HINFormation

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

May 2007

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Summer is finally here! We have had a productive month with a number of exciting new developments as well as a new term already under way for many of our undergraduate students. This period also included the arrival of twenty-five of our distance Masters students in May to Victoria to attend two weeks of intensive on-campus courses. We had students attending this event from across Canada, the United States and from as far away as Pakistan, with presentations from faculty and visiting experts from as far away as Spain (see this issue for a description of this innovate distance educational event). Also during this month Professor Francis Lau co-hosted a very successful BC Hospice and Palliative Care conference in Vancouver, with substantive input from faculty and students from the School and our Faculty.

Congratulations to Craig Kuziemsky who recently graduated with a PhD in Health Information Science from the School and who will be taking up a position as Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa! He will help to set up an innovative health informatics stream within their business school. He joins Stefan Pantazi as a recent PhD graduate of our School working to set up health informatics educational programs across Canada.

In addition, during the past while the School has received a number of grants for exciting projects. This included a grant from the BC Ministry of Health to support the School in setting up an "Electronic Health Record Educational Portal". This innovative portal will house a variety of electronic record systems (including both commercial and open source systems) which will be made accessible to students and health informatics professionals over the WWW. It will also include educational materials to introduce a range of students (including health information science and health professional students in areas such as nursing and medicine) to the latest electronic health records. Also, the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services has given the School a major grant to develop a new 13-week government informatics training program that draws in many ways from our unique approach to health informatics education. If you are interested in either of these projects please let us know as there will be many opportunities for collaboration and input from students and alumni alike on these and related projects and initiatives over the coming year.

Andre Kushniruk

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Distributed Master's On-Campus Workshop

Our distributed master's students have just left Victoria, following another successful workshop. A good number of the students were in their first or second term in the master's program, and got to jump in with both feet as we kicked off two intensive courses, "Research Methods" with Elizabeth Borycki and "Information Management" with Denis Protti. There was a good mix of new students and those closer to graduation, and after 10 days of intensive coursework, they became a pretty tight group!

Day two saw our class hooked up to translation equipment for lectures by Dr. Antonio Peinado, General Secretary, SAS (Andalusian Health Care System); Dr. Francisco Pérez, Diraya Project Manager, Andalusian health care system; and Pablo Rivero Corte, Managing Director, Health Innovation Systems and Technology, Andalucía Ministry of Health. Other guest lecturers included Sarah Kramer, CIO, Cancer Care Ontario and Dr. Chris Corbett, President, CSCW Systems Corporation, among others, including many of HINF's own faculty.

Students could be found in their 'off-hours' kayaking in the harbour, racing up Mount Tolmie, discovering Victoria's nightlife, and climbing exhausted into bed at the end of each day. The group projects kept everybody pretty busy, with some groups setting their alarms for early dawn to get a head start. Now that everyone has left, once their final assignments are completed, we expect a lot of catch-up sleeping will be required! Our students are now on break until the next course starts up in July.

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On May 7, students in HINF 510 along with 25-30 other guests were exposed to the exciting developments that are taking place in the province of Andalucia in Spain.

Since the end of the '90s the province of Andalucía (8 million people) has been developing an e-Health Strategy, which consists of integrating all the health information on each citizen and making this information available at any time or any place in which the citizen requires health assistance. The eHealth strategy is a reality today thanks to DIRAYA, the unified Digital Medical Record (an EMR/EHR used by over 10,000 primary care physicians in 1,500 primary care centres, a growing number of specialists and other health professionals) that allows the integration of all the information systems and of healthcare management in the Public Health Centres in Andalusia. DIRAYA includes:

- a centralized appointment system,
- use of smart card which each patient and physician has
- a Citizen Information and Services Centre called 'Health Responses' which is operational twenty-four hours a day,
- an electronic prescription system called 'Prescription XXI' which is directly connected to doctors' offices and all pharmacies,

- a Telemedicine system, and other developments which have made the region a point of reference in Europe.

The Deputy Minister of Health from Andalucía, the physician in charge of the design and implementation, the head technical architect and the developers of DIRAYA came to Victoria to meet with an audience of western Canada ministry and larger Regional Health Authorities CIOs as well the students in HINF 510. It was a stimulating and unique opportunity to gain insights into the strategy and intentions of the DIRAYA planners. The audience was informed that not only is DIRAYA used by all primary care teams across the entire region, it is now operational in 14 of the region's 35 hospitals and is also being implemented in all of the outpatient clinics of all the hospitals.

Denis Protti

First Graduates from the Health Information Science Distributed Master's Program!

Congratulations to Sihong Huang, Liz Peloso, and Tim Graham who have joined Jeff Barnett as the first graduates from our distributed master's program. All four will receive their degrees at the June 8 convocation ceremony.

Sihong Huang defended her project report in December 2006, titled "A Regional Palliative Service Reporting System at Vancouver Island". In her life outside of her studies, she is the Technical Team Lead and Senior Software Developer / Analyst / Designer at TP Systems Ltd in Victoria, BC.

Liz Peloso also completed her degree last December after her successful oral defense on her project "Evaluation of End-User Satisfaction with a New Community Model Implementation". Liz is a Manager at Deloitte & Touche in Toronto.

Tim Graham completed his degree this Spring, defending his project titled "Usability Characteristics of

Two Emergency Department Electronic Clinical Decision Support Systems". Tim is Assistant Clinical Professor in Emergency Medicine at the University of Alberta.

For students in the HINF Master's program, be sure to take a look at Sihong, Tim, and Jeff's final project report on the HINF 598 site on WebCT.

Distributed Master's Student Granted Health Research Award

Congratulations to Jay Lambert, who successfully applied for the BC ACADRE Aboriginal Health research award in the amount of $16,000. Jay's research project is entitled "First Nations Making Sense of a First Nations Client Registry" One of the goals of the BC ACADRE is to recruit and improve Aboriginal access to health research training programs and health research careers. The Aboriginal Health Research Awards and Fellowships are intended to support and increase the number of Aboriginal health professionals with health research skills and research experience. The BC ACADRE is innovative in the development of cooperative research environments by placing the Aboriginal community at the center of the process.

New Funding for Entrance Scholarships to Distributed Master's Program

In the 2007 Throne Speech the BC government announced that it would be providing funding to the province's research-intensive universities for expansion of their graduate programs. The government has identified provincial-priority areas, including life sciences, technology, clean technology, natural resources, the 'government's Asia-Pacific Gateway Strategy' and increased opportunities for aboriginal students. We are very happy to announce that the master's program in the School of Health Information Science has been

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identified as falling into the government's priority areas. We have just received word that we will be given funding for our September-entry students for 2007, which will take the form of several 'Pacific Century Graduate Scholarships': entrance scholarships of $10,000 each. This is very exciting news for our programs as we are able, for the first time, to offer competitive entrance scholarships to distance students as well as on-campus. New applicants for the Master's program for September who get their applications in by June 15th will be considered. We are hoping to have some additional funds for January, and to receive Pacific Century Graduate Scholarships again next year for the September entry. Intakes for the on-line distributed Masters program are ongoing: the program has three start times each year in September, January and May. Spread the word to your friends and colleagues!
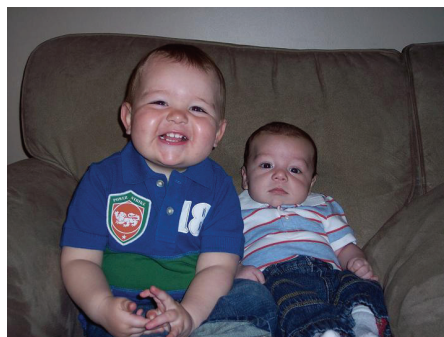
On-Campus Program

It looks like 2007/08 will be an exciting time for our on-campus master's program as well. We had a large increase in applications for the on-campus program, and are happy to have been able to admit 10 new students to start their studies on campus in the fall, increasing our total number of on-campus master's students to 14. Some students from our undergraduate program have taken the opportunity to further their studies with a HINF master's degree, while other new students are coming from the USA, Toronto and Iran. We're looking forward to welcoming this diverse group of students to campus!

ALUMNI

For those interested in statistics, here is a comparison of what our alumni are doing now compared to 1999 based on the information they have sent us. This information was compiled for the School's upcoming External Review.

	1999	2007
Employed in BC	78%	64%
Employed in other parts of Canada	15%	26%
Employed outside of the country	7%	10%
Work in government departments including community health agencies	40%	56%
Work in hospitals	20%	12%
Work in consulting firms, software houses or computer hardware firms	40%	26%
Work in universities or colleges	n/a	6%

Babies, Babies, Babies

Ben and Matthew McRae

Congratulations to Sara (Kennedy '98) McRae on the birth of her second son, Matthew Lawrence McRae on February 9th shown above with big brother, Ben.

Kim and Brooklyn Spryszak

Congratulations as well to Sean and Kim (Arscott '00)) Spryszak on the birth of their daughter Brooklyn Avery Spryszak born January 27, 2007. Weighing in at a healthy 7lb. 4 oz. more pictures can be seen at http://www.spryszak.com.

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Caillie Saunders

And, to make it a triple header, Robin Saunders ('95)had a healthy 7lb 9oz baby girl named Callie on March 24/07 in Prince George. In what is definitely a HINF first, the baby was delivered by Robin's former HINF classmate, Dr. George Burns ('94).

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CO-OP NEWS

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority – PARIS Project reaches milestone of 50 Co-op students hired

In the spring of 2003, Blair Stickland (HINF BSc '89) phoned the HINF Co-op office to ask if we had any students available for the coming summer. He was in charge of a new project at Vancouver Coastal Health – the Primary Access Regional Information System. The project, he said, would need several students to help out with implementation, and would be ongoing for 18 months or so. We were able to send the PARIS team seven students that summer, and they had a great introduction to a new information system as well as to change management in action.

Four years later, PARIS has been very successful, and has gone above and beyond its initial phases. The team at PARIS is still hiring HINF Co-op students, as well as graduates of the program. Currently, there are 9 HINF alumni working with PARIS, 6 of whom completed a co-op work term there. One of the first students on the project, Yuko Kawano, did her 4th work term with the PARIS team in the summer of 2003, and she still enjoys the work and the people there today.

Thanks to Melanie Worobec, who currently hires and supervises our students, the PARIS project has been responsible for FIFTY Co-op placements to date. In fact, another long-time Co-op employer of ours was heard to mention – "Is it mandatory that your students complete at least one work term with the PARIS project?"

Here in the HINF Co-op office, we value the educational partnership that we've had over the years with Vancouver Coastal Health Authority – PARIS Project. They have given our students invaluable experience, and have helped us develop the next generation of Health Informatics specialists.

Summer placement

This summer, we have 24 students out on a Co-op work term. They are working for a wide variety of organizations across Canada and in Australia. Employers include those that have taken many students in the past as well as some that are newcomers to Co-op hiring. The organizations that are currently hiring our students include:

BC Cancer Agency
BC Centre for Disease Control
BC Ministry of Forests
BC Ministry of Health
Calgary Health Region
 Canadian Institute for Health
   Information (CIHI)
Mt. Sinai Hospital
Northern Health Authority
Providence Healthcare
Queensland Government
 Regional Shared Health Information
   Program
Saskatchewan Health
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
Vancouver Island Health Authority

Since we placed 100% of our students once again this summer, but had additional employers who wanted to hire, we managed to place 12 University of Victoria students who were enrolled in other Co-op programs, including Business, Social Science, Education and Computer Science.

Dave Hutchinson

FACULTY & STAFF

Angie Francis will be moving to the Director's Office in Cooperative Education for a 4 month term as Secretary to the Executive Director, beginning May 17. Angie joins the Director's Office team at a very exciting time, as there will be a new Executive Director this summer, as well as 3 new Program Managers. Please join us in wishing her luck in this new and challenging position. She won't be too far away (University Centre) so we can still visit!

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Alex Kuo

Dr. Mu-Hsing (Alex) Kuo joined us in February for a year long sabbatical. Dr. Kuo is an assistant professor in the Department of Information Management, at the Chaoyang University of Technology, in Taiwan. He arrived just in time to present his paper "Application of Data Mining to Diabetes Care Management" at ITCH 2007. Dr. Kuo is occupying an office in HSD A203 and can be reached at akuo@uvic.ca.

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D enis Protti recently represented Canada at a one day meeting in the OECD offices in Paris. The meeting was to discuss and refine proposals for future OECD work in two work streams, namely: (1) challenges of valuing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in health care; and (2) drivers and incentives for implementation.

The meeting took stock of progress in health ICT applications around the world, discussed factors that promote or impede adoption or implementation, and considered the strength of the evidence on the impact of ICT on effectiveness and efficiency. Fourteen countries were represented. In addition to Canada, there was at least one representative from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, United Kingdom, and United States. There were also a number of representatives from the European Commission and WHO as well as a variety of individuals from European universities and the private sector.

Summer Sessional Instructors

We would like to welcome new sessional instructor Erdem Yazganoglu, who is teaching HINF 371 for the first time. Erdem is a physician with experience in clinical decision-making and in the use and impact of clinical practice guidelines. He has a Master's degree in Health Sciences from the University of Toronto, a Master's degree in Hospital Administration from Leeds University, UK, and a Medical degree from Gee University, Turkey.

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Welcome back to Jeff Barnett, the HINF 351 instructor this summer. He taught HINF 450 in the summer of 2004. Jeff is the first graduate from our Distributed Masters Program and has signed on to teach a course in our distributed master's program in the fall titled: "Information Technology Procurement in the Real World". Check with the grad secretary (hisgrad@uvic.ca) for more information on this and other upcoming graduate courses.

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Roman Mateyko and Nola Ries are again teaching HINF 345 and HINF 330 respectively.

STUDENTS

Lara Dahl (right)

UVic Health Care Team Challenge Amir Kabesh and Manbir Atwal represented the School at the UVic Health Care Team Challenge earlier this year while Lara Dahl acted as MC.

Coach Founding President's Award

Congratulations to Chris Carvalho, this year's recipient of the Coach Founding President's Award. In addition to a cash prize of $500, Chris has received a free registration to e-health 2007 and free COACH membership for 2007.

Undergraduate Demographics

No, it is not your imagination; our students really are getting younger. In 2000 we started admitting students directly from high school which has had an impact on the school's demographics.

	1999	2007
Average age on admission	26	23
Students with a previous degree	40%	18%
Students with a background in health-related disciplines	25%	10%

MISCELLANEOUS

There are some exciting changes taking place in the undergraduate program starting in September.

For the first time, a part-time option will be available with special permission of the Director. Typically, to be considered for the part-time option an applicant will have a minimum of one year experience working in a related field. This part-time option is not available through the combined Major in Computer Science and Health Information Science.

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We will now accept students into the program both in September and January. The new application deadlines are March 31 and October 31.

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HINF 172 has been renumbered HINF 130 and renamed "Introduction to Health Information Technology."

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Both HINF 130 and HINF 140 will be offered in the fall and spring without any prerequisites to encourage students from other faculties to "get a taste of HINF" by taking the courses as electives.

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