

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

My goal is to obtain an assistant professor (preferably tenure-track) position at a top-ranking research institution that executes its theoretical research findings through real-world industry application. It is important to me to perform Management/Business Information System research for the sake of improving the implementation of technology for business and personal value rather than pursuing research for purely theoretical value that is not brought to bear. I believe that a university that emphasizes excellence in teaching as much as research productivity is crucial to the success of the organization.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

As a MIS researcher, I prefer thinking “outside of the box;” I focus on the *relationship* between the individuals or groups and the information system instead of the information system by itself. I was first introduced to this paradigm shift in the *Media Equation* (1996) by Reeves and Nass which proposes “Media = Real Life” where humans interact with new media such as computers as they would with other human beings. Therefore, human-computer interaction becomes a type of *interpersonal* interaction between man and machine. This is consistent with Orlikowski and Iacono’s (2001) “ensemble view” of the IT artifact which calls for “unpacking the black-box” by examining it in the context in which it is being used. “IT artifacts are always embedded in some time, place, discourse, and community . . . and these conditions, both material and cultural, cannot be ignored, abstracted, or assumed away,” according to Orlikowski and Iacono. Therefore, the human actors interacting with an information system are as integral to MIS research as the technology itself.

My initial research began with examining how humans interact with websites in a social context. We found that websites could act as social actors that elicit a politeness response from humans. Participants provided significantly more positive evaluations to a web-based tutor that asked for a self-evaluation than a third-party website that requested the same feedback on the web-based tutor. If humans apply psychological social norms when interacting with technology, this has many implications for researchers, practitioners, and individuals.

My dissertation research focuses on optimizing information technology usage to maximum knowledge worker productivity. Knowledge workers are white collared workers engaged in the production, process, or distribution of information, who represent the majority of the US workforce (Aral et al. 2006; Drury et al. 1999). The basic idea is that more technology is not necessarily better. The premise is that more technology use does not always lead to increased productivity and can sometimes, in fact, be counterproductive. I propose a new concept of technology crowding which is a phenomenon that occurs at the point in which more technology usage which initially improved workers’ productivity has reached the point of diminishing marginal returns. We have created and validated a construct for technology crowding that has three dimensions: system feature, information, and communication overload. These dimensions are based on contextual and human-factors such as task-technology fit, bounded rationality, and human interruption theory. This research poses a rival hypothesis to consider relative to the productivity paradox. Is it possible that there is a curvilinear relationship instead of no relationship between information technology and productivity?

My other research interests follow within the same focus on human-computer interaction outcomes. I am interested in research dealing with on-line social communities, workgroup collaboration, organizational impacts of IT groups, innovations supporting public good, and how technology has changed the environment in which we live. I am also interested in examining the dichotomy between MIS theoretical research and IT practitioner research and how this gap can be narrowed so that both research communities can benefit.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

As a teacher, my goal is to prepare students to best achieve their individual goals as they pertain to knowledge about information technology. I believe that students should be challenged by their coursework and that it is my responsibility to engage them in the materials by making the curriculum relevant and promoting mutual respect between myself and my students.

I feel that many university level courses have become “one-size-fits-all,” where professors do not take the students’ goals into account. For instance, I taught two sections of Management Information Systems (INFO 3130) to college-level seniors, most of whom were not MIS majors. One common complaint students have in this course is that the material is not relevant to their future careers in marketing, accounting, finance, international business, or other business related fields. To mitigate this, I divided project groups by majors and assigned students a software demo of a functional business system that was relevant to their fields. The end result was that each student realized how information technology was relevant to their major and their future career. Another way I attempt to “mass customize” the course is by assigning open-ended writing assignments where students are able to research topics that are specific to their own interests yet still teaching important course concepts.

Over time, I have realized and gladly accepted the fact that challenging students also means challenging myself. Although grading written assignments, assigning group projects, avoiding scantron exams, customizing Power Point presentations, and adding supplemental materials increases my own workload, I know that my students learn more from these teaching methods than they would otherwise. Students may complain that my section of the course is more difficult, but in the end, they always admit that they have learned more from the class and are proud of their accomplishments.

While I expect a lot from my students, they should also expect much from me in return. It is my responsibility to make often dry material engaging and maybe even entertaining at times. Students are encouraged to share their ideas in class, and we often find topics that make us all laugh. Learning can be both fun and productive. I find interesting articles and videos to share with the class along with the lecture materials. I have incorporated class debates, presentations, and group exercises to enhance the learning experience. For instance, in a chapter about peer-to-peer networking, I showed students the repercussions of illegally sharing digital files by visiting a peer-to-peer website ([eDonkey2000](#)) which had recently been shut down. We also read current news articles where individuals had been prosecuted for downloading pirated digital materials.

Finally, respect is paramount. I make it clear to students that they should respect one another by attending peer presentations, participating in group assignments, and not interrupting one another in class. My syllabus states that disrespect in any of these ways can impact a student’s final grade. I also make it clear that they should demand my respect as well. This includes soliciting feedback about what students want to learn from the class in the beginning of the semester and incorporating this material in the curriculum. Students are encouraged to ask questions and learn that if an answer is not readily available, I will promptly research and follow up with a response. It is important to me to entertain points-of-view that are contradictory to the text and to add my real-world industry knowledge to show students that questioning facts is encouraged for deeper learning of a topic. It is important that students feel that I am approachable in this regard. I have found that expecting students to respect one another and to demand my respect earns their respect in return.

As for my teaching preferences, I am most interested in teaching theoretical design and strategic business application of information technology. This includes but is not limited to systems analysis and design, database design, management information systems, human-computer interaction, and information systems economics, strategy, and policy. However, I am confident that I could also teach courses in programming languages, telecommunications, quantitative decision making, and introductory operations management.