UC SANTA BARBARA

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Exploring the Data Universe

The availability of data at a higher spatial, temporal and thematic resolution is changing science and society. Contrary to popular belief, however, this change is fueled by the synthesis of heterogeneous data and not by volume alone.

Interestingly, according to experts, the resulting data universe as a dynamic system of technology and society is barely understood. This year's Harold J. Plous Lecture, presented by Plous Award recipient Krzysztof Janowicz, assistant professor of geography at UC Santa Barbara, will demonstrate how data observatories can explore this universe, and how semantic signatures enable scientists to study human behavior.

Janowicz's talk, titled "Exploring the Data Universe with Semantic Signatures," will begin at 4 p.m. Wednesday, May 13, in the McCune Conference Room, 6020 Humanities and Social Sciences Building. It is free and open to the public.

A specialist in semantics and ontology as they relate to the ability to search the Internet and retrieve, translate and name geographic phenomena based on their location, Janowicz came to UCSB from Pennsylvania State University in 2011. His work is also relevant to research that involves big data, searching for patterns in large observational or behavioral databases. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Münster in Germany, where he also worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Geoinformatics.

Over the past three years, Janowicz has authored 36 journal articles, proceedings and book chapters, as well as several editorials and reports. According to Google Scholar, his work has been cited almost 1,400 times, which represents an increase of 500 citations in one year. In addition, since joining the UCSB faculty, he has been awarded 11 grants totaling over $400,000.

The Harold J. Plous Award is one of the university's most prestigious faculty honors. It is given annually to an assistant professor from the humanities, social sciences or natural sciences who has shown exceptional achievement in research, teaching, and service to the university. Presented by the College of Letters and Science, the award was established in 1957 to honor the memory of Harold J. Plous, an assistant professor of economics.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.