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CAIS AND TENURE AND PROMOTION

Paul Gray
Editor, CAIS

cais@cgu.edu

EDITORIAL

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Paul Gray
Editor, CAIS
cais@cgu.edu

Recently I received the following inquiry from the chair of an IS department about how CAIS should be treated for purposes of tenure and promotion. The inquiry read:

I'm hoping you can help me with a publication evaluation problem we are having. Some of our faculty have received notification from you of acceptance of an article for Communications of AIS. In order for them to get much credit for their publications, the journals must be on our list of ranked journals, which we developed based on the ISR rankings published last year. Our policies allow us to add publications to the list if we have external documentation as to their rankings. Do you have any suggestions for sources of published information that we could use to determine an appropriate ranking for this publication?

Here is my response to this inquiry:

Dear

I am pleased to respond to your inquiry about CAIS's standing for promotion and tenure. I believe the following points will be of help to you.

1. CAIS is an official journal of the Association for Information Systems (AIS). AIS has nearly 2000 members, almost all of whom teach about information systems at universities worldwide. The journal is made available to all members as part of their membership.

2. CAIS is a new journal. It began publishing in January 1999. New journals are generally not ranked until they have a track record. For example, Current Contents and other citation indexes will not include references for a journal until it is at least two years old.

3. The journal published 45 articles in 1999 and through thus far this year through July published 20 articles.

4. The journal publishes work by leading people in the field. Table 1 is a partial list of the senior people in IS who have already published with us.

Table 1 Partial List of CAIS Authors

Maryam Alavi	Chris Holland	Carol Saunders
Steve Alter	Blake Ives	Detmar straub
Richard Baskerville	Leon Kappelman	Margaret Tan
Gordon Davis	Ken and Julie Kendall	Hugh Watson
Gary Dickson	Hank Lucas	Rick Watson
Omar El Sawy	Jerry Luftman	Ron Weber
Jane Fedorowicz	M. Lynne Markus	Jim Wetherbee
Brent Gallupe	Michael Myers	

Our contributors are international. We have already published authors from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Finland, Hong Kong, Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United Kingdom..

5. The journal is published electronically on a controlled circulation basis. That is, a name and password is required for access. Access is limited to subscribers. A site license is available to Universities at a nominal \$90/year so that students can gain access.

6. The focus of CAIS is broader than most journals. It covers not only research results and methods but also tutorials, professional articles dealing with the nature of the IS field, cases, teaching, and more. The intent is to publish articles that further the development of the field and teach those who teach.

7. Articles in the journal are refereed. The author has the choice of review by an associate editor (a list is attached at the end of this article) or review by two outside referees supervised by an Associate Editor. (Some refer to this option as

“light review” versus “full review” The first option results in much quicker publication. It is a deliberate decision made to counter the over 2-year cycle time from submission to publication that exists for most journals in our field. Our mean time from receipt of an article to its publication is under 3 months. As best I, and members of my editorial board, can tell, the quality of the articles published is the same as that of other journals.

8. The journal, being electronic, and having a quick turnaround time from submission to publication, publishes articles on leading edge topics while they are still leading edge.

9. The impact of the journal is large. We publish to a larger academic IS research audience than other journals since we reach 2000 members (plus students at institutions that have site licenses). By comparison, the circulation of the Journal of Management Information Systems (JMIS) as published in its Spring 2000 issue as being 940, including libraries.

10. The Journal's impact can also be seen in its acceptance for promotion and tenure purposes at various universities. Let me give you two examples. At Temple University in Philadelphia, electronic journals such as CAIS are recognized for purposes of promotion and tenure. At Virginia Tech, when a CAIS author was up for tenure, the Dean of Business called me to ask for a letter of recommendation because the candidate was publishing electronically, which he viewed as being at the forefront.

11. The Society is working with the Deans in AACSB to inform them about electronic journals and their role in the future of academic publishing. A copy of this letter is attached as an appendix.

12. We believe that papers need to be judged individually, based on what is in them, not on the institutional aura associated with a journal. The three contributions from your University were published by CAIS because they are outstanding papers.

The bottom line is that we believe that the Association for Information Systems created an important new journal in a field that is underserved in terms

of the number of places in which to publish. It meets the standards of quality that are well established in academia.

I hope the foregoing is of help to you. Please don't hesitate to ask additional questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Gray
Editor, CAIS

APPENDIX

LETTER TO DEANS

Dear Dean/Professor __:

The Association for Information Systems (AIS) is pleased to announce the publication of two, new electronic journals, *The Communications of AIS (CAIS)* and the *Journal of AIS (JAIS)*. The *Journal* publishes rigorously researched articles on all aspects of information systems. It is a highly refereed, peer-reviewed journal. The *Communications* publishes articles on a wide range of subjects of interest in addition to research. CAIS Editors review all articles, and authors submitting papers may request that their submissions be peer reviewed as well.

We are writing to encourage you to consider these two journals as you would equivalent print journals in promotion and tenure decisions. We believe that eventually most academic journals will become electronic; the economics of Web publishing are much more attractive than printing and distributing paper journals. In fact, it is doubtful that AIS could afford to produce a single journal using the traditional paper publishing model. The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), with approximately 80,000 members, has invested heavily in a digital library and has announced that it will end print publications at some point in the future. There are many electronic journals being published today, and more are planned.

This transition to electronic publishing raises some questions about the quality of papers published electronically and whether the review of these papers meets traditional standards. The AIS publications committee and journal editors are committed to the review policies stated above, and most important, to creating journals of the highest quality. Our objective is for the *Journal of AIS* to achieve a level of quality that equals the best print journals in our field, publications like *Information Systems Research* and *MIS Quarterly*. The *Communications of AIS* stresses quality; it is also a place to publish papers that do not deal with research such as tutorials, teaching cases and innovative ideas on teaching and curriculum.

Promotion and tenure committees can be confident that AIS electronic publications are refereed with the same rigor and have been subjected to the same high standards as the traditional printed journals in our field. Faculty should have no reservations about treating refereed articles in *CAIS* and *JAIS* as the equivalent to the best print publications.

Thank you for your interest; please feel free to contact either of us to discuss the AIS journals further.

Sincerely,

Henry C. Lucas
Stern School of Business
New York University
Editor-in-Chief
AIS Electronic Journals
AIS Vice President, Publications

Gordon Davis
Carlson School of Management
University of Minnesota
President, AIS

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EDITOR
Paul Gray

Claremont Graduate University

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