

The Valpo Path to Success

Lara Pudwell
Valparaiso University

Scholarship Day
February 6, 2010

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- Humanities Minor/ Christ College Scholar

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- webmaster for Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, member of Chapel altar guild

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- returned to Valpo as a faculty member in Fall 2008

Why makes Valpo special?

- 1 personal attention
- 2 colloquium experience
- 3 research program



- Professors get to know you individually.
- Math major classes can be as small as 4–5 students.
- Professors help individual students get involved in activities that highlight their strengths.

What is colloquium?

All Mathematics majors participate in the colloquium to learn to use mathematical writing software and to give mathematical talks.

Computer Science majors take CS 493 (Seminar in Professional Practices) as a parallel experience.

Actuarial Science majors take ACRS 325 (Actuarial Modeling) as a parallel experience.

This might sound scary at first, but there are a number of pros!

- Get to know other math and computer science majors.
- Get to know math faculty members.
- Practice giving talks.
- Practice writing technical papers.
- Learn about interesting topics.

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Who does research at Valpo?

- *All* math/cs majors are invited!
- Students of all backgrounds participate.

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- 3 Senior year (again!)
 - “cover pebbling”
 - worked with Betsy (French major, now CSR), Paul (Chemistry major), Tammy (math/cs major, now computer programmer)
 - published 1 paper in math journal



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- Professor Caristi (computer science)
 - “catch the cat” game
 - how to make the cat smarter? how to make the human smarter?
 - under what circumstances are there winning strategies for either the cat or the player?

- research program is built for *all* majors, regardless of focus or future plans!
- experience real-world problem solving
- experience with technical writing/presentations
- opportunities to travel for presentations