

2012 CBMS-NSF Conference:

Mathematics of the Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Emerging areas of mathematical interest are coming from the social and behavioral sciences. What makes these concerns, which are motivated by issues in economics, sociology, political science, and psychology, of particular mathematical interest is that many standard mathematical tools were developed in response to questions from the physical and engineering sciences, which means that often they are not appropriate to analyze concerns from the social and behavioral sciences. The precision of differential equations, for instance, can lead to misleading conclusions for the qualitative types of issues that arise in the social sciences; many questions about aggregation rules, such as voting rules and price models in economics, have not been answered.

In other words, to make advances in the mathematical social and behavioral sciences, there is a need to develop different forms of mathematical approaches. The theme of this series is to introduce and describe a portion of them.

A goal of these lectures, when introducing these new kinds of mathematical questions and approaches, is to interest the participants into exploring these issues. An expectation is that some of the participants will leave the lecture series armed with the necessary mathematical structures to start making research contributions on these topics.



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