Battle of the Neighborhoods

# Introduction:

Where there are colleges and universities, there are restaurants.  Dining out, and particularly dining out with friends, is common for college students. Unfortunately for student groups, they often must debate which venue to choose from in order to satisfy multiple tastes. There are many choices, such as Chinese, Indian, Thai, Mexican, and Greek from which to debate and choose. Innovative restaurant entrepreneurs have recognized that groups do not want to visit multiple venues when their tastes span multiple cuisines. As a result, fusion style restaurants are on the rise and expanding to college towns.

While it is common to think of combining coffee with bagels or Thai with Chinese within a venue, more innovative style restaurants are finding niche markets. Two former University of Minnesota students founded Burrigato in 2017, a restaurant unique to the school, that fuses Asian style cuisine with a Mexican style wrap. While it is predictable for a venue to serve both deli sandwiches and ice cream, in today’s eclectic university settings venturing into a Greek and Somalian combination or a meld of Cajun and Baltic would not be extreme.

This exploratory analysis will develop a simple metric to measure the concentration of two cuisine types near a population center. A higher number of restaurants per individual will correlate with a higher concentration score. This metric will rank the chosen locations, higher being better, for potential expansion or development of fusion style restaurants. In order to limit the scope of the analysis, a “Burrigato” scenario will be explored by posing the following question. If the Burrigato owners desired to open a franchise near another Big Ten Conference University, which of the thirteen schools has the highest concentration of Asian and Mexican restaurants and would therefore be considered the optimal expansion candidate?  It should be noted that Burrigato is a real world restaurant, but for the purposes of this presentation should be considered a fictional example.

Multiple groups will be interested in the methods and results of this research. Marketers would be interested in the concentration score in order to target and streamline advertising campaigns. Universities would value the metric to more fully understand their diversity and inclusivity demographics. Most importantly, entrepreneurs would be interested in the score to target future expansion or initial openings of fusion style restaurants.