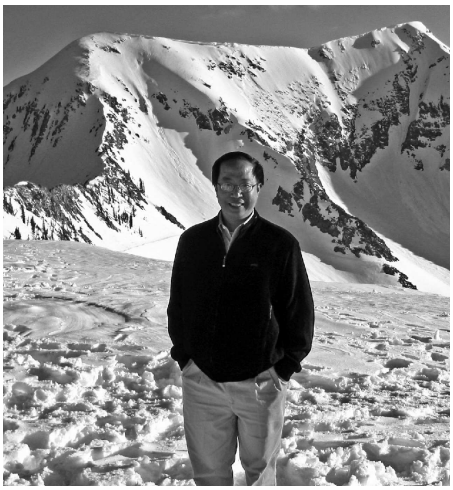
In Memoriam
Xiao-Song Lin
Professor of Mathematics
UC Riverside
1957-2007



Xiao-Song Lin, Professor of Mathematics at UC Riverside (UCR), passed away on January 14, 2007, in Riverside after a battle with liver cancer. Prof. Lin was born on July 27, 1957, in Songjiang, Shanghai, and grew up in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. After graduating from high school during the Cultural Revolution, Prof. Lin worked in a steel factory in Suzhou for three years. While in the steel plant, he engaged in high-intensity manual labor. Later, because of his literary talent, he was transferred to do writing work and became proficient in calligraphy.

After the college entrance examination was resumed in 1977, Prof. Lin was admitted to Nanjing University of Post and Telecommunication in 1978. Due to a shortage of professors there at the time, Prof. Lin spent three years in Jiangsu Normal College (now Suzhou University). Prof. Lin's first choice was chemistry, but he was assigned to his third choice of mathematics. In the third year of university, Prof. Lin developed a keen interest in mathematics, and his professors encouraged him to self-study to go to graduate school.

After getting his MSc degree from Peking University with the distinction of being a top-two student, Prof. Lin went to UC San Diego to do his PhD under Michael Freedman, winner of 1986 Fields Medal. Since then, Prof. Lin blossomed into a popular figure in low dimensional topology, making many well-known contributions to the theory of knots and links.

After receiving his PhD from UC San Diego in 1988, Prof. Lin worked for seven years (1988-1995) at Columbia University, where he was a recipient of the Sloan Fellowship. In the 1993-1994 academic year, Prof. Lin was a visiting scholar at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study.

Prof. Lin joined UC Riverside in 1995, becoming the first member of the topology team in the Mathematics Department. In February 1999, Prof. Lin initiated and edited the first issue of the new mathematics journal *Communications in Contemporary Mathematics* (CCM).

In the summer and autumn of 1996, Prof. Lin visited the Chinese University of Hong Kong. During those months, he established research ties with the Chinese University and the recently established Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and supported several young scholars.

Prof. Lin, in cooperation with Peking University mathematicians Jiang Boju and Wang Shicheng, provided much needed support to Chinese topology in the 1990s, when state funding of mathematics and the number of math majors was dropping precipitously. Professors Lin, Jiang, and Wang held annual low-dimensional topology summer classes with funding from the National Natural Sciences Foundation of China. In total, they held more than ten low-dimensional topology seminars, the ICM 2002 Xi'an Geometric Topology Satellite Conference, and co-sponsored the annual China-Japan-Korea knot meeting. In Nankai, Prof. Lin participated in the organization of the 2000 Zhou Weiliang and Chen Guocai Memorial International Conference and the 2005 Completion Conference of Shengshen Building.

In 2000, Prof. Lin and Wang Shicheng were awarded the China Type B Outstanding Youth Cooperation Fund. With funding from the China Tianyuan Foundation, Prof. Lin and Tian Gang founded the China Math Star Summer Camp. Every summer, Prof. Lin invited experts to give lectures to outstanding high school students, which opened a pathway for growth of young scholars.

Prof. Lin will always be remembered as a person providing encouragement and love to young students and professors. Whether it was a problem in academic career or in life, Prof. Lin would help his students and colleagues in every possible way. During the holidays, many students gathered with Prof. Lin's family, so that everyone whose family was overseas could feel the warmth of home.

Colleagues recall that mathematics was Prof. Lin's great passion. When he was awake, he was thinking about mathematics almost every moment. Students at his Geometry and Algebraic Topology classes remember fondly his ability to illustrate complex theoretical concepts with simple examples and the beautiful topological knots he left on the blackboard.

At the time of his death, Prof. Lin was survived by his wife, Jianpin, and his son, Haijian, who followed in his father’s footsteps and completed his PhD in mathematics at UC Berkeley in 2012.

This memorial was prepared by Alexander Barinov, Assistant Professor of Finance at the UCR School of Business, using information from public sources.