combinatorial cusp counting in curves

Sebastian Baader

University Bern

sebastian.baader@math.unibe.ch

A classic open problem in algebraic geometry asks for the maximal number of cusps in plane algebraic curves of degree $d$. This is closely related to determining the minimal genus of smooth cobordisms between torus links and connected sums of trefoil knots. As we will see, the signature function is strikingly effective at estimating the latter.