

*Trust, Influence and Urgent Diffusion in Social Media*

Prof. Bill Rand (University of Maryland)

Date: Monday, 9 September 2013

Time: 3:45-4:45pm\*

Location: Chauvenet 110

**Abstract:** The dramatic feature of social media is that it gives everyone a voice; anyone can speak out and express their opinion to a crowd of followers with little or no cost or effort, which creates a loud and potentially overwhelming marketplace of ideas. The good news is that the organizations have more data than ever about what their consumers are saying about their brand. The bad news is that this huge amount of data is difficult to sift through. We will look at developing methods that can help sift through this torrent of data and examine important questions, such as who do users trust to provide them with the information that they want? Which entities have the greatest influence on social media users? How does information diffuse in urgent situations? Using agent-based modeling, machine learning and network analysis we begin to examine and shed light on these questions and develop a deeper understanding of the complex system of social media.

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\*The talk will be preceded by tea and cookies starting at 3:30pm.