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### University of Montana offers mathematics course on Rubik's cube

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# University of Montana

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA OFFERS MATHEMATICS COURSE ON RUBIK'S CUBE

MISSOULA--

A mathematics course on Rubik's cube will be offered spring quarter at the University of Montana. Prerequisites are enthusiasm and a cube.

Students who complete the course may be able to solve the cube without having to memorize the strings of manipulations characteristic of most published solutions, said course instructor Walter Michaelis, UM assistant professor of mathematics.

Although Michaelis says he has not had much time to work on the puzzle, he has long been interested in the mathematics involved, specifically, group theory.

Group theory, concerned with the various arrangements of elements in a set, is the key to solving many kinds of puzzles, including the cube, he said. Michaelis will use a computer program, written by UM mathematics professor George Votruba, to display a cube on a screen to allow manipulation by means of a keyboard.

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