

*GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY*  
*Department of Mathematics*

**COLLOQUIUM**

To Explain or To Predict?

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**Abstract:** Statistical modeling is at the core of many scientific disciplines. Although a vast literature exists on the process of statistical modeling, on good practices, and on abuses of statistical models, the literature lacks the discussion of a key component: the distinction between modeling for explanatory purposes and modeling for predictive purposes. This omission exacts considerable cost in terms of advancing scientific research in many fields and especially in the social sciences, where statistical modeling is done almost entirely in the context of explanation. In this talk I describe how statistical modeling is used in research for causal explanation, and the differences between explanatory and predictive statistical modeling.

Refreshments will be served after the talk.