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Panel: Developing a Sustainable Academic Career in IS

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DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE ACADEMIC CAREER IN IS

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What does it take to become a successful Professor in Information Systems? Hard work and a good sense of humor, obviously. But, is it enough? Unsurprisingly, the familiar confession from the people who have made it through the professorial ranks in our field is “Well, it hasn’t been easy”. This panel aims to explore why this may be the case, shedding light in the processes, the practices, the cultures, the challenges and success factors that mark a successful academic career in information systems. Four Professors who have moved quickly and successfully in their careers, working in different national contexts, have agreed to talk about their experiences on this panel, leading to an open discussion about good practice and pitfalls for developing a sustainable academic career in IS, diversity in practice and challenges across countries, and the lessons that can be learned for the future.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THIS PANEL

The idea for this panel emerged during a meeting of a new open group called ‘mid career forum’ at ICIS 2007. Noting that several events at IS conferences are geared towards either (very) junior or (very) senior faculty, a number of IS academics who are ‘in the middle’ met to discuss the need and opportunities for explicit peer support to this latter group. This proposed panel is a follow up event, aiming to open up a public debate in IS academia on one of the key concerns amongst members of the ‘mid career forum’, namely the process and success factors for pursuing further academic development and promotion.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

While this panel is primarily intended for people in the 'middle' of their academic career (e.g., at Senior Lecturer or Associate Professor level) interested in further advancement in academia, the topic is of interest to younger researchers, presently planning out their career path, but also to senior scholars, as it will offer an opportunity to reflect on current practices and discuss improvements for career advancement in our field.

RELEVANCE TO THE CONFERENCE THEME

The central theme of the 16th European Conference on Information Systems places the Innovative Knowledge Society at its center. Ironically, we tend to overlook the significance of the knowledge society when it comes to considering academic issues. This panel would like to contribute to a better appreciation of the issues within the academic network, on the one hand by raising awareness about current practice in academic career development and on the other hand by creating momentum and visibility and raising membership for the mid-career forum, so that networking and knowledge sharing among our peers can be facilitated.

PANEL ORGANIZERS

Nancy Pouloudi

Athanasia (Nancy) Pouloudi is an Associate Professor in the Department of Management Science and Technology at the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB), Greece. She holds a first degree in Informatics (AUEB, Greece), and an MSc and PhD degree in Information Systems (London School of Economics, UK). Her research focuses on strategic and social issues of information systems development and implementation. She is Associate Editor of the European Journal of Information Systems and IT & People. She has taught information systems at Brunel University (as lecturer) and the London School of Economics (as teaching assistant) and held visiting positions at Erasmus University (The Netherlands), the University of Hawai'i (USA) and the Athens Laboratory of Business Administration (Greece). She has acted as scientific coordinator for AUEB in a number of European Projects. She has organized the 7th ETHICOMP conference (2004) and two tracks on e-society (2005) and on e-work and virtual organisations (2004) at the European Conference on Information Systems.

Antonio Cordella

Antonio Cordella is lecturer in Information Systems at the London School of Economics. Antonio Cordella holds a Laurea in Political Science from the University of Bologna, Italy and a PhD from Göteborg University, Sweden. His research interests lie in the relationships between IT and organisations, forms and behaviours and information systems infrastructures. He also looks at e-government and electronic commerce and the associated institutional changes. His publications discuss the effects of ICT on Transaction cost, Information Infrastructures and E-government.

PANELISTS

(in alphabetical order)

Jan Damsgaard

Jan Damsgaard is professor and the director of Center for Applied Information and Communication Technology (CAICT), Copenhagen Business School, Denmark. JD holds a Master's degree in Computer Science and Psychology and a Ph.D. in Information Systems. His research focuses on the diffusion and implementation of networked and standard-based technologies such as intranet, Internet portals, EDI, mobile and wireless technologies and corporate information infrastructures. JD has presented his work at international conferences (ICIS, ECIS, PACIS, HICSS, IFIP 8.2. and IFIP 8.6) and in international journals (*Information Systems Journal*, *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, *Information Society*, *Journal of Global Information Management*, *Journal of Organizational Computing and Electronic Commerce*, *Information Technology and People*, and *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*).

Elaine Ferneley

Elaine became a professor at Salford Business School in July 2008. Her chair is in Technological Innovation. Elaine's area of research is information and communication technology and innovation. She has worked extensively on UK and European research projects conducting research on the socio-technical implications of advanced ICT utilization within the areas of social network technologies, mobile computing, collaborative working, information systems design and knowledge management. Her research particularly focuses on how ICTs such as social networking technologies and mobile technologies shape and are shaped by working practices in knowledge intensive organizations within the domains of the emergency services, production environments and publishing companies. She is particularly interested in the increased mobilization of interaction and the resultant difficulties in communication. She has an MSc and PhD in Computation from The University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, both in the area of intelligent information retrieval. She is currently the programme director for Salford's MBA. Additionally, Elaine has worked as a systems architect managing large scale system developments for ICI and IBM Australia. She undertakes consultancy work on the socio-technical aspects of computing, recent contracts include working with the Fire Service, the nuclear fuel industry and Astra Zeneca.

Hans van der Heijden

Hans van der Heijden is head of the division of management and a professor of management information systems at the University of Surrey, United Kingdom. He holds a Ph.D. in management information systems from Erasmus University, Netherlands and has worked in the Netherlands, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. Before embarking on his academic career he spent four years working in industry for a global management consultancy. Currently Prof. van der Heijden is the incoming co-editor of the European Journal of Information Systems, and the research chair for the European Conference on Information Systems 2008 in Galway, Ireland. He has an interest in the design of management information systems and the user acceptance of information systems. His publications have appeared in MIS Quarterly, European Journal of Information Systems, Decision Support Systems, Information and Management, and Journal of Information Technology.

Eric van Heck

Eric van Heck holds the Chair of Information Management and Markets at RSM Erasmus University, where he is conducting research and is teaching on the strategic and operational use of information technologies for companies and markets. He is also Director of Doctoral Education at the Erasmus Institute of Management (ERIM). He is best known for his work on how companies can create value with online auctions. He has co-authored or co-edited twelve books and published in California Management Review, Communications of the ACM, Decision Support Systems, Electronic Markets, European Management Journal, Harvard Business Review, Information Systems Research, International Journal of Electronic Commerce, Journal of Information Technology, and Wirtschaftsinformatik. Prior to joining Erasmus University, van Heck was a Research Fellow at Tilburg University, an Assistant Professor at Wageningen University, and a visiting scholar at New York University, and he has worked for Cap Gemini. He was a visiting professor at the Helsinki School of Economics and the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munchen. He is currently member of the editorial board of Decision Support Systems and the Journal of Information Technology. He received both his M.Sc. and Ph.D. from Wageningen University.