
The Gordon B. Davis Symposium
**The Future of the Information Systems Academic Discipline:
Opportunities and Directions**

Management Information Systems Research Center
Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

May 13-14, 2005

OVERVIEW

Professor Gordon Davis is one of the pioneers of Information Systems as an academic discipline. His retirement in 2004, thirty-six years after the first formal MIS degree programs were established at the University of Minnesota, provides an occasion for reflection, re-examination, and re-visioning the direction and future of our field. IS academics continue to explore and debate the conceptual foundations of the field, thirty years after Professor Davis's seminal conceptual foundations book was published. In the meantime, IS is well accepted as a central discipline for management in business and government organizations. Executives recognize the strategic role and value of a sound body of knowledge about the acquisition, management, and use of information technologies in organizations. IS academics have made significant advances in developing appropriate theories, methodologies, and research streams on important subjects such as the adoption and use of IT, economic value of IT, organizational impacts of IT, strategic consequences of IT, design of enabling IT infrastructures and applications, and the capabilities, processes, and organizational models for management of IT. Overall, the discipline has made considerable progress in establishing its intellectual foundations and in contributing to practice.

However, the celebration of these successes must be tempered by the realization that numerous challenges remain. For example, what is the future intellectual space of the information systems discipline? What phenomena will be considered important for study by IS academics? What body of knowledge should the discipline continue to develop in order to strengthen and maintain its role as a business discipline? The dot-com crash, corporate failures, and the ubiquitous nature of computing and global bandwidth have prompted some to question the continued relevance of IT as a strategic asset. Some assert that the management of IT be reconceptualized as a less than strategic activity in firms, although others argue that continued success with innovation, agility, and competitive advantage will require tighter integration between IT and business processes, structures, and strategies. Increasingly, IT savvy business executives challenge existing knowledge about the role and nature of IT management and appropriate models for governance and organization of IT activities. The rapid emergence of multinational outsourcing is contributing to revisions in IT management practice. Furthermore, interest continues in learning not just whether IT investments and management practices have economic payoffs, but also what conditions and organizational practices enable the leverage and capture of the economic value of IT. Finally, as information technologies become significantly embedded into organizational work processes, routines, and structures, interest grows in understanding how combinations of social institutions, human actions, and technology features and functionalities will occasion change and transformation of organizational and managerial practice.

This symposium provides a forum for examining, exploring, and understanding the future evolution of the information systems academic discipline. What phenomena, theories, and research methods are going to dominate the conversation and thinking of IS academics and enable its continued growth as a professional and academic discipline? What body of knowledge will the members of the IS community need to develop to strengthen the economic, societal, national, and organizational role and value of IT? The symposium will feature a combination of invited and contributed articles.

Final Program
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Friday, May 13, 2005 (all Friday sessions are in the 3M Auditorium)

- 11:00 – 12:30 Registration, Carlson Atrium (light lunch)
- 12:30 – 12:45 Opening Remarks: David Naumann, Rob Kauffman, Associate Dean
Dennis Ahlburg
- 12:45 – 2:00 Session F1
The evolution of IS as an academic community, Keynotes:
Moderator: Blake Ives
Speakers: Frank Land, Dick Mason
- 2:00 – 3:30 Session F2
Panel: Emerging Directions for the IS Academic Community: Challenges
and Opportunities
Moderator: Izak Benbasat
Panelists: Steve Alter, Benn Konsynski, Mohan Tanniru
- 3:30 – 4:00 Break
- 4:00 – 5:30 Session F3
Panel: Confronting the Challenges and Realizing the Opportunities
Moderator: V. Sambamurthy
Panelists: Cynthia Beath, Jim Brancheau, Sirkka Jarvenpaa, Lynne Markus
- 6:00 – 9:30 Mississippi dinner cruise on the sternwheeler *Harriet Bishop*

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Saturday, May 14, 2005

8:00 – 10:30 Continental breakfast, Carlson Atrium

8:30 – 10:00 Session **S1** (3M Auditorium)

Panel: Publishing research in information systems

Moderator: Rudy Hirschheim

Panelists: Paul Gray, Cynthia Beath, V. Sambamurthy, Carol Saunders

Session **S2** (classroom 2-206)

Moderator: Laurie Kirsch

Invited paper: Sal March

Invited paper: V. Venkatesh, Fred Davis & Michael Morris

Session **S3** (Classroom 1-114)

Moderator: Dennis Galletta

Richard Watson

& Elena Karahanna

The stakeholder perspective and the conceptual foundations of information systems

Bob Glass & Iris Vessey

Predicting the Future of IS Research: An Analysis Based on Current Research in the Discipline

John King & Kalle Lyytinen

The Evolution of Information System Discipline as a Market Place of Ideas

Session **S4** (Classroom 2-207)

Doctoral workshop with Gordon Davis

Leaders: Gove Allen, Alina Chircu, Chuck Wood

10:00 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 12:00 Session **S5** (3M Auditorium)

Panel: Teaching opportunities and challenges

Moderator: Mani Subramani

Panelists: Ritu Agarwal, Prabhudev Konana, Joe Valacich

Session **S6** (classroom 2-206)

Moderator: Alok Gupta

Invited Paper: Arun Rai

Invited Paper: Mary Culnan

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Session **S7** (*Classroom 1-114*)

Moderator: Elena Karahanna
Wendy Currie & Mihir Parikh

A Critical Analysis of IS Innovations
Using Institutional Theory

Neil Ramiller, Burt Swanson
& Ping Wang

Research Directions, Knowledge
Markets, and Institutional
Embeddedness

Andrew Schwartz
& Rudy Hirschheim

The Future Role of IT: A Network-
Dependent, Relationship-Oriented
Function

Session **S8** (*Classroom 2-207*)

Moderator: Sandy Slaughter
Tom Horan
& Michael Gurstein

Why community information
systems are important to the future
of IS

Fred Niederman, Tor Larsen
& Moez Limayem

Conceptual mapping - a key
methodology for 21st Century IT
research

John Vinsonhaler

Information Systems Research and
the Mobile Personal Computer

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch, Carlson dining room

SYMPOSIUM OFFICERS

Symposium Co-Chairs:

Izak Benbasat, University of British Columbia

Blake Ives, University of Houston

David Naumann, University of Minnesota

Program Chair:

V. Sambamurthy, Michigan State University

Publication Chair:

Rob Kauffman, University of Minnesota

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Tor Larsen, Norwegian School of Management

Moez Limayem, City University of Hong Kong

Sudha Ram, University of Arizona

Sandy Slaughter, Carnegie Mellon University

Mani Subramani, University of Minnesota

Viswanath Venkatesh, University of Arkansas

Bruce Weber, London Business School

Ilze Zigurs, University of Nebraska Omaha

CALL FOR PAPERS

The program committee invites original submissions addressing either of the following issues:

1. *What phenomena are likely to dominate the intellectual space of the IS academic discipline?* Submissions based on anticipated externalities such as technical developments, economic, national, international and societal trends, business transformations, political events, and new approaches to management education are particularly welcome. Such submissions should provide a good descriptive analysis of the emerging phenomenon, its importance for the IS discipline, and its implications for research, teaching, and knowledge development by the IS academic community.
2. *What theories, research methods, and data gathering strategies are likely to dominate the repertoire of the IS academic discipline?* Submissions could examine the above question from the economic, technical, organizational, social, institutional, network, strategic or individual behavior perspectives of the information systems community. Such submissions should provide an overview of the proposed theory or research method, how it could enhance understanding about an appropriate IS phenomenon beyond what is known, and what are its implications for research, teaching, and knowledge development by the IS academic community.

Interested contributors are invited to first submit a brief statement of intent (maximum 2 pages, double spaced) explaining the core idea, its novelty, significance, and appropriateness for the symposium. These initial submissions will be reviewed by the program committee. Authors whose submissions are accepted will be invited to develop full-length versions (maximum 5000 words) of their ideas for further review and evaluation by the program committee. Accepted papers will not only be presented at the symposium, but will also be included for publication in a book to be released after the symposium.

Statements of intent and submissions must be sent electronically to the Program Chair (smurthy@msu.edu).

Key Dates

Submission of Statement of Intent:	July 1, 2004
Submission of Manuscript:	October 1, 2004
Notification of Acceptance:	January 15, 2005
Symposium Manuscript Due:	March 1, 2005
Post-Symposium Publication Copy Due:	July 1, 2005