

UMassD visit on April 15th, 2009: Amit Tandon's talk to the "Building New Bridges" Colloquium series, organized by the Chancellor of UMass D.

Amit Tandon was invited to give an evening talk to a wide audience of academics and other invited members of the community, organized by the UMassD Chancellor. This series is intended to bridge from the academic world into the world of public administrators and other senior public Officials. Amit presented a talk, entitled "The ocean: from rotating fluid to blooming planktons", aimed to address some the most recent development in ocean sciences. Outside collaborators of Amit were invited to attend, such as John Marshall and I from MIT and Amala Mahadevan from BU.

Amit chose to illustrate some of his themes using the 'weather in a tank' rotating table. The Ekman pumping experiment was used to show an example of wind driven motion and the role of upwelling in the ocean. He cleverly connected this with numerical simulations of ocean chlorophyll, which illustrated bio-geochemistry cycles in the ocean and their importance on the Carbon cycle. Amit also stressed the way in which the lab experiments helped him entrain physics undergraduates in to the activity, as evidenced by his 'lab assistant' for the evening, Carter Chamberlain.

The talk was very well received. The audience was involved in making predictions about the experiments, engaged and sometimes amused by the event. Several questions were asked concerning global warming and the role of the ocean. Amit did a great job in bringing the ocean physics to a non-specialist audience and showed again that the rotating table was very effective as an outreach tool

