Interdisciplinary CS: Introduction

Philip Chan

Syllabus

- [www.cs.fit.edu/~pkc/classes/interCS/](http://www.cs.fit.edu/~pkc/classes/interCS/)
- **“Discipline/problem-centric”**
- Sample problems in each discipline
- Algorithm solutions to each problem

Sample Disciplines & Problems

- **Sociology**
  - small world (how many friends are there between Obama and you?)
  - connectors in social networks
- **Geography**
  - localization (where are you?)
  - turn-by-turn navigation (how do you get there?)
- **Marketing**
  - advertisement in search (google)
  - recommendation systems (netflix, amazon)

Sample Disciplines & Problems

- **Finance**
  - credit card fraud detection (is that you trying to spend $1000 at Best Buy in Alaska?)
- **Law**
  - scheduling attorneys to judges (time, workload, specialty, personality, ... constraints)
- **Biology**
  - DNA sequence alignment (are you a close relative of your cat? is the suspect the criminal?)

General Steps

- **Problem Understanding**
  - Understand what is desired
- **Problem Formulation**
  - Convert the problem into a more formal/computer-oriented description (input/output)
  - Abstraction is usually needed
- **Algorithm**
  - Algorithmic solution to the formulated problem
  - Analysis of tradeoffs among solutions
- **Implementation**
  - Data structures, programming languages

Assigned Reading

- “The Law of the Few” handout from Malcolm Gladwell
  - *The Tipping Point—How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*