

Part II (viewable by the public)

Basic Information

Institution Name:

University of Western Ontario (UWO)

Conference Vision

1. What is your vision for the conference?

Our Organizing Committee's vision for CUMC at Western is to create an inclusive, bilingual and interdisciplinary opportunity for undergraduate students in the Mathematical Sciences to discuss and explore their research interests, while making lasting connections with their colleagues. We commit to ensuring that CUMC at Western is a welcoming experience for all attendees, regardless of their backgrounds. In addition, we will strongly encourage students from various academic backgrounds and disciplines to attend the conference. Our vision for the conference will be reflected and emphasized in our advertising materials. We hope to attract a diverse body of attendees, by advertising the conference to a wider audience, and by subsidizing for travel costs for participants who demonstrate financial need. In addition, we hope to draw out many Western professors to the conference, to give attendees more chances for networking. Furthermore, in order to maximize participation and build a strong sense of camaraderie, we will emphasize the non-competitiveness of the CUMC. We also believe it is of paramount importance that every Canadian undergraduate student can benefit from CUMC, and as such, we guarantee that the conference and all related communications will be fully bilingual in every aspect. In addition, we would ensure that all events, both on- and off-campus, are accessible to all attendees, including attendees with disabilities.

We recognize that connections are made not only in formal events, but also in informal events. Networking sessions regarding the transition from undergraduate mathematics to graduate mathematics, and sessions regarding careers in mathematics, will be conducted to help students create professional and formal connections. Furthermore, we will make sure that CUMC at Western helps connect undergraduate students to the CMS and its resources. To build a strong sense of community among participants, we will hold many social events, where the emphasis will always be on getting to know the other attendees. We will spark meaningful discussions among attendees in every way possible, in hopes of inspiring and broadening their research interests. In an effort to do this, we plan to include and encourage interdisciplinary keynote talks and student talks. Finally, we plan to include tours of facilities where hands-on, math-related research is being performed.

In the view of Western's Organizing Committee, students attend the CUMC for 3 main reasons: to develop their academics skills, by presenting their own work and/or by learning from other students and keynote speakers; to develop important academic and professional connections; and to enjoy themselves and socialize with the other attendees. In order to maximize the extent to which attendees can accomplish this, we intend to take care of as much tedious work as possible for attendees, such as accommodation, transportation, food, and (in cases of students in difficult financial situations) financial support. These are discussed in

greater detail in the following questions.

2. Which aspects of the CUMC do you think work particular well and would continue to be included in your iteration of the conference?

In addition to carefully considering which elements of CUMC 2019 should be continued for 2020, we consulted attendees of CUMC 2018 for their input and recommendations. As in the past, the academic core of the conference would be student presentations, plenary lectures, and the student poster session. We found that the schedule for CUMC 2019 worked well, and would be mimicked by our Organizing Committee. In past years, no more than 4 talks were held at a time, which minimized potential conflicts between talks; this will be continued if CUMC 2020 is held at Western. In addition, as was the case with the last two editions of the CUMC, we would select 4 closely-placed rooms within one building, in which to hold the student talks. We will continue to give speakers an option to include a “suggested background” section with the abstract of their talk, in order to help students select talks best suited to their background. As was done in the past, we would ensure that no two talks on similar topics are held at the same time, so that attendees can attend all talks in their area of interest; and would ensure that no two talks in French are held at the same time, so that francophone attendees can attend all French talks.

Attendees of CUMC 2018 were fascinated by the tour of the Synchrotron, which exhibited an exciting application of modern mathematics. Similarly, our Organizing Committee aims to organize a tour of the Western’s *WindEEE Research Institute* (<https://www.eng.uwo.ca/windeee/>), the world’s first three-dimensional testing chamber for wind research, to help inspire students to seek new applications of mathematics. In addition, many students found the “Academia and Industry” panel at CUMC 2018 to be very helpful and informative, and so a similar panel would be held at Western in 2020. As in past conferences, we plan to use campus residence for accommodation, as they are relatively inexpensive and are very close to the lecture halls, making them convenient for attendees. Finally, we plan to continue using different colours of T-shirts to distinguish organizers from attendees, as this has proved effective in past conferences. As was done for CUMC 2019, our conference handbook would include a section on places to eat and drink in London, focusing on places nearby campus; and would also include a campus map, clearly labelling the conference-relevant building. In addition, we would continue to have volunteers and/or members of the Organizing Committee lead students between buildings, in order to prevent students from getting lost.

3. Which aspects of the CUMC would you improve upon and how? Are there any new ideas that you would like to bring to the conference?

We understand that most attendees would be visiting the Western campus for their first time, and so our Organizing Committee would give a campus tour on each of the first two days of the conference. These tours will put special emphasis on the conference-relevant buildings. We will also have the closing banquet take place on campus, so that it is convenient to find and attend. Furthermore, we would increase the availability of food for people with dietary

restrictions, to ensure that all attendees can enjoy a complete meal at every conference meal.

Western's Organizing Committee believes that socializing is an important part of the conference for attendees. For that reason, all our events will have a significant social component, and social events will be held on every night of the conference. For example, we will hold an "Explore the Downtown Night", where attendees will explore Downtown London's various eats and entertainment. We will ensure that no more than one activity is held at a time, and will hold structured activities rather than having attendees explore the town themselves, so that all attendees have the chance to get to know each other. In addition, at the end of each keynote speaker's presentation, the snacks will be set up directly outside the room, in order to allow attendees to network with the speaker immediately after the talk.

In order to make getting around London as easy as possible, we will work to obtain free bus passes (i.e. London Transit Convention Passes) for all attendees. In addition, we will aim to hold all conference events (except the closing banquet) in just 2-3 closely-placed buildings, to prevent students from getting lost, or coming late to events. In addition to having volunteers direct attendees between buildings, we will direct attendees to classfind.com, a site with visual directions to certain rooms on campus. To minimize attendees' commutes, and to make for easy accommodation, we will plan with Western's student residences so that each attendee has the option of staying on-campus, and at a reduced price. The Organizing Committee has offered to provide their contact information, including the President's cell phone number, to attendees, so that immediate assistance is available throughout the conference.

At CUMC 2019, many student presenters had difficulties in connecting their laptops to the overhead projector for slideshow presentations. As a result, many student talks went overtime, or ended without covering all the presentation material. In order to prevent this problem for 2020, the Organizing Committee plans to have laptops already connected to the overhead system in all 4 presentation rooms, so that students can choose to simply use the laptop already attached. In addition, since it is common some student talks to draw very large audiences, we will ensure that each of the 4 rooms have enough capacity to fit at least half of the conference attendees. Finally, we will give student presenters and keynote speakers the option to submit their slideshows to the Organizing Committee, which will then make all the slideshows available to conference attendees, so that attendees can review topics of interest.

4. What are your proposed dates for the conference and why?

Our proposed conference dates are July 8-12, 2020. We plan to begin the conference late in the afternoon on the first day and end the conference early in the afternoon on the last day, to allow for travel time. The dates chosen are ideal because the number of academic commitments are minimized during this time. Furthermore, these dates do not conflict with any other undergraduate math conferences in Canada, with convocation ceremonies, or with holidays. Moreover, these dates ensure that students with summer research positions have worked for at least two months, thereby strengthening their poster/talk for the conference. These particular dates also allow the conference attendees to celebrate Sunfest. Sunfest is beloved by Londoners as it brings many different cultures together downtown to display their traditions, clothes and

customs. Sunfest includes a wide variety of food stands, fantastic festive musicians, cultural dancing and vendors. Another benefit to these dates is that the conferences that have been placed in mid-July have historically been successful, and considering London's great weather, it will be a great time to host a conference.

5. What are the unique aspects of your proposed conference location (institution, city, etc), that would add to the conference experience and why?

Western is a historic campus, dating back to 1878, and includes a breathtaking combination of old-style and new-style architecture. One particularly impressive example of Western's dedication to architecture is The Great Hall, which is an exquisite dining hall located in one of Western's oldest buildings and would be a perfect place to host the closing banquet. Moreover, Western has an abundance of lecture halls equipped with cutting-edge technology, which makes for effective talks of all sizes. In addition, Western has large groups of researchers and top-of-the-line research facilities for various fields related to mathematics, such as medicine and engineering. For example, Western contains one of the country's largest medical schools; the Robarts Research Institute; a wind tunnel for engineering research; and the WindEEE Research Institute. These facilities would make for fascinating math-related tours or interdisciplinary keynote lectures. Western campus, and London in general, have very friendly social atmospheres, and Western's kind and helpful faculty and staff will be a major asset to the conference.

Our campus' aesthetic is something that we are very proud of. The beautiful shrubbery, flowers, and leaves at Western really show why London is known as the Forest City. Moreover, Western provides more extensive access to fascinating animals than do some provincial parks. The large amounts of greenspace and shade also make it ideal for a barbeque or any outdoor event. Springbank Park, one of London's many beautiful forested areas, would be an excellent site to visit as part of the conference.

London's downtown, which is nearby campus and very accessible from campus, becomes a vibrant centre of countless festivals and other activities each summer. Its Richmond Row contains a wide selection of restaurants, stores, and entertainment venues; its Covent Garden Market hosts a variety of unique stores and eateries; and its Victoria Park is a prime location for relaxation and holds some of the most exciting events in Canada, including the aforementioned Sunfest.

Western campus is also home to a variety of restaurants for casual dining. Western prides itself in The Grad Club, an old-fashioned bar that is laid-back in style but boasts draft beer, cider, global eats, trivia nights, board games, and music. The Grad Club is located in the math building and would then be a convenient place for students to enjoy meals or snacks. As such, the Organizing Committee would plan to ensure that it stays open for the conference weekend. Western also has: The Spoke, a fun spot with great vibes and Western-famous bagels; The Wave, a relaxed eatery with a large menu, which stays true to the restaurant feel with exceptional catering; and Einstein's, a science-themed café with gourmet coffee and snacks.

Western offers a wide selection for on-campus living, including 9 comfortable residences in main campus alone, all of which are equipped with top-of-the-line facilities and technology. Furthermore, there is a multitude of off-campus accommodation near Western campus, including hotels, much of which is available at low costs. Because London is a well-designed medium-sized city, commuting to campus from nearby is usually very short, whether by car, by bus, or on foot.

6. How will you do your best to ensure the conference attracts as many attendees as in the past or more?

We recognize that an effective and coherent marketing campaign is crucial to high attendance. In order to attract as many attendees from across Canada as possible, we will run a marketing campaign with strong emphasis on social media, especially Facebook. Our portfolio of CUMC advertising material will consist of various graphics and videos aiming to inspire and empower young mathematicians. Furthermore, we commit to providing a bilingual experience for attendees by making all advertising materials available in both English and French.

All our advertising material will be created with a touch of modern design, by one of the members of our team, who is proficient in graphic design, including Photoshop. Important information and documents such as registration forms will be available on the website well in advance of the due dates. We will ensure that our website is ready in early June and is updated frequently. The speakers list and the conference guide will be published the day after registration closes. This will give student presenters advance notice regarding which date they will be speaking on.

In order to maximize our reach, we will establish a direct connection with Mathematics departments and clubs across the country and promote the event to all students in Mathematical Sciences, not just students in Mathematics. Universities and clubs will be contacted by emails in January, and reminded in May, in order to provide sufficient planning time for attendees. In addition, we will have our posters physically distributed at as many schools as possible. We will also contact previous attendees, as this is one of the most effective ways of increasing attendance. The advertising campaign will be launched in January and will run until early July, with greater coverage in May.

Aside from creating an attractive marketing campaign, convenience for attendees is also critical in ensuring as many people attend the CUMC as possible. Our selection of dates, July 8-12, will be favourable to potential attendees, as it has been checked scrupulously to make it as convenient as possible for undergraduate students and professors to attend. We will also provide travel and accommodation subsidies to minimize to financial disincentives students face when considering attending CUMC. In addition, by seeking significant sponsorship, we would minimize the registration fee (we are currently targeting \$50), without decreasing the quality of the conference.