CCSU
DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
MATH CLUB AT CCSU

COLLOQUIUM

Friday, October 3
1:00 – 2:00 PM
Maria Sanford, Room 212

THE FUNDAMENTAL GROUP

MARK HOVEY

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

Algebraic topology is a method for distinguishing between different shapes using algebraic invariants. One of the first such invariants is called the fundamental group. We discuss the ideas behind the fundamental group and use it to show that if you start with two identical disks, crinkle and stretch one of them as much as you want and paste it onto the other, then at least one point on the crinkled disk is pasted to the same point it would have been if you had not crinkled it at all.

You do not have to know what a group is to understand this talk.