

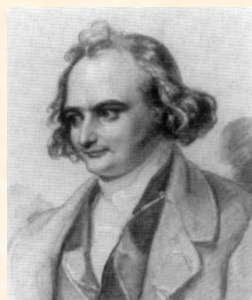
The Oregon Distinguished Math Lectures for Students

Lectures by mathematicians for undergraduates

(and anyone else who wants to have fun learning math)

The Jacobi-Legendre Correspondence: A Vignette in the History of Mathematics

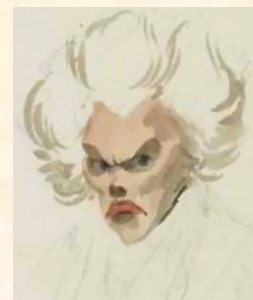
Farshid Hajir (University of Massachusetts)



Tuesday, May 10, 2016

5:15-6:15 PM

Straub 145



Once upon a time, a recent math PhD (in Germany) got up the courage to write to one of the world's greatest mathematicians (in France) about the problems he was working on regarding elliptic functions. The Master wrote back a few days later at length and with much praise for the youngster's work. Thus began the correspondence between Carl Gustav Jacob von Jacobi (the youngster) and Adrien-Marie Legendre (the Master). The correspondence is filled with lessons about the process of mathematical discovery, about how mathematicians inspire and compete with each other, as well as wonderful math. This lecture - largely a talk in the history of math - will tour highlights in the Jacobi-Legendre correspondence, famous for richness in mathematical gems. Naturally, the ulterior motive is to introduce the audience to elliptic functions and other mathematical objects that fascinated Jacobi and Legendre.