



Postgraduate Research
Academic Motivation Session
UMT - USM 2026

PROGRAMME BOOK

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SEMINAR & ACADEMIC MOTIVATION SESSION

USM  UMT

8 MAY 2026



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TENTATIVE

Registration	07:45 AM
Opening Remarks by Dean	08:00 AM
Token of Appreciation	08:30 AM
Photo Session	08:45AM
Motivational Talk 1	09:00 AM
<i>ASSOC. PROF. MD YUSHALIFI - Challenge as a Postgraduate Student</i>	
Short Break	09:30 AM
Presenter 1	09:50 AM
<i>DANANG - Enhancing Physics-Informed Neural Networks through a Multi-Method Refinement Framework for Solving Differential Equations and Their Applications in Ecological Modeling</i>	
Presenter 2	10:10 AM
<i>CHENG JIE OOI - Stochastic Dynamics and Adaptive Parameterization in Dengue Epidemics</i>	
Presenter 3	10:30 AM
<i>IDZA AISARA - Unifying Modalities: A Comparative Analysis of Bilinear Pooling Fusion Techniques for Multimodal Fake News Detection</i>	
Presenter 4	10:50 AM
<i>DUA'A MKHIEMIR - Enhancing trustworthy deep learning for image classification against evasion attacks</i>	
Presenter 5	11:10 AM
<i>KELVIN LIM CHING WEI - Simulated-annealing-based hyper-heuristic for flexible job-shop scheduling</i>	
Presenter 6	11:30 AM
<i>NAZIRUL HAKIM - Modelling Sea Turtle Population Dynamics using Fractional-Order Differential Equations</i>	

TENTATIVE

Presenter 7	11:50 AM
<i>NURLIEDA ELLYANNA - Exploring Deep Learning Models for Multi-Label Sentiment Analysis in Pandemic Reviews</i>	
Computer Science Lab Tour	12:10 PM
Lunch Break & Friday Prayer	12:45 PM
Presenter 8	2:30 PM
<i>WAN ANIS FARHAH - Comparative Analysis of Functional Nonparametric and Machine Learning Models for Weather Forecasting: A Case Study of Pulau Langkawi</i>	
Presenter 9	2:50 PM
<i>FENNY SYAFARIANI - A New Hybrid Machine Learning And Deep Learning Models For Cyberbullying Detection</i>	
Presenter 10	3:10 PM
<i>HAZEM AHMED - Cyber Aggression Detection with Bystanders Roles by using LLMs as Auto-labelers</i>	
Presenter 11	3:30 PM
<i>FAUSTINE KASTORY NZIKU - Measure-attentive Multiset Representation Learning for Persistence Diagrams</i>	
Presenter 12	3:50 PM
<i>IMELDA PANGARIBUAN - Reading Between the Lines: Implicit Aspect Detection Using Transformer Models</i>	
Motivational Talk 2	4:10PM
<i>DR NAJIHAH BINTI IBRAHIM - Journey to the Grand Line: Postgrad Edition</i>	
Closing Ceremony	4:40 PM



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OBJECTIVES



The objectives of this programme are to facilitate the sharing of research among postgraduate students from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), as well as to strengthen academic collaboration and networking between both institutions. In addition, this programme aims to provide exposure to students on research opportunities and pathways towards PhD studies.

Furthermore, this programme seeks to enhance communication and academic presentation skills through research sharing sessions. It also aligns with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4 and SDG 17 by promoting knowledge sharing, institutional collaboration, and sustainable academic development.



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Welcoming

WELCOMING MESSAGE

Assalamualaikum and warm greetings,

It is my great pleasure to welcome all participants to the Postgraduate Research Seminar & Academic Motivation Session UMT-USM 2026. This programme reflects the strong collaboration between Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in advancing postgraduate research and academic excellence.

This seminar provides a valuable platform for knowledge sharing, intellectual discussion, and motivation among postgraduate students. I hope this session will inspire all participants to continue striving for excellence in their academic journey.

Thank you for your participation, and I wish you a productive and meaningful programme. May this programme inspire you to grow, explore, and achieve your academic goals.

Mohd Tirmizi Bin

Mohd Lutfi

Programme Director





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ABSTRACTS



ENHANCING PHYSICS-INFORMED NEURAL NETWORKS THROUGH A MULTI-METHOD REFINEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SOLVING DIFFERENTIAL EQUATIONS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS IN ECOLOGICAL MODELING

Danang Adi Pratama

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ABSTRACT

Differential equations (DEs) play a fundamental role in modeling and understanding real-world phenomena across science, engineering, and ecology, providing essential mathematical frameworks for describing dynamical processes. The solutions of DEs can be obtained analytically or numerically. However, obtaining analytical solutions is often challenging or even impossible for complex problems. As an alternative, numerical methods have traditionally been employed to approximate solutions. The advent of machine learning (ML), particularly Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs), has introduced new opportunities for solving DEs with improved accuracy and efficiency. Among ML techniques, the Physics-Informed Neural Network (PINN) stands out as a relatively recent ANN-based approach that is seamlessly applicable to diverse real-world phenomena. Despite these advantages, basic PINNs face several limitations, including slow convergence, high computational cost, and difficulties in handling stiff or highly nonlinear problems. This thesis addresses these limitations by enhancing the PINN framework through a restarting PINN (rPINN), a truncated singular value decomposition-based approach (PINN-TSVD), and a hybrid architecture that combines functional-link expansions with PINNs (FL-PINN). A total of 18 benchmark DE problems were tested, ranging from linear and nonlinear ordinary differential equations (ODEs) to three-dimensional partial differential equations (PDEs) and systems of PDEs (SPDEs). In addition, two ecological case studies were explored, namely the Lotka-Volterra model for simulating sea turtle population dynamics and a reaction-diffusion system with control variables modeling interactions between native and invasive species. The rPINN method demonstrated significant reductions in training time by reducing uncertainty in convergence behavior. However, its accuracy varied depending on problem complexity. For simpler DEs, the performance remained comparable to the basic PINN, whereas for more complex problems, rPINN often could not reach an optimal solution. To address the accuracy limitations of rPINN, the PINN-TSVD approach was introduced. By compressing the weight matrices using truncated singular value decomposition, this method achieved faster iteration times, reduced computational cost, and improved accuracy across several benchmarks. Finally, the FL-PINN framework integrated functional-link expansions. Three types of expansion functions were implemented, namely Legendre (LEL-PINN), Chebyshev (CEL-PINN), and trigonometric (TEL-PINN). Among the three, only LEL-PINN consistently outperformed the basic PINN, while CEL-PINN and TEL-PINN showed less consistent improvements. Nevertheless, these benefits came at the cost of increased training time and computational complexity. Overall, this research contributes to advancing the practical applicability of PINNs by developing strategies that balance accuracy and efficiency. The findings demonstrate that enhanced PINNs not only accelerate convergence and improve solution quality but also expand their capability to address complex ecological modeling tasks. These contributions provide a foundation for future applications of PINNs in scientific and engineering domains where conventional methods face significant limitations.

STOCHASTIC DYNAMICS AND ADAPTIVE PARAMETERIZATION IN DENGUE EPIDEMICS

Cheng Jie Ooi

School of Mathematical Sciences, USM

ABSTRACT

Epidemic dynamics are inherently stochastic and non-deterministic, posing significant challenges for machine learning-based modeling. These dynamics are commonly represented as time series, which capture temporal variations in disease incidence and reveal complex behaviors in real-world tropical epidemic systems. Specifically, Dengue epidemics exhibit pronounced temporal irregularities, including abrupt spikes and declines and highly variable dispersion, underscoring the strongly stochastic nature of the system. Compared to more structured real-world time series such as astronomical or climatic data, dengue incidence demonstrates greater unpredictability and heterogeneity. This variability indicates that fixed model configurations are insufficient to capture the evolving data structure. Consequently, models with dynamically selected parameters are more suitable, as they enable adaptation to underlying data characteristics. This highlights the importance of adaptive hyperparameter selection in handling non-stationary and abruptly changing stochastic systems, and underscores the sensitivity of machine learning models to parameter choices under such conditions.



UNIFYING MODALITIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BILINEAR POOLING FUSION TECHNIQUES FOR MULTIMODAL FAKE NEWS DETECTION

Idza Aisara Norabid

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ABSTRACT

The widespread dissemination of fake news on social media has driven the need for multimodal detection approaches that integrate both text and image data. This paper presents a comparative study of fusion techniques for fine-grained multimodal fake news detection using BERT for textual features and ResNet models (ResNet18 and ResNet50) for visual features. Four fusion methods are evaluated: Multimodal Factorized Bilinear Pooling (MFB), Multimodal Compact Bilinear pooling (MCB) and alongside their self-attention-enhanced variants. Experiments are conducted on nine subsets of the Fakeddit dataset of varying sizes to assess performance scalability. Results show that bilinear pooling techniques achieve better accuracy, particularly on larger datasets. Among them, MFB consistently delivers stable and high performance, while MCB also performs reliably, though slightly below MFB in most cases. In addition, ResNet50 offers slightly better performance than ResNet18 at larger dataset sizes. This study offers insights into the effectiveness of different fusion strategies and their trade-offs, contributing to the development of efficient and accurate multimodal fake news detection systems.

ENHANCING TRUSTWORTHY DEEP LEARNING FOR IMAGE CLASSIFICATION AGAINST EVASION ATTACKS

Dua'a Mkhiemir Salameh Akhtom

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly evolving field of Deep Learning (DL), the trustworthiness of models is essential for their effective application in critical domains like healthcare and autonomous systems. Trustworthiness in DL encompasses aspects such as reliability, fairness, and transparency, which are crucial for its real-world impact and acceptance. However, the development of trustworthy DL models faces significant challenges. This is notably due to adversarial examples, a sophisticated form of evasion attack in adversarial machine learning (AML), which subtly alter inputs to deceive these models and pose a major threat to their safety and reliability. The current body of research primarily focuses on defensive measures, such as enhancing the robustness of models or implementing explainable AI techniques. However, this approach often neglects to address the fundamental vulnerabilities that adversaries exploit. As a result, the field tends to concentrate more on counteracting measures rather than gaining an in-depth understanding of the vulnerabilities and attack strategies inherent in DL systems. This gap in comprehensive understanding impedes the formulation of effective defense mechanisms. Our research aims to shift the focus from predominantly defensive strategies toward a more extensive comprehension of adversarial techniques and the innate vulnerabilities of DL models. Our findings reveal the key characteristics of adversarial examples that enable their success against image classification-based DL models. Building on these insights, we propose a trustworthy-based framework. This conceptual model aims to rectify the deficiencies in current defense strategies by incorporating the analyzed traits of adversarial examples, potentially enhancing the robustness and trustworthiness of DL models.

SIMULATED-ANNEALING-BASED HYPER-HEURISTIC FOR FLEXIBLE JOB-SHOP SCHEDULING

Kelvin Lim Ching Wei

School of Computer Sciences, USM

ABSTRACT

The flexible job-shop scheduling problem (FJSP) is common in high-mix industries such as semiconductor manufacturing. An FJSP is initiated when an operation can be executed on a machine assigned from a set of alternative machines. Thus, an FJSP consists of the machine assignment and job sequencing sub-problems, which can be resolved using a pair of problem-dependent machine assignment rules (MARs) and job sequencing rules (JSRs). Selecting an MAR-JSR pair that performs efficiently is a challenge. This study proposes a simulated-annealing-based hyper-heuristic (SA-HH) for assembling an heuristic scheme (HS) consisting of MAR-JSR pairs with a set of problem state features. Two variants of SA-HH, i.e. SA-HH based on HS with problem state features (SA-HHPSF) and without problem state features (SA-HHNO-PSF), are investigated. In terms of the best makespan, SA-HHPSF outperforms or is comparable with over 75% of benchmark algorithms on 8 out of 10 instances in the Brandimarte dataset.



MODELLING SEA TURTLE POPULATION DYNAMICS USING FRACTIONAL-ORDER DIFFERENTIAL EQUATIONS

Nazirul Hakim bin Yunsi

Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics, UMT

ABSTRACT

Sea turtle populations are currently declining due to numerous factors such as habitat degradation, pollution, animal predation, and human exploitation. If this trend continues, sea turtles may face extinction within a few decades, potentially causing imbalances in marine ecosystems. Therefore, this study aims to develop and analyse a fractional-order differential equation model for sea turtle population dynamics. Existing sea turtle population models are generally based on integer-order derivative systems, which are unable to effectively explain population dynamics involving memory effects. Changes in sea turtle populations are influenced not only by current factors but also by factors that occurred a few years or even decades earlier. In this study, a fractional-order stage-structured prey--predator model is constructed using the Caputo fractional derivative. The significant differences between the integer-order and fractional-order models are highlighted. Following the formulation of the model, its basic mathematical properties are investigated, including the proofs of existence and uniqueness, as well as the non-negativity and boundedness of the solutions. Subsequently, the stability of the equilibrium points is analysed. To further understand the dynamical behaviour of the model, numerical simulations are carried out. These simulations also serve to validate the earlier theoretical findings. Finally, the study is expected to provide useful insights for planning effective conservation strategies for sea turtle populations.



EXPLORING DEEP LEARNING MODELS FOR MULTI-LABEL SENTIMENT ANALYSIS IN PANDEMIC REVIEWS

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Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)*

ABSTRACT

The term 'pandemic' has become widely familiar following the lived experience of the global COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic resulted in widespread discussions in the digital world, especially on social media platforms, where people expressed a wide range of thoughts and emotions. Therefore, multi-label sentiment analysis is functional as it captures multiple sentiment classifications in social media data for richer insights. However, there is a need to know the best-suited deep learning models for multi-label sentiment analysis in the pandemic reviews domain. Thus, this study aims to explore, compare, and analyse existing deep learning models applied in this domain by using the PRISMA guidelines. The study identified CNN, LSTM/BiLSTM, and Transformer models (BERT, RoBERTa) as the most common for multi-label sentiment analysis in pandemic reviews. The hybrid CNN + BiLSTM model is utilised on the existing COVID-19 Twitter dataset as a pilot experiment. This model is used to gain preliminary insights into deep learning models' behaviour for pandemic reviews. The result shows that the model can handle multi-label sentiment analysis well in pandemic-related content.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FUNCTIONAL NONPARAMETRIC AND MACHINE LEARNING MODELS FOR WEATHER FORECASTING: A CASE STUDY OF PULAU LANGKAWI

Wan Anis Farhah Wan Amir
School of Mathematical Sciences, USM

ABSTRACT

Traditional climate time series analysis often relies on discrete scalar observations, which may overlook the continuous structural information inherent in meteorological processes. Functional Data Analysis (FDA) offers a robust alternative by treating annual weather cycles as continuous functional objects. This study evaluates the predictive performance of functional nonparametric models against established machine learning and statistical benchmarks, including Prophet, Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, Neural Network Autoregression (NNAR), and Dynamic Harmonic Regression (DHR), for forecasting daily temperature and rainfall in Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia. Utilising a 10-year dataset (2015–2024), weather variables were transformed into registered annual functional curves. Three functional estimators were implemented: Functional Conditional Mean (FCM), Functional Conditional Quantile (FCQ), and Functional Conditional Density (FCD). These models utilise a Functional Principal Component (FPC) semi-metric and adaptive kernel weighting to map historical functional profiles to future outcomes. Performance was validated using RMSE, MAE, MAPE, and MASE. For temperature forecasting, where seasonal trends are stable, DHR achieved the highest precision (RMSE: 0.5559). However, for the highly stochastic and intermittent nature of rainfall, the FCM outperformed all other models, including deep learning architectures (RMSE: 2.2466; MASE: 0.08861). Notably, while LSTM and quantile-based models struggled with the "spike-heavy" nature of precipitation or produced physically impossible negative values, the FCM estimator maintained physical consistency and non-negativity constraints. The findings suggest that while DHR and LSTMs are superior for smooth, seasonally dominated variables like temperature, functional nonparametric approaches (specifically FCM) provide a more reliable and physically consistent framework for irregular climate variables like rainfall. This research highlights the utility of the FDA in enhancing the accuracy of local Early Warning Systems for extreme weather events.



A NEW HYBRID MACHINE LEARNING AND DEEP LEARNING MODELS FOR CYBERBULLYING DETECTION

Fenny Syafariani

Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics, UMT

ABSTRACT

Cyberbullying represents a critical threat to digital communication, undermining individual well being and social harmony. Detecting it is complex, as harmful expressions often utilize subtle, racially charged, or emotionally aggressive language. This study proposes a novel hybrid intelligent framework integrating machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL) to address these challenges. The ML level combines Support Vector Machine (SVM) and Linear Discriminant Analysis (LDA), while the DL level integrates Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) and Gated Recurrent Units (GRU), utilizing SoftMax and SVM as final classifiers. To evaluate text representation's influence, six methods were tested: TF-IDF, BoW, Word2Vec, GloVe, BERT, and ELMo. Validated across three social media datasets, results show that BERT consistently delivered the strongest embedding performance, with an average accuracy of 0.8795, precision of 0.8058, F1-score of 0.8182, and AUC of 0.8517. ELMo achieved the highest average recall at 0.8472. Architecturally, GRU-CNN emerged as the most effective configuration; GRU-CNN-SoftMax and GRU-CNN-SVM reached average accuracies of 0.8725 and 0.8694, respectively. Peak dataset level results included an F1-score of 0.9280 for BERT-GRU-CNN-SoftMax on Dataset 2 and 0.9073 for BERT-GRU-CNN-SVM on Dataset 3. The findings confirm that successful detection relies on the interaction between architectural design, embedding strategy, and data characteristics. This research contributes five empirically validated hybrid configurations that advance robust, adaptive, and real-time cyberbullying detection, fostering safer digital environments.

CYBER AGGRESSION DETECTION WITH BYSTANDERS ROLES BY USING LLMS AS AUTO-LABELERS

Hazem Ahmed Mohamed Nabil Abdelraouf
School of Computer Sciences, USM

ABSTRACT

Cyber Aggression and bullying has become a pervasive threat on digital platforms, taking many forms that range from overt textual insults to subtle multimodal attacks embedded in memes and videos. Contemporary detection systems have moved beyond simple keyword lists and now exploit a rich set of contextual signals such as linguistic nuance, visual content, social-network structure, engagement metrics and user-level demographics. Among these signals the stance taken by bystanders, users who comment on or otherwise engage with an aggression episode, has received relatively little attention in computational work even though the social-science literature identifies bystander behavior as a decisive factor in the escalation or mitigation of aggression severity. Accurately labeling bystander roles (for example an instigator who encourages aggression, a defender who opposes it, a neutral observer or a passive spectator) promises to improve the feature space of cyber aggression detectors and to provide actionable insight for moderation policies. Manual annotation of such roles is expensive because it demands a deep understanding of intent, sarcasm, cultural references and conversational dynamics. Recent advances in large language models (LLMs) have shown that these systems can generate high-quality annotations for a variety of tasks when guided by appropriate prompts or fine-tuned with modest amounts of data. This project proposes a systematic investigation of how LLMs can be employed as auto-labelers for bystander-role identification and cyber aggression detection by prompting and fine-tuning them.

MEASURE-ATTENTIVE MULTISSET REPRESENTATION LEARNING FOR PERSISTENCE DIAGRAMS

Faustine Kastory Nziku

School of Mathematical Sciences, USM

ABSTRACT

In topological data analysis (TDA), persistence diagrams (PDs) are powerful topological descriptors that naturally form multisets of birth–death pairs, yet learning directly from them is challenging because diagrams are unordered, vary in cardinality, and contain features with widely differing persistence. While persistence diagrams naturally capture topological invariants and structural geometry, existing representation learning methods for persistence diagrams often neglect multiplicity, the geometric role of the diagonal, formal stability guarantees, and computational scalability. To address these limitations, we develop a measure-theoretic framework for multiset representation learning in which a persistence diagram is modeled as a finite measure, and attention is defined directly as an integral operator over this measure. Within this formulation, permutation invariance is satisfied by construction, while multiplicity is incorporated explicitly through measure weights rather than implicit aggregation. To mitigate the influence of topological noise, we introduce a diagonal-aware kernel that reduces contributions from low-persistence features. Under standard regularity assumptions on the kernel and value functions, we establish a Lipschitz continuity result with respect to the Wasserstein-1 distance, providing a principled notion of stability. In addition, we incorporate coreset-based compression with explicit approximation guarantees, enabling efficient processing of large-scale diagrams.

Real-world experiments indicate that the proposed framework achieves a favorable balance between robustness, expressivity, and computational efficiency. Overall, the approach offers a mathematically consistent and scalable integration of topological data analysis with attention-based learning, with potential applications in agriculture, bio-informatics, materials science, and social networks.



READING BETWEEN THE LINES: IMPLICIT ASPECT DETECTION USING TRANSFORMER MODELS

Imelda Pangaribuan

Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics, UMT

ABSTRACT

Standard sentiment analysis fails to capture the nuanced opinions expressed toward specific attributes of an entity, limiting its practical utility in real-world applications. This study investigates Aspect-Based Sentiment Analysis (ABSA) with a particular focus on implicit aspect detection — the most challenging subtask wherein opinion targets are contextually implied rather than explicitly stated. Using the SemEval 2016 Task 5 Restaurant dataset comprising 350 annotated sentences, two transformer-based models were compared: BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) and GPT-2 (Generative Pre-trained Transformer 2). Both models were evaluated across four ABSA subtasks — Aspect Term Extraction, Aspect Category Detection, Aspect Sentiment Classification, and Implicit Aspect Detection — using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score as evaluation metrics. Results demonstrate that BERT consistently outperformed GPT-2 across all metrics, achieving an overall F1-score of 79.8% compared to 72.0% for GPT-2, with a notably wider gap on implicit aspect detection (71.3% vs. 61.2%). A systematic error analysis yielded a seven-category taxonomy ($\kappa = 0.82$), identifying implicit aspects, negation handling, and semantic ambiguity as the dominant failure modes. These findings confirm the superiority of bidirectional contextual encoding for ABSA and highlight implicit aspect detection as a critical direction for future research involving dual-stream attention mechanisms and curriculum learning strategies.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



PRISMA



The organising committee from Persatuan Siswazah Informatik Sains dan Matematik (PRISMA), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Graduate School of UMT for their financial support and guidance in making this programme a success.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to FSKM and Pusat Komunikasi Korporat (PKK) for their kind support and contribution towards this programme.

Special thanks are dedicated to Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), particularly the School of Mathematical Sciences and the School of Computer Sciences, for their collaboration and valuable contributions to this programme.

Finally, we would like to thank all speakers, participants and committee members for their commitment and support in ensuring the success of this programme





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THANK YOU

