


VOICES: Conference on Teaching STEM with Music, September 27-28, 2017

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VOICES: Conference on Teaching STEM with Music

SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2017

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This first-of-its-kind, online-only conference will explore the use of music to teach STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) at the college level (including AP courses). Presentations will be live-streamed from the conference website, <https://www.causeweb.org/voices>. Online registrations (for only \$10 apiece!) will be accepted at the conference website until the conclusion of the conference on September 28, 2017.

Readers of this journal may have encountered educational mathematics and statistics songs intended for classroom use, see for instance [1] by Lawrence M. Lesser. However, readers may not be aware of the extent of scholarship and activity in this area (see, for instance, [2]). Along these lines, a trio of statistics educators — Larry Lesser of UTEP, Dennis Pearl of Penn State, and John Weber of Georgia State — have an ongoing National Science Foundation grant for Project SMILES (Student-Made Interactive Learning with Educational Songs) in Introductory Statistics. The overall goal of this project is to make songs more interactive, and thus more impactful, by inviting students to complete the lyrics with key pieces of content.

Since this approach may also have value in other STEM courses, Project SMILES is sponsoring a series of online conferences (dubbed VOICES: Virtual Ongoing Interdisciplinary Conferences on Educating with Song) devoted to teaching STEM with music. The first will be held on September 27th and 28th, 2017.

VOICES will cover both formal research studies and practical “boots-on-the-ground” ideas on effectively communicating the ideas of STEM through song. It will include a variety of formats: a keynote presentation by Lynda Williams (the “Physics Chanteuse”); shorter invited presentations from experts in mathematics, science, music, education, and STEM outreach; and refereed sessions, interactive virtual poster sessions, and informal “songbirds-of-a-feather” discussions. All sessions will invite the active participation of a diverse audience.

Registration for VOICES will cost only \$10 thanks to partial funding through Project SMILES.

As the chair of the VOICES organizing committee, it is my great pleasure to invite all interested students, staff, and faculty to join us online at <https://www.causeweb.org/voices> on September 27th and 28th.

References

- [1] Lesser, L.M., “Mathematical lyrics: noteworthy endeavours in education”, *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts*, Volume **8** (2014), pages 46–53.
- [2] Lesser, L.M., Pearl, D.K., and Weber, J.J., “Assessing fun items’ effectiveness in increasing learning of college introductory statistics students: results of a randomized experiment”, *Journal of Statistics Education*, Volume **24** (2016), pages 54–62.