Science of Information Summer School at Purdue University

The Info-Metrics Institute sponsored seven of our PhD (and post graduate) students for participating in the 2013 Science of Information Summer School June 4-7, 2013 at Purdue University. Below, participants provide their experiences and thoughts on similar future programs and classes.

Purdue Summer School participants L-R: Jess Chen, Tual Tuang, Justin Grana, Woubet Kassa, Heath Henderson, George Panterov

“Inside the classroom, I gained an extensive list of topics and terms that were foreign to me. From an economics perspective, I was only familiar with maximum entropy and the information theoretic approaches to estimation. Now I realize the IT goes far beyond maximum entropy and I will be investigating such topics as source coding, relay networks, capacity and qubits.

Outside the classroom, I was able to talk about my ideas to people who are not necessarily with the structure and paradigms of economic thinking. This provided me with useful feedback and a new perspective on many concepts. I was exposed to how a game theory problem can arise naturally in solving a problem that initially has no suggestion of strategic interaction.

For future students, I would suggest that they keep an open mind during the lessons but maximize the free time to discuss ideas with others over a meal or a drink at the local pub.”

-Justin Grana, American University PhD Economics candidate
“I found the conference quite useful. Although some of the topics were harder to follow than others due to the engineering character of the talks (e.g. wireless network design), the conference was an excellent opportunity to get some exposure to new ideas and people. I received some useful feedback by non-economists during an informal presentation of one of my dissertation chapters. Furthermore, the event was a great networking opportunity.

I think the institute can benefit more from future events like this one, especially if there are more social science talks in the program.”

-George Panterov (American U)

“First, the summer school was truly inter-disciplinary, as there were attendees who worked in the fields of engineering, computer science, physics, and so on. It was great to get a glimpse of the research in these other disciplines. Second, the program of the summer school reflected the inter-disciplinary nature of the attendees, as there were presentations on large-scale networks, quantum computing, complex diseases, etc. While these topics are in and of themselves interesting, for me it was most beneficial to see the tools with which problems in these areas were being explored. Finally, the summer school created plenty of opportunities to network with the other attendees. It seems as if most people thought this was the most important aspect of the program as it offered an opportunity to informally discuss our research, our interests, and any hang-ups in our work that others might provide insight into.

-Heath Henderson (Inter-American Development Bank, Info-Metrics Research Associate)