# HINFormation

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

**Hello**, the year 2004 has barely begun and we are already bustling with many exciting activities at the School. **First,** we have successfully recruited *Dr. Benjamin Jung* to join the School as our newest faculty member in July of this year. Dr. Jung has just completed his PhD and is currently a Lecturer at the Centre for Health Informatics in the Department of Computer Science at Trinity College Dublin, where he teaches and conducts research in the areas of EHR, XML, HL7 and Semantic Web. **Second**, the School is now one step closer to launching a distributed master degree program in health informatics, tentatively set for January 2005. This program will be offered via online and face-to-face formats over a 2-year period. The primary target audience will be health and IT professionals seeking advanced health informatics training. **Third**, the School is currently undergoing a major review of the undergraduate curriculum to ensure it continues to meet the needs of employers and the industry. As part of this effort, we have established an Undergraduate Curriculum Advisory Council with representatives from the private sector, academia, professional associations and health organizations.

**Finally**, I will be stepping down as the Director of the School in July of this year to focus my attention on launching the distributed M.Sc. program. The search for a new Director has just begun and we hope to fill the position before the end of this year. I must say it has been a privilege for me having served as the Director of the School over the past three years – your continued success as health informaticians at all levels across Canada has made it all worthwhile.

*Francis Lau*

## COURSE UNION

For many HINF students, Fall 2003 has been a continuing hard work one after another. We managed to get through and all had a happy Christmas holiday! As for Fall 2003, many great things happened to our Course Union and its members. The Course Union is very happy with the members this year. Many various faces participated in different activities run by the course union. Many friendships have been formed over this past Fall 2003 semester. The biggest hit of the course union in Fall 2003 seemed to be the annual Hinf Pub Crawl held on November 21st, 2003. This year, under the organization of a few dedicated Hinf students, we had a blast on our Pub Crawl. The pub crawl was a joint pub crawl this year with the department of Computer Science. Since there are many friends of Hinfers in Computer Science, we decided a joint pub crawl with Cscers will be a fun thing to do. There were students from year 1 to year 4 from Hinf and CSC participated in this year

pub crawl. The joint pub crawl turned out to be a great success as there were 142 Hinfers and Cscers on the pub crawl night. Free drinks were given out at each bar and it was definitely a smiley night. Over 30 pitchers of beer were used in one of the drinking game. Pictures of the Hinf 2003 Pub Crawl can be found at our course union website: www.hinf.com under gallery section .



Big applause to the organizers – *Greg Botten, Monica Balicki, Togio Chayanuwat, Ramina Dhillon, Lindsay Forland,* and *Marc Huot* – as well as those who helped in little things for organizing such a great pub-crawl. The course union hopes that we can host another great event soon for Spring 2004. Besides the annual Pub Crawl, other great activities such as the Hinf camping trip held in September and the first week social night at Felicita's University Pub had a great turnout as well. Pictures of these activities can be found at www.hinf.com also.

As already mentioned about our first course union website, I would rather feel guilty if I don't mention about the person behind it. Thank you to *Greg Botten*, our dedicated third year hinfer who contributed his own time for our very own first course union website.

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If you have not yet visited our course union website before, www.hinf.com is just one click away from you. You can find list of course union events and pictures as well as medical and health related news and information and links to related websites here.

The Hinf Course Union is hoping that everyone will have a great semester this winter and that everyone will come out and participate at our next fun event. There has been a gossip of a Mardigras Party theme for our next big event as well as Hinf clothing. Check our website for latest detail.

Last but not least, the course union would love to hear from anyone who wants to help out and take part in the course union. Please feel free to contact any of the course union representatives or e-mail Togio at prakornc@uvic.ca with any suggestions or questions.

Good luck with Spring 2004 semester and we will see you at our next event.

*Togio Chayanuwat*

## STUDENTS

On November 10th Jaafar *Aghajanian, Adrienne Cousins, Katharine Lawrence, Robert Pope, Vani Puri,* and *Yunzhi Zhan* officially became Health Information Science alumni. Good luck in your future endeavours.

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Once again HINF students have been very successful in obtaining scholarships. Congratulations go to *Stephanie Appleby* "The ICBC Scholarship in Health Information Science" ($5,000); *Adam Beaton* "The President's Scholarship" ($885); *Shannon Gibson* the "UVic Excellence Scholarships Renewal" ($2,500); *Janine Greenwell* the "UVic Excellence Scholarship" ($3,500); *Robert Landry*, "James Coward Memorial Award" ($550); *Jamila Madhani* "The Mrs. Annie Greskiw Scholarship in Health Information

Science" ($1,512.50), "The University of Victoria Faculty Scholarship" ($500.00), and "The President's Scholarship" ($488.00); *Katherine Taylor* "The President's Scholarship" ($885); *Darla Tzonev* "The Mrs. Annie Greskiw Scholarship in Health Information Science" ($1,512.50); and to *Christine Selzler* "The President's Scholarship for Part-Time Undergraduate Students" ($700) and "The Howard Petch Scholarship" ($975.00).

## FACULTY AND STAFF

The School is pleased to welcome two new sessional instructors this term. *Ann Moskow* is teaching HINF 215 "Human Communications and Relations in Health Care". For over 25 years Ann has trained public and private sector executives, senior managers, officers and staff internationally and across Canada in various aspects of management practices, policy development and communications.

*Helen Stevens* is teaching HINF 430 "Healthcare Messaging Standards". She has extensive experience in the healthcare information technology industry providing clients with excellence in design, development, implementations and support. Her experience encompasses 12 years of HL7 expert knowledge including Version 2 and Version 3 design and working throughout the international HL7 standards organization.

*Victoria Barr* has returned to teach HINF 340 on her own this term and *Roman Mateyko* is teaching HINF 445 again. *Ken Chung* is now the instructor for HINF 301. Meanwhile our part-time faculty has been increased to 19. A full listing of the faculty and their background information can be found at http://hinf.uvic.ca/people/faculty.htm.

Congratulations to *Denis* and *Pat Protti* on the birth of their first grandson, *James V. McDonald,* born November 8th. The proud parents are *Jim* and *Carmen McDonald*.

## ALUMNI

*Michelle Ostan* ('95) is now working for the Fraser Health Authority as the Coordinator of the authority-wide Hospitalist Program.

In addition to the alumni spread coast to coast across Canada and the USA, we now have alumni in Indonesia, New Zealand, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

Congratulations to *Mahmood Tara* who has received the Dr. Julius Schleicher Graduate Scholarship, valued at $6,300. *Mowafa Househ* has transferred to the PhD program effective January 1st.

### *Yuri Kagolovsky*

On January 5 I started working as a full-time professor and a coordinator for the new health informatics program at the Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Kitchener, Ontario. I am very excited about this opportunity to create the second program in Canada offering a Bachelor degree in health informatics.

The College was established in 1967 as one of the Ontario Government's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. It is located in the centre of Canada's "Technology Triangle" and serves an area with a combined population of more than 750,000, including cities of Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and Guelph. This region is one of the economically active and fastest growing in the

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country. The industry is represented by advanced manufacturing, information technology, insurance, finance, service industry, and small businesses.

Conestoga offers over 70 full-time two and three-year diploma and one-year certificate programs through the Schools of Business, Engineering and Information Technology, Trades and Apprenticeship, Liberal and Media Studies, Health Sciences, Community Services and Biotechnology. Over 6,000 full-time students attend the College. In addition, approximately 32,000 part-time students take courses, workshops and seminars through the Department of Continuing Education. The College has four campuses. The main Doon campus is located in Kitchener, 120 km west of Toronto. The other campuses are in Waterloo, Guelph, and Stratford.

The College has established contacts and collaborations with many universities and colleges in Canada. For example, the School of Health Sciences, Community Services, and Biotechnology has a four-year BSc in Nursing degree in collaboration with McMaster University and Mohawk College. This is one of the largest educational collaborations in the province of Ontario with approximately 350 first-year students. An example of the College's establishment of an international presence is a cooperation with Heilongjiang College and the opening of a campus in China.

This is one of the best colleges in Ontario. During the last five years an independent research company conducts annual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) surveys for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and for the fifth consecutive year the results show Conestoga as the overall #1 rated college in Ontario. There are four surveys in all: graduate employment, graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction, and student satisfaction. In addition to the best composite result, the College has the best performance among Ontario colleges on the graduate employment survey.

For example, in 2002, 94% of the full-time, post-secondary graduates found employment within six months of graduation. In 2003 Essential Economics Corporation published a study of the economic and social value of Conestoga College. The study found that approximately 40% of the local labor force had been trained by the College, and 36% of the local labor force had upgraded their skills through its continuing education programs and courses.

In March 2001, the College became fully registered under the ISO 9001 as the result of the assessment made by the external auditing company, KPMG Quality Registrar Inc. In February 2003, the Ontario government designated Conestoga College with a status of an Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (ITAL). These achievements are considered by the College as steps towards transforming it into a provincial and national centre of excellence.

Conestoga College has long advocated for the adoption of applied degree-granting status for Ontario's colleges. The status of the Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning allows it to offer up to 15% of applied degree programs in addition to offering courses that enable diploma and certificate holders to earn degree designations in their areas of study. Currently, Conestoga has four approved applied degree programs: telecommunication and computer technologies, advanced manufacturing, architecture – project and facility management, and wood and composite products. Two of these programs started in September 2003, and two will start in September 2004. Graduates of these programs will receive a degree of Bachelor of Applied Technology. The degree programs at the College are planned to provide students with more personal academic experience as classes are not larger than 30 students. The faculty members are chosen among people with significant academic and industry experience. Students enrolled in degree programs would go on paid work terms and be able to apply their

skills and knowledge in a real work setting.

The new health informatics program is planned to start in September 2005. This will be a four-year program with at least 3 co-op terms, and its graduates will receive a degree of Bachelor of Applied Health Sciences – Health Care Information Management. We are planning to admit into the program approximately 30 students every year during the first four years. The teaching will be done by the faculty from all the Schools at the Conestoga. The students at the program will acquire knowledge and skills in health sciences, information technology, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, and management sciences.

In addition to the courses that are being offered in the majority of health informatics programs, the new program will focus on early development of such generic skills as creative, critical, and systems thinking; ability to solve problems, conduct research, and communicate results; to work independently, and in multidisciplinary teams; to provide leadership, manage projects, and resolve conflicts. The students will develop skills for being life-long learners and active participants in organizational learning. This will allow them to be successful in adapting to a rapidly changing contemporary job market. All these will be done by adapting the Foundation Module developed at the College and taught during the first term. Another interesting feature of the program is its strong emphasis on developing a strong understanding of health care processes by using Clinical Practicum modules. During Clinical Practicums the students will be able to apply their integrated skills and knowledge about health care, information and communication technology, management, and generic skills in different health care settings. It is envisioned that having such practicums would help students to be more productive during their work terms.

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There is a strong support in the community for health informatics education. The evidence of it is a major donation that the program has just received from Manulife Financial, a leading Canadian financial services company. The company will invest $500,000 over the next five years to promote and advance health care education at the College. Half of this amount, $250,000, will help to develop a new health information management program. Part of this money will be used to purchase computer equipment for the program's lab, as well as printed and electronic health informatics resources.

During the planning stage, the College looked at different health informatics programs in Canada and the United States. The program at UVic was chosen as the best example for the new program, and we would like to establish a close collaboration with HINF. We also plan to have close contacts and develop collaborations with health informatics initiatives at the University of Waterloo, McMaster University, York University, and the health information management program at George Brown College in Toronto.

There are still many steps that have to be gone through before September 2005. A new degree program in the province of Ontario has to receive an approval from the Post-secondary Education Quality Advisory Board (QAB) of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. We are currently preparing for a QAB Panel visit that will be during the next few months. As soon as the program is approved, we would start advertising it, and I would be able to provide you with more information. At the same time, we will be working on refining the curriculum, planning admission process, and establishing contacts with high schools, and potential employers.

Although I enjoy working, there are also possibilities "to play," as the Kitchener-Waterloo area has many cultural attractions. It has a strong Germanic heritage. Until 1916 Kitchener was known as Berlin, and at the beginning of the last century it was known as Canada's German capital. In 1916 the city was called Kitchener after Horatio Herbert Kitchener, a British General who won fame during the Boer War. The traditional Octoberfest attracts people from different countries, and hotels in the area are booked well in advance. There are art galleries, museums, music and theatrical entertainment at Kitchener's Centre in the Square, and it is not too far away if you want to get to the famous Shakespearean Festival in Stratford. Winters are usually not too harsh, and people can enjoy skiing, skating, hockey and other outdoor sports.

While living in Victoria, I enjoyed its mild climate, and it was difficult to imagine getting in a place with a real winter, especially in January. However, when I arrived in Kitchener on January 3, the weather was in an impressive contrast to the weather in Victoria, where the temperature was below zero and the roads were covered with snow. The temperature in Kitchener was +11 during the day, and +6 at night, and I was told that the winter had been one of the mildest so far. Unfortunately, in just a few days the temperature dropped below zero, and deep snow was everywhere. I was told that the cold weather this year is quite unusual for Kitchener. Although it is cold and snowy here now, I do not mind it, because it reminds me of the winters that I grew up with in Ukraine and Russia, and I am learning to shovel snow.

I miss Victoria, and the many wonderful people that I met there, but my new work is exciting and challenging, and there are many things that have to be done before starting the program. It is a great opportunity to be able to create a new program, and to promote health informatics in Canada. There is a lot of support for this new program at the College, and it will be wonderful to be able to use everything that I learned at the University of Victoria, and during my work with Health Evidence Application and Linkage Network (HEALNet).

If you would like additional information about the College, you can look at its Web site, www.conestogac.on.ca. I can be reached either using one of these e-mail addresses: ykagolov@uvic.ca and ykagolovsky@conestogac.on.ca or by phone: (519)748-5220, extension 3941

*Yuri Kagolovsky*

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PhD candidate *Craig Kuziemsky* will receive up to 2 years of funding as part of a SSHRC Innovations of New Economy funded project on the role of technology in producing and using health information. The project is led by *Dr. Ellen Balka* of Simon Fraser University. Craig's contribution to the project will be an analysis of technology use in palliative care such as how is palliative practice influenced when tools such as PDA's are used in care delivery.

# MISCELLANEOUS

Application has been made to Senate to change the terms of reference of the Michael Miller Scholarship to open it to students entering their $3^{rd}$ or $4^{th}$ year of Health Information Science as well as graduate students. The scholarship was established in 2001 in honour of former HINF MSc student, *Michael Miller*. Mike began HINF as an undergraduate in the fall of 1993, but finished with an MSc in 1998. After a long and very private battle with manic depression (bipolar disorder) Mike took his own life on August 3, 2000. He was 31.

Eligible students are encouraged to submit an essay (not to exceed 2500 words) on manic depression to the School by June 30, 2004. This scholarship is in excess of $1,500. If you are interested in learning more about Mike, a website has been established in his memory: www.michaelmillermemorial.com/index.html

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