

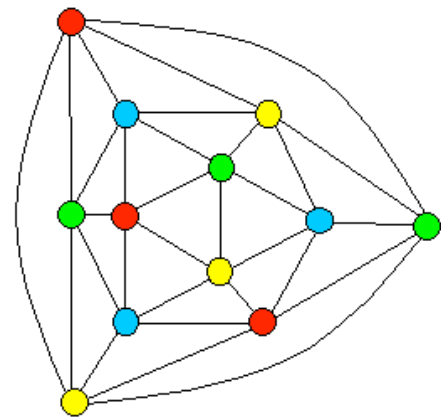
# Piney Woods Lecture Series

## Combinatorics, Graph Theory, and Computers: Connections and Interplay

Dr. Minerva Cordero-Epperson  
University of Texas - Arlington

February 27, 2008  
2 - 3 PM  
LDB 214

<http://www.mathpages.com/home/kmath266/kmath266.htm>



**Abstract:** In this talk we will look at several problems and long-standing conjectures and how they have been solved by using several areas of mathematics. We will study Euler's conjecture, Kirkman's schoolgirl problem, the Four-color Theorem, and the existence of a projective plane of order 10.

**Biography:** Minerva Cordero always had the support of her parents. Her mother, who only completed the seventh grade, valued education and often said to her children, "The best thing I can give you is an education." Cordero and her five siblings could be found every night doing homework and talking about what they learned in school. "We learned each others' subjects." Cordero wanted to go to college. On her own initiative, she bought a SAT review book and completed all of the problems. Her SAT score has remained the highest ever achieved at her high school, Miguel Melendez Munoz High School.

While Cordero was in graduate school at the University of Puerto Rico, she applied for a National Science Foundation (NSF) Minority Graduate Fellowship and was awarded the fellowship. With encouragement and support from her professors, she applied to universities in the United States to continue her graduate studies. The University of California at Berkeley overlooked the late date of her application and enthusiastically admitted her. Cordero graduated from Berkeley in 1983 with a M.A. in Mathematics. She continued her graduate studies at the University of Iowa and received her Ph.D. degree in 1989 under the supervision of Professor Norman Johnson. Her dissertation was entitled, "On  $p$ -primitive planes."

Cordero has been a faculty member at the University of Texas - Arlington since 2001, and is currently Associate Dean of the Honors College. She was recognized by the Texas Section of the MAA for Distinguished University Teaching in 2007.