West Chester University Mathematics Colloquium
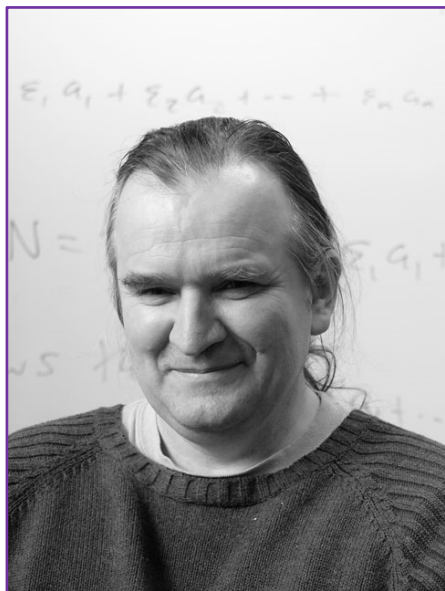
Presents

James McLaughlin
West Chester University

What is Mathematics?

Time & Location
Wednesday, November 1, 2023
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm
25 University Avenue, Room 162

Dr. James McLaughlin is a Professor of Mathematics at West Chester University. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois in 2002 and has worked at WCU since 2005. Dr. McLaughlin is the author of over 50 papers and the book "Topics and methods in q-series."

Abstract: This is non-specialist talk aimed in part at non-mathematicians who are curious about what mathematics is, and partly at students interested in mathematics who are also wondering what mathematicians do apart from teaching, and are also curious about the nature of mathematical research. Thus, there are several purposes in giving this talk:

1. To say a little about what mathematics is, from a philosophical point of view.
2. To attempt to provide a picture for non-mathematicians of the kinds of things mathematicians spend their time on.
3. To attempt to provide a picture for students thinking of pursuing a career in mathematics of how mathematicians spend their time.
4. To demonstrate how most mathematicians work in a very localized area of mathematics.
5. To provide an overview of the particular area of mathematics in which I do research.
6. To indicate the importance of computer algebra systems to my own research.