

Why Benford's Law?

What: Bi-State Math Colloquium

When: Wednesday, October 16, 4:00PM

Where: Loras College, Hennessy 250

Who: Dr. Matt Rissler

Have you ever wondered how the number of followers on Twitter is distributed? Is your number of followers more likely to start with a 1 or an 8? Benford's Law describes the probability that the leading digit of a number is each of the nine possibilities. Normally when Benford's Law is introduced, it appears as an empirical distribution that has uses for detecting accounting fraud. In this talk, we will look at why the Benford distribution has the values it does.

Matt Rissler is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at Loras College. He managed to complete a PhD in mathematical biology at the University of Notre Dame while playing lots of ultimate Frisbee. His interests include sports statistics and modeling just about anything.