UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

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Big Data, Big Ideas

With the surge of devices that generate enormous amounts of information (think Internet of Things) and major advances in the computing power of our machines, we are awash in an unprecedented amount of data. This phenomenon, in turn, opens up possibilities for how this data may be used, and how it can be handled.

And it will all be addressed in a new lecture series at UC Santa Barbara.

Created by faculty members in UCSB's Department of Statistics and Applied Probability (PSTAT), leaders in the diverse fields that generate and rely on massive data sets will visit campus to discuss hot topics and emerging trends in the field of data science.

"The goal is to promote the campus-wide effort to contribute to research and teaching in the area of data science from theory to applications," said PSTAT professor Jean-Pierre Fouque, one of the creators of the lecture series.

Designed to be accessible to a wide audience, from undergraduate and graduate students to faculty and the general public the lectures are set to occur at least once per quarter. All are free and open to the public.

"We are delighted that more cross-disciplinary conversations are developing around this lecture series," said Sang-Yun Oh, another PSTAT faculty member behind the lecture series. "We hope they will contribute to advancing UCSB to become one of the leaders in data science research and education."

The series kicks off Wednesday, October 25, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at UCSB's Campbell Hall, with Peter Norvig, a director of research at Google, Inc. In the talk "Creating Software with Machine Learning: Challenges and Promise," Norvig will discuss software and applications built not through programming, scripts, rules and code, but by an iterative process that "trains" a machine to perform a task until it does so correctly. His lecture will also be livestreamed.

A co-author of "Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach," which has become the leading textbook in its field, Norvig has a scientific career that includes work at NASA's Ames Research Center, Harlequin, Inc., and Sun Microsystems. In his teaching career, he developed an extremely popular online course in artificial intelligence at Silicon Valley think tank Singularity University. He is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, the Association for Computing Machinery, the California Academy of Science and the American Academy of Arts & Science

The 2017-18 Distinguished Lecture Series in Data Science was developed in collaboration with Santa Barbara semantic technology startup GRAPHIQ (recently acquired by Amazon.com) and the UCSB Center for Financial Mathematics and Actuarial Research. Future lectures in this series will be presented by Ron Kaplan, chief scientist and vice-president at Amazon.com; Stéphane Mallat, professor of applied mathematics at École Normale Supérieure in France; Afsheen Afshar, chief data science officer at J.P. Morgan; and Yann LeCun, director of AI research at Facebook.

Tags
Artificial Intelligence

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.