



Graduate Student Blog

by and for math graduate students



The AMS Graduate Student Blog, by and for math graduate students, includes puzzles and a variety of interesting columns such as the one from March 2017 excerpted below.

blogs.ams.org/mathgradblog.

“On ‘Imposter Syndrome’”

by Tom Gannon, University of Texas at Austin

Here's how it happens: You're in graduate school and were one of the best people in your major from your school. ... It's really fun, being with people who are just as excited about math as you are. But then, a horrible thing happens. Someone, in conversation, mentions something you don't know. And not only that, but the way they talk about it suggests that anyone who knows anything about anything knows what they're talking about. Or maybe, in an even worse turn of events, this person is a professor. What are you going to do?

I've pieced together advice I've gotten from various people and compiled it here. Being a math person, I have decided to divide it into two cases (although half of the problem with imposter syndrome is actually not knowing which case you fall into).

Case 1: You are not the person that knows the least in the room.

Case 2: You really are the person that knows the least in the room.

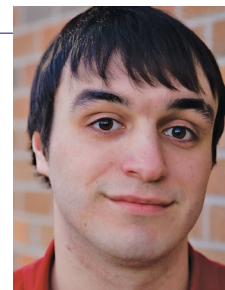
Everyone needs to cross the bridge at some point in their life where they learn that they're not the best. Hopefully these tips lead you to recognize and start to get over your imposter syndrome just a little more easily.

Photo Credit

Photo of Tom Gannon is courtesy of Tom Gannon.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tom Gannon is a first-year graduate student at the University of Texas at Austin.



Tom Gannon



Graduate students at member institutions can opt to receive print copies of the *Notices* by updating their individual member profiles at www.ams.org/cml/update-ams