

HINFormation

A Newsletter of the School of Health Information Science
University of Victoria

January 2005

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR

I hope you have had a good first term. For me, it has been a busy but enjoyable term as new Director of HINF. I have had the opportunity to get to know more of the faculty, staff and students and am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the upcoming weeks and months. There were many things accomplished in the first term and a number of highlights. These included intensive work by the faculty on development of a new proposed curriculum, which we hope keeps the flavour of the current HINF undergraduate program, as well as updating and adding to the curriculum in new key areas where the field of health information science has advanced in recent years. Thanks for all the useful input and feedback from alumni and students in this process. The proposed curriculum changes have been approved by the Faculty Curriculum Committee and will proceed to final approval – watch for details to be announced shortly.

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In addition to developments in the undergraduate program, there have been a number of exciting advances in the HINF graduate program. In December we ran an extensive two day seminar series where the current HINF graduate students were able to present their work to their fellow students and faculty, we thank all those who participated for making this a stimulating and interesting set of presentations. More recently, in the first week of January, the distributed Masters program in Health Information Science was launched. This is a unique program in Canada that brings together students from across Canada and will involve the use of the latest distance and on-line learning technologies. Dr. Francis Lau and colleagues have worked hard to make this innovative program a reality and we congratulate them on a successful start. The launch of the program was kicked off by an on-site week long course on methods held here in Victoria where the 19 new graduate students participated.

In other news, Denis Protti has been named as “Who’s Who in Healthcare” for his many and continuing contributions to health information science, congratulations Denis! In addition, the weekly HINF research seminars have resumed (they are being held on Friday mornings) and everyone is welcome to attend. The first seminar was presented on January 7 and the full term of seminars is available at:

<http://hinf.uvic.ca/events/index.htm#seminars>.

The seminars are being video taped and digitized and are available through the HINF web site for viewing (if you cannot make a particular seminar). We are currently in the process of recruiting for a 2 year term faculty position. The successful candidate will help with teaching in both the undergraduate program and the new Distributed Masters program. Finally, I would like to welcome to the School two professors on sabbatical: Dr. Shigeki Kuwata from Japan, and Dr. Pierre LeBeux from France. These two visitors join John Horne also here on sabbatical, welcome.

I hope you have an interesting and exciting spring term!

Andre Kushniruk

STUDENTS



Andre Kushniruk & Erin Reardon

Andre Kushniruk hosted his first HINF reception for graduating students in November when 19 students received their BSc. Goodbye and good luck to Lindsay Arscott, Melissa Barling, Anoop Buttar, Jeanette Carlson, Zhe Chen, Heather Garnett, Tanupreet Gidda, Jane Kong, Shannon Malovec, Elisa McIntosh,

Shamir Mithani, Krishan Pallan, Sherman Quan, Erin Reardon, Jacqueline Robichaud, Christine Selzler, Katherine Taylor, Jiahui Yao, and Xu Zhang.



Elisa McIntosh and Gerhard Brauer

Congratulations to Wei Hong and Amber Wenstob. They each received \$1550 as this year's recipients of the Barbara Thornton Memorial Award.

On October 10th at St. Ann's Academy in Victoria, Cori Thompson married Max Durando. The happy couple will be residing in Victoria.



Cori and Max Durando

ALUMNI

Marc Tallentire ('04) is now working for the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) in Toronto. He is an analyst for the Hospital Reports department working on the annual acute care Hospital Report and Benchmarking report.

Anita DiMaio ('96) is a VYSTA Application Technical Specialist at the Vancouver Island Health Authority.

Gail Peterson (MSc '95) has left IBM and is now the Lead, Special Projects at the new Victoria office of CIHI.

George Burns ('94) is still practicing medicine in Prince George where he has opened a brand new office, 1500 square feet, with three exam rooms. He has implemented an electronic medical record and has 6 computers, all networked, with a terminal in each exam room. The computers are all secured by an electronic identification and locking system called "Xyloc" which prevents unauthorized access to the data. Truly an electronic office, he uses a thermal printer with high-security thermal prescription paper for prescriptions and uses Dragon Naturally Speaking Medical Edition for dictating notes into the charts.

Gerry Bliss ('87) is back in Victoria working for Seattle based Covestic and consulting with the BC Ministry of Health on privacy issues.

Jiahui Yao ('04) is working as a research officer with the Integrated Analysis & Evaluation, Fraser Health Authority.

Mellisa Barling ('04) is in the UK working as a business analyst at Camden PCT for their information development team.

The project I am the project manager for has won the national 3M Team Quality Award (non-acute environment). The alumni involved in the project include myself, Rosemary Gray ('95), Michael Li ('03), Alec Matthews ('03), and Peter Chan ('03). Rosemary's team and mine also collaborated on the information system used in this project (as well as in others now across the province.) The system won the BC public sector IT award in the public value section.

Sylvia Robinson ('87)

Valerie Gibbs ('98), will be leaving her role of Proposal Director at PRA International in February 2005 to take on the more senior position of Director Business Operations for PRA's Victoria, San Diego and Ottawa business units.

Andy French ('00) enrolled in the Executive MBA program at the Richard Ivey School of Business (University of Western Ontario). The 17 month program began in January 2005 and finishes in June 2006.

FACULTY

Sessional Instructors

We are pleased to welcome back Roman Mateyko and Victoria Barr as sessional instructors teaching HINF 445 and HINF 340 respectively. New to the HINF team is Stephen Hume who is teaching HINF 215. As a reporter in the 1970s and 80s, Stephen covered local, provincial, and federal health issues. In addition, he has written on medical ethics and other health issues for medical journals such as the *Medical Post* and *JAMA*, as well

as various newspapers. He is the author of *Frederick Banting: Hero, Healer, Artist* – A biography of Canadian scientist and physician Dr. Frederick Banting, whose work led to the discovery of insulin. Stephen has been a sessional instructor in UVic's Department of English since 2001.

International Society for Tele dermatology

I accepted an invitation to join the Advisory Board of the International Society for Tele dermatology (ISTD) in autumn 2004. ISTD was founded in 2003 to substitute and integrate the "European Confederation of Telemedical Organizations in Dermatology" into a world-wide coverage. In order to promote tele dermatology (TD), its activities include:

- Exchanging experience in the field of TD
- Communicating and publishing
 - ♦ common quality standards for diagnosis and management of skin diseases
 - ♦ existing strategies for the management of skin diseases
 - ♦ quality standards for teleconsultation with a focus on TD
- Organizing scientific congresses and educational courses
- Publishing teleeducation programs on TD
- Coordinating and supporting TD projects
- Organizing online TD databases
- Organizing a legal platform in order to provide databases of national and international legal standards and to discuss legal problems in the TD field
- Coordinating and stimulating scientific work in the TD field

More information can be found on the ISTD homepage:
<http://www.tele dermatology-society.org/>

Benjamin Jung

Who's Who in Healthcare Award.

Denis Protti has received a "Who's Who in Healthcare" Award. The following article appeared in the October 2004 issue of *Canadian Healthcare Manager* by Gabrielle Bauer.

"Denis Protti has always been drawn to the big picture. Whether it's in the classroom at the University of Victoria, where he is a professor at the School of Health Information Science (HINF), in his work on international health information strategies, or at Partnerships & Productivity, the colloquium he has hosted for the past 20 years, Dr. Protti's focus is on healthcare's big ideas.

Take his teaching. The founding director of HINF between 1981 and 1994, Dr. Protti created the School's original curriculum and helped assemble its faculty.

Early on, Dr. Protti looked beyond the confines of the classroom, using video conferencing as a learning tool. He now uses the medium to allow hospital executives to "interact" with students in his health informatics courses. In one fourth-year course, for example, "students have to compare and contrast the actual strategic plans of different healthcare organizations," he explains. "The course ends with a four hour videoconference between the students and various healthcare sites. The students present their analyses, and the sites provide feedback—and hopefully learn something as well."

To date, HINF is still the only health informatics program in Canada that provides comprehensive training in the field. The school's more than 400 graduates work in health-related organizations throughout Canada, in capacities ranging from analysts to managers to senior executives—and Dr. Protti has taught and mentored just about every one.

Dr. Protti's research activities extend far beyond the ivory tower. A world leader in the area of electronic health record and information management, he advises several countries on the deployment of health information

technology. In 1998, the United Kingdom Treasury commissioned him to review its National Health Service (NHS) Information Strategy before it was rolled out. The methodology he developed for that project—known as the "Protti Scores"—used 10 measurable criteria to monitor the local implementation of the strategy in 100 communities.

His expertise has long been at work on this continent—before taking up teaching, Dr. Protti spent time in senior executive IT positions in hospitals in Manitoba and British Columbia. He is a founding member of both COACH, Canada's Health Informatics Organization, and the American Medical Informatics Association. He's also been the chair of the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) Partnership Working Group on data content standards.

With over 200 articles in peer-reviewed journals among his published materials, Dr. Protti also finds the time to deliver presentations, workshops and seminars at conferences throughout the world—and even to play the odd game of duplicate bridge. But he says his proudest accomplishment is Partnerships & Productivity, the colloquium he launched in 1985 and has co-chaired for the past 20 years. The event is an "uncensored" forum for influential healthcare players—corporate and hospital executives, physicians and deputy health ministers among them—who are after that same big picture that he is. Loosely structured around a different theme every year—privatization, aging, human resources—the colloquium blends short presentations with "lots of discussion," says Dr. Protti.

When Dr. Protti announced his decision to step down as chair of the colloquium earlier this year, a group of former participants raised \$150,000 as an endowment in his and his wife—and co-chair—Pat's honour. He says possibilities for the funds include a bursary for undergraduate students at HINF, a scholarship for the School's new graduate program, and a

scholarship allowing students to pursue specialized training abroad.

But the Partners & Productivity colloquium undoubtedly trumps most other accomplishments in his mind. "I'm quite pleased about the way it's evolved," he concedes. As with the rest of his work, that evolution will doubtless continue, as will his continued search for the big ideas."

Processing HL7-XML with XSL

My proposal to add another tutorial to the existing set of tutorials taught at HL7 Working Group (WG) meetings was accepted by the HL7 Education Committee at the end of 2004. I am going to teach "Processing HL7-XML with XSL", a half-day hands-on tutorial and workshop, at the January WG meeting in Orlando. The class covers the basic principles and code constructs to transform HL7-XML documents for data exchange, print and electronic publication.

Benjamin Jung

While in London, UK, in November, Denis Protti accepted the formidable challenge of predicting the future for health informatics in the twenty-first century in a talk sponsored by the University College London Centre for Health Informatics and Multi-professional Education (CHIME), together with City University's Centre for Measurement and Information in Medicine (MIM) and the UK Health Information Society (UKHiS -formerly BMIS, British Medical Informatics Society). Full information can be found at

<http://www.chime.ucl.ac.uk/events/dprotti20041104/index.htm>

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Distributed Stream MSc

After 2 years of intense preparation, we are finally launching the distributed MSc stream in January 2005 with the first cohort of 19 graduate students. The first course being offered in January is HINF 503 Research Methods in Health Informatics by Dr. Nicola Shaw from UBC. It has a 5-day intensive face-to-face workshop in Victoria followed by 3 weeks of online forum with individual/group assignments. From February to April students will enrol in one of two online electives - HINF 511 Critical Appraisal by Dr. Robert Hayward from U of Alberta or HINF 553 e-health Sustainability by Dr. Richard Scott from U of Calgary. Then the cohort meets face-to-face again at UVic in June for two weeks followed by another two weeks of online forum for two core courses - HINF 510 Health Information Management by Professor Denis Protti and HINF 550 Health Information Systems Design by Dr. Francis Lau. From September to December the cohort will enrol in HINF 571 Health Systems Data Analysis by Dr. Malcolm Maclure, and take part in our regular HINF 580 Research Seminar series. The second year has a similar structure but is focused more on completing the HINF 598 Major Project from within their workplace.

We are also very pleased with our first cohort selection of 19 students, who have a variety of IT/healthcare backgrounds and work experience across different settings, including one who works with First Nations. Eleven of these students are from the Western Provinces, seven are from Ontario, and one from Saudi Arabia visiting UBC with her husband. Among the cohort are six MD's, one pharmacist and various IT/health professionals who have worked extensively in the healthcare system. Some are sponsored by their employers to be in this program, and most are con-

tinuing to work full-time while pursuing the MSc degree. All are expected to take on a major health informatics research project that can benefit their organization or workplace in some way, which is what makes this MSc stream an attractive and practical program. Everyone is very committed and looking forward to the two-year journey ahead into the exciting world of health informatics. For more information about this unique and innovative distributed MSc program please visit our school website <http://hinf.uvic.ca/programs/index.htm> under Graduate Programs.

Francis Lau

Nicole Grimm's paper "Translating a Project-based Course in Health Care Quality Improvement to Distance Education using the PDSA Approach", co-authored by Felicia Pantazi, Stefan Pantazi, Jochen Moehr and Francis Lau, was accepted for presentation at the Hawaii International Conference on Education, January 4 - 7, 2005 in Honolulu. Nicole received a Graduate Student Travel Grant to attend.

Nicole Grimm has been accepted as a trainee in Dr. Shoo Lee's CIHR-funded Neonatal-Perinatal Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement (NICE) trainee program.

The Neonatal-Perinatal Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement (NICE) team brings together researchers, clinicians and decision makers to develop new methods of knowledge translation to improve quality of care for mothers and babies. The NICE Team Trainee Program supports graduate and medical students interested in pursuing an interdisciplinary approach to quality improvement. Dr. Jochen Moehr is a NICE team member, and is Nicole Grimm's supervisor. Nicole is pursuing case study research on the influence of organizational culture and quality improvement initiatives on evidence-based practice within the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at

Finished and Staying On

Carolyn Green has successfully defended her PhD thesis "The Actualities of Regional Health Board Work: Implications for Decision Support Design" and been awarded a Canadian Institute of Health Research fellowship for 2004 to 2007. Her postdoctoral research program, which will extend the methodology used in her doctoral research, will be undertaken with Malcolm Maclure here at the School of Health Information Science. In the process of starting to map knowledge translation practices for chronic disease management in primary care renewal in BC, HINF graduates have been identified at the centre of action. For example, the Vancouver Island Health Authority innovative 3M award winning project in chronic disease management has had the capable support of HINF alumni Sylvia Robinson as project manager as well as Michael Li and Peter Chan as informatics support. Likewise this project as well as others benefit from the chronic disease management toolkit that Rosemary Gray and Alec Matthews have developed. Carolyn is looking forward to being able to demonstrate how it is that knowledge is successfully translated into practice through the use of informatics tools and processes.

Look for upcoming publications based on Carolyn's thesis. Her doctoral research examined how health data, information and knowledge (evidence) is taken up or not in the little researched area of health care governance. The opportunities for decision support suggested by this research include web-based provision of electronic documents with enhanced functionality for board members to facilitate knowledge translation, as well as telecommunication support for meetings between board members and stakeholder advisor liaisons. As well, the thesis provides an empirical basis for the support of information infrastructure development and guidance as

to the development of tailor made decision support tools such as digital dashboards. HEALNet legacy funding as well as a trainee award from the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Services Research supported Carolyn through her doctoral studies.

CO-OP

Effective May 2004, all cooperative education work terms completed at UVic have been awarded two (2.00) units of credit. These credits may only be applied to completion of the work term requirements and may not be applied to fulfill any other degree program requirement.

HINF Co-op weblog

With the start of the first Co-op term in the new year, we run a weblog in the school in order to improve the communication with and between our HINF Co-op students while they are away. A weblog (or blog) is an online journal or diary, that each student is encouraged to 'feed' with irregular notes, comments or short reports about their daily work. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Descriptions of the daily tasks
- Work related challenges and how they were solved
- Things that were learned on the job
- Things to recommend/not recommend
- Experiences the student had gone through while on the new job
- Job related things to do in the spare time
- Personal challenges in the new environment
- Interesting places/locations in the city
- Help in raising funding
- Accommodation hunting issues

The list could go on and I am sure we will see some interesting and novel aspects in the near future. The weblog allows an online audience (such as faculty, staff, prospective students and Co-op employers) to closely follow progress and success of our students,

offering help and advice whenever it is needed, much quicker and more comprehensively than before. On the other hand, past journals will be an excellent source for prospective HINF Co-op students in order to help them with choosing a workplace, getting external funding, looking for accommodation or just finding the right spot to hang out and meet people in the new city.

We are looking forward to many 'live' reports! If you have a couple of minutes to spare, please visit our HINF Co-op students at their new online home and make this a successful enterprise.

<http://142.104.48.20/roller/>

Benjamin Jung

MISCELLANEOUS

CIHR/MSFHR phd/postdoc training program

On January 5, 2005 we kicked off the 2nd round of our CIHR/MSFHR strategic training program with a real-time virtual research seminar linking a cohort of 30 PhD/postdoc/practitioner trainees and 14 mentors from East to West coast. The CIHR/MSFHR Health Informatics PhD/Postdoc Strategic Training Program, also known as the CHPSTP, was established in June 2002 with funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the BC Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR). The CHPSTP has eight partner universities across Canada with UVic as the lead institution[1]. The overall aim of this program is to increase research capacity in health informatics (HI) at the advanced level in Canada. The specific objectives are to:

- Offer research learning experiences to trainees that are not obtainable from local programs
- Strengthen collaboration among partner institutions in HI education and research
- Build a virtual community that is actively engaged in HI research, education and practice

- Assume a leadership/facilitation role as a credible academic HI community in Canada

The training program is closely aligned with the research areas of the mentors so their work can be linked to the trainees and across partner institutions. There are three thematic areas based on the CIHR health domains and HI research themes of partners: primary care informatics (PCI); e-health policy and evaluation (e-health); and knowledge management (KM). These 3 themes are only intended to provide a high-level categorization of relevant research areas to encourage focused collaboration among the mentors, yet still considered sufficiently broad to allow diverse HI research and development to be undertaken by the trainees.

The basic structure of the training program is comprised of online Research Learning Experience (RLE) modules with regular virtual classes, annual on-campus workshops and face-to-face meetings at HI related conferences. Three mini-cohorts have been established each focused on one theme. Each mini-cohort is coordinated by 2 mentors from 2 partner institutions. These coordinators are responsible for organizing and facilitating specific research training activities for each mini-cohort. To foster better integration of HI research and practice, the PCI mini-cohort also includes a small group of practitioner trainees from BC to explore research-based HI practice in primary care settings. The program will run for 20 months from Jan 2005 to Aug 2006. For further information about the CHPSTP please visit our website at <http://web.his.uvic.ca/chpstp/index.html> or contact Dr. Francis Lau who is the program director, or Nicole Grimm who is the program coordinator.

Francis Lau

[1] The 8 partners are: U of Victoria, Calgary, McMaster, McGill, Waterloo, Toronto, Sherbrooke and Dalhousie.

STUDENT UNION

The fall semester proved to be a stellar success for the student union. We held a start-of-semester dinner at Boston Pizza, which gave students a chance to meet and socialize outside of classes. That event set the stage for the legendary HINF pub crawl held in late November. Nearly 100 participants in shockingly bright orange shirts took to the streets, meeting up with other student pub crawls along the way at Hugo's, Upstairs Cabaret, and Red Jacket. Aside from being visible from half a kilometer away, we were truly a force to be reckoned with.



Hesitant to call it quits just yet, two end of semester Christmas parties followed, in which both students and faculty alike came out to celebrate the holiday season. (for pictures from the pub crawl and all our events, be sure to visit <http://hinf.com>) That about wraps up fall of 2004, a big thank you to everyone who helped organize the events.

We're off to an ambitious start this spring! Our first event, only a couple of days away, will be a night of bowling, friends, and fun. A much more informal student union has formed this time around with Brian Chou, Katie Mackle, Kira Allingham, Richard Theng, Steve Murenbeeld, and myself, Marc Huot, all helping to organize events. We intend on continuing the pub crawl tradition, as well as introducing a few other events that will be sure to liven up the campus.

Don't wait until the next edition of the newsletter to hear about this

semester's events! The two best resources to keep up to date with student life on campus are the official website (<http://hinf.com>) and mailing list (<http://lists.uvic.ca/mailman/listinfo/hinf>). Make sure to check that you've bookmarked or subscribed to them, respectively.

Best of luck to all students in their classes and co-op terms this semester. To those who will be joining the alumni ranks in short order, our congratulations!

Marc Huot

More Graduation Pictures.....

