

STS 10-01 STS Reading Lab:

MODELS

Moon Duchin Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 pm



In mathematical modeling courses, you study various discrete and continuous systems for representing and predicting real-world phenomena. In this Reading Lab, you'll read about the hidden assumptions and the social impacts of models, and you'll tackle big questions about how models construct and don't just reflect reality. What does it mean to simulate accurately? How do models become successful, and how do they become obsolete? Can a model be racist? We'll start by trying to understand what it means to make a model, with examples ranging to a scale model of the San Francisco Bay to economic decision-making to predictive policing and algorithmic sentencing. Over the course of the term we will hear about current modeling work at Tufts in areas from particle physics to voting rights.