

Meeting: 1003, Atlanta, Georgia, MAA CP X1, MAA General Contributed Paper Session, I

1003-X1-691 **Behzad D Noubary** (rnoubary@bloomu.edu), Department of Mathematics, Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA 17815, and **Reza D Noubary*** (rnoubary@bloomu.edu), Department of Mathematics, Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA 17815. *Coincidences - A motivating Theme for an Introductory Probability Course*. Preliminary report.

This article describes an idea for motivating students in an introductory probability and statistics course. The motivating theme is coincidences, and the implementation begins with a questionnaire which samples attitudes of students toward coincidences and involves them in analysis of events they consider coincidence. The questionnaire serves as a context for the instructor to develop the technical concepts of probability and statistics and provides an opportunity to increase student motivation and involvement. A representative sample of student views regarding coincidences, together with several famous and popular coincidences, are included for possible use. These examples are useful for class discussion as they are related to the concepts covered in introductory probability and statistics courses. The goal of the article is not to decide how these materials should be used by instructors, but merely provide resources for possible application. We think that the sample questionnaire presented here should be modified by the instructor to offer more insight based on the level and type of the class. (Received September 27, 2004)