Panel 10 Information Systems and Technology Programs: Meeting the Challenges of the New Millennium

Daniel Peak  
University of Nebraska, Omaha

Justin Stolen  
University of Nebraska, Omaha

Rob Kling  
Indiana University

Jay Nunamaker, Jr.  
University of Arizona

Follow this and additional works at: http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis1997

Recommended Citation  
Peak, Daniel; Stolen, Justin; Kling, Rob; and Nunamaker, Jr., Jay, "Panel 10 Information Systems and Technology Programs: Meeting the Challenges of the New Millennium" (1997). ICIS 1997 Proceedings. 71.  
http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis1997/71

This material is brought to you by the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS) at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in ICIS 1997 Proceedings by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact elibrary@aisnet.org.
Information systems and information technology (IS/IT) programs touch on many diverse and traditionally-unrelated university programs that use information technology as part of their curricula and research. Around 1980, university programs including IS programs, were relatively independent of one another. Now, some universities are seeking to find ways to meet the challenges of educating students to work with complex distributed information/knowledge networks and a diverse array of online services by synergizing common elements of these programs. Their goal is to enrich the university environment as they encourage cross-pollination of new ideas from faculty and students. Examples of programs that have been selected for collaboration include MIS, computer science, areas of engineering, library and information sciences, communications, education, medical sciences, and even journalism and the fine arts. Topics common to these programs may include the Internet, electronic publishing, digital libraries, electronic commerce, virtual organizations, and telecommuting.

What, then, will be the role of the IS/IT programs for the coming millennium? How can the university be enhanced as a fertile environment for thought and innovation? Can a nexus across the university be provided? Should a new breed of multi-disciplined faculty and graduates be created? In response to these questions, some universities have introduced a variety of new academic architectures by affiliating, combining, or overlapping diverse programs.

This panel will discuss the role of IS/IT programs in the coming millennium. Each member will describe programs that are being developed at their own university and explain the motivating forces behind the change. The panel discussion will then center on two main issues.

The first is, for university programs that focus on information, what kinds of synergies are appropriate and meaningful today. What are effective strategies for creating synergies? What programs complement each other? What problems are likely and how can they be overcome?

The second issue is, how do faculty, students, and industry solve the problems that result from restructuring university programs and disciplines? Will programs and disciplines lose their identities? If the boundaries of standard disciplines become unclear, how will students select degree programs and how will their future employers recognize employees across many universities and many programs? What are the impacts on faculty and their research?