Theodora Bourni

“Null mean curvature” flow and marginally outer trapped surfaces

In this talk we discuss a new second order parabolic evolution equation for hypersurfaces in space-time initial data sets, that generalizes mean curvature flow (MCF). In particular, the ‘null mean curvature’ - a space-time extrinsic curvature quantity - replaces the usual mean curvature in the evolution equation defining MCF. This flow is motivated by the study of black holes and mass/energy inequalities in general relativity. We present a theory of weak solutions using the level-set method and outline a natural application of the flow as a parabolic approach to finding outermost marginally outer trapped surfaces (MOTS), which play the role of quasi-local black hole boundaries in general relativity. This is joint work with Kristen Moore.