam Exam Preparation.** The William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition, aka, The Putnam Exam, is an annual contest for undergraduate students across the United States and Canada. Participants in the contest spend 6 hours (in two sittings, a morning session and an afternoon session) trying to solve 12 problems. Problems on the "exam" are generally *quite challenging*, but not specialized. In other words, they are accessible to students who may or may not have taken advanced courses. If you enjoy "playing with math", check this out!

**Professor Grant Moles** will be leading fun problem-solving sessions on **Thursdays at 4pm in Bailey 207.** We hope to see you there this week, **September 19.**