Message from the Chair

Greetings Alums, Students, and Friends,

Another academic year has come to a close, leaving the classroom halls quiet but not for long! When you receive this newsletter, Summer Session will be in full swing with Management Information Systems faculty members engaged in teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses in our GOLD MBA (Golden Opportunity for Leadership Development in Connecticut).

I am pleased to report that we are experiencing an increase in the number of students majoring and minoring in Management Information Systems as well as the number of students pursuing a double major. Additionally, our students continue to be sought after for part-time and full-time employment.

Do take time to read about the achievements of students, alums, and faculty. Then, be sure to complete the brief form on the last page of the newsletter and send it to me at the address indicated or log onto http://www.ccsu.edu/misfriends and update us on your personal and professional achievements along with contact information.

U. S. Senator Praises Dr. Siamack Shojai for his Leadership and Commitment

Recently Dr. Siamack Shojai was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from U. S. Senator Richard Blumenthal for his “outstanding leadership of the Central Connecticut State University School of Business and Unwavering Devotion” to students. Blumenthal states “Since assuming the position of Dean, you have dedicated yourself to providing students with the tools they need to successfully navigate their careers and achieve their dreams. Under your guidance, the CCSU School of Business, with support from students, faculty, and staff, carried out a rigorous self-evaluation process that culminated in the awarding of internationally-recognized AACSB accreditation – an achievement attained by very few business schools throughout the world.”

Dr. Shojai received a standing ovation by those in attendance at the School of Business Hall of Honor when presented with Blumenthal’s congratulatory letter and certificate.

We were, indeed, fortunate to have Dr. Siamack Shojai at the helm providing leadership throughout the AACSB accreditation process.
MIS Faculty and Student Scholarly Contributions in 2014-2015


Faculty on the Move

Snyder and Cistulli Receive Prestigious Dean’s Recognition Award

Dr. Jason Snyder and Dr. Mark Cistulli, both associate professors in the MIS department, recently received the Dean’s award at the annual School of Business Hall of Honor for their contribution in developing the School of Business MBA program.

The dormant MBA was revitalized with the hard work of many faculty and staff, but it was Snyder and Cistulli who spearheaded the project. The program is off to a great start with a healthy applicant pool and over 100 students already enrolled. Students can choose from three tracks – accounting, business analytics, or the “central” track, a mix of both accounting and business analytics courses. Our skilled MIS faculty have undertaken a major role in teaching the business analytics track for the program and in doing so have helped raise the profile of CCSU and the School of Business.

“A great MBA program can define a business school,” said Snyder. “We needed to have that new, improved image for our School of Business.”

“We offer valuable experience to students looking to bring more to their career,” added Cistulli. “Our faculty provide up-to-date, real-world experiences for our MBA students.”

Cistulli presents paper at Eastern Communication Conference

In April, Dr. Mark Cistulli, an associate professor in the MIS department, presented a paper at the 2015 Eastern Communication Association Conference titled: “Affective Organizational Commitment: A Study of Generational Cohorts.” Dr. Jason Snyder, also an associate professor in the MIS department, is the co-author on the paper. This year’s conference was held in Philadelphia, PA.

The modern workforce in the United States is experiencing seismic shifts in attitudes and behaviors because of generational differences which exist in today’s companies. Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers and Millennials (also called Gen Y) are thrown together as technology and globalization create new business communication challenges. Specifically, these different generations:

- Approach business communication differently
- Exhibit different levels of organizational commitment (loyalty)
- Deal with workplace conflict differently
- Rely on different communication technologies to do their work and complete projects

These generational differences are at the center of co-worker and client interactions. As a result, managers and workers at all levels of the organizational hierarchy are not always equipped to deal when conflicts arise.

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Historically, the affective organizational commitment (AOC) construct has been employed to understand and better predict important work variables such as employee turnover and job performance. This study builds on other recent research on affective organizational commitment that demonstrates the versatility of the AOC construct and its predictive value in the realm of advertising effects, brand attitudes and intended behavior.

**Applying Big Data to Soccer**

Two faculty members of the MIS Department – Tom JarMoszko and Robert Schumaker – are part of an exciting new research initiative: to apply big data to the game of association football, otherwise known as soccer. Together with two professors from the Management Department (David Freeman and Chet Labedz) JarMoszko and Schumaker have spent considerable time collecting and analyzing large quantities of data in an effort to gain insight into the sport through the prism of established business research and the emerging techniques of big data analysis. At this point in time two research streams have emerged: sentiment analysis of Twitter messages (tweets) and a study of soccer shooting events based on video analysis of last World Cup’s 64 matches. Thus far, the research output has consisted of one paper presented at MIT’s prestigious Sports Analytics Conference (February 2015), two papers submitted to management conferences and a working paper – on success factors in soccer shooting – which is still looking for an outlet. The group is currently negotiating a purchase of a large data set, compiled by Opta Sports, for the purpose of positional play analysis. *Moneyball*: watch out!

## Service Learning Projects

### Websites Developed as Class Projects

The students in the Project Management for Business course (MIS 300) worked on two community engagement projects—one in Fall 2014 and one in Spring 2015. Both projects were focused on creating web sites providing support for children of incarcerated parents and their community caregivers and parents.

In Fall 2014 our client was The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP) in New Britain, a non-partisan research institute which seeks to provide solutions to regional issues through policy development and implementation. One of the Institute’s grant programs, Connecticut’s Children of Incarcerated Parents (CTCIP), is dedicated to providing information that may be helpful to those with a loved one in a Connecticut correctional facility.

Believe in Me Empowerment Corporation (BIMEC) is our client in Spring 2015. BIMEC is a community based organization serving the New Haven community and is a grassroots non-profit service agency mostly oriented toward youngsters between 12-16 years at risk.

Such projects provide a unique community service-learning opportunity for the students. The projects not only enhance the students’ professional skills and knowledge but also give them the opportunity to engage with the community.

The projects have direct impact on children with incarcerated parents and provide a service to organizations and communities by providing timely and appropriate information that is easily accessible.

### Service Learning Project: e-Commerce website for non-profit or small businesses

In the e-Business course (MIS 305), students worked in teams under the direction of Dr. Robert Schumaker to create a turnkey e-Commerce solution for local non-profits and small businesses. Throughout the semester students learned project management skills, effective communication and technological skills using WordPress, web hosting, database integration, PHP and eCommerce elements. The website created had to offer something for sale. A shopping cart and payment system were a required minimum. Websites needed to be designed to store and retrieve data; therefore, careful attention to database design was essential. Additionally, teams were responsible for devising a way for website administrators to access customer data through a secure login portal. How these teams chose to meet these demands was determined by the teams, leaving a significant latitude for creativity.

At the end of the semester, student groups gave two presentations: the first was a class presentation to fellow students and the Instructor, while the second was a mixer-type function where students mingled with their project liaisons and local business leaders to present their projects in a social setting.

Student projects were nothing short of amazing. Given the raw creative and impressive commitments to the project, students built website solutions for the American Legion, local automotive repair shops, ice cream parlors, landscapers and more. All in all it was a win-win for students and businesses alike.
Department Highlights

Faculty in the Community

Tom Jarmoszko spent another year volunteering his time to serve on the Management Board of the Polish Language School. Located in New Britain, CT, this institution has been providing instruction in the Polish language -- as well as history, geography and culture of Poland -- to K0-K10 students of the Greater Hartford area. In addition to in-class instruction, students have the opportunity to participate in various trips and outings as well as cultural events. Over the past 55 years, the School (founded in 1960), has grown to its current size of 627 students and is now one of the largest of its type in the country. In the years Tom has worked with the School, important reforms of by-laws, budgeting and operating procedures were implemented. These changes were well received by the School’s stakeholders.

Attention MIS Professionals: The MBA @ CCSU is for you!

Professionals in MIS now have a great opportunity to grow their knowledge of the exploding area of “Big Data.” Effective leaders understand the need to leverage information to transform their businesses; and with an MBA specialization in Business Analytics, our students will be able to do just that.

More and more employers are looking for managers who can effectively analyze and manipulate “big data.” Our faculty are experts in teaching effective use of corporate data, developing new techniques in data management, and helping students learn predictive modeling, forecasting and cluster analysis. All signs point to this field expanding over the next several years; and with an MBA in Business Analytics from CCSU, students can now be at the forefront of the “big data” revolution.

To learn more about the Business Analytics track, contact Dr. Jason Snyder at snyderjal@ccsu.edu or Dr. Mark Cistulli at mark.cistulli@ccsu.edu

MIS Department Offers PMP Exam Prep Course

The Management Information Systems department offered its first Project Management Professional (PMP) Exam Course in Spring, 2015 through the University’s Office of Continuing Education. The course is designed to prepare participants to take the Project Management Professional examination.

The course was offered over five Saturday sessions for a total of 35 hours. Participants were awarded a Certificate of Completion. The department expects to offer these and other short courses in the coming semesters.

Do let us know by e-mail (donofrio@ccsu.edu) if you have ideas about course topics that would be of benefit to you and others in your organizations.
Student Clubs and Awards

The Management Information Systems (MIS) Club Update

The MIS Club has had a great 2014-2015 year with plenty of speakers, trips and other exciting developments. Over the past year we were fortunate to have Robert Hokunson and Justin DiMarco (both MIS alums) give a talk to students on “Technologies Employees Desire.” We also welcomed internationally renowned software developer Ryan Cuprak and his talk on “Java Development.” Workshops were in the air at the end of March with Chief Instructor of JavaPassion.com, Sang Shin, giving an all-day presentation on “Apache Hadoop.” In mid April we welcomed IBM Researcher Nalini Ratha who spoke about “Biometrics.”

As for trips, this past March we had our first “Boston Tech Trip” visiting the MIT Museum, Makerbot (manufacturers of 3D printers) and MicroCenter (an incredible technology retail store). The “Tech Trip” was a great success; and the recently elected MIS Club officers for 2015-2016 are eager to plan a second “Tech Trip” for Fall, 2015.

Do join the MIS Club and participate in many learning and fun activities.

IABC Club Update

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Club is an organization dedicated to enhancing professional communication. CCSU’s student chapter brings students together to help network and improve their professional communication skills.

Previous events have included business dinners, guest speakers, workshops, tie dye awareness campaigns, and even tailgates! Dr. Mark Cistulli is the club’s advisor and is always on the lookout for CCSU students who want to polish their business communication skills. For more information, contact Dr. Cistulli at mark.cistulli@ccsu.edu

MIS Student Awarded 2015 Travelers Scholarship

Congratulations to Daniel Folino, the recipient of a 2015 Travelers Scholarship Award. Travelers’ scholarship awards are given based on academic performance and future potential in IT positions.

Departmental Honors Award:
Raymond Griswold

Excellence in Management Information Systems Award:
Andrew Crozier  
Jamil Dahhan  
Christopher Denault  
Ryan Emond  
William Carr Fearrington
Raymond Griswold  
Adem Guster  
Jessica Kataneksza  
Kevin Kutys  
Matthew Vigue

School of Business Hall of Honor Merit Scholarship Awards:
Phil Lyons

Pictured: from left to right: MIS Club Officers 2015-2016; Brandon Melchiore, Vice President and Publicity; Amadeo Ruui, President; Benjamin Kopchick, Treasurer; and Christina Peltrop, Secretary (missing from photo).
**Students in the Spotlight**

**Jessica Kataneksza**

My experience at CCSU shaped me into the student I am today and set me on the right path for my future career. As a former pre-nursing transfer student coming into CCSU, I had no idea what I wanted to study. My initial decision coming to Central was to become an undeclared business major so that I could explore my options in the School of Business. The first class that really grasped my attention was MIS 201 with Dr. Petkova. I found this class very interesting and was eager to learn more about Management Information Systems. After my first two semesters filled with lower division business classes at CCSU, I knew that I wanted to declare myself as a Management Information Systems major. I set up an appointment to meet with Dr. D’Onofrio for some advice and direction about MIS as a major. Dr. D’Onofrio guided me through all the MIS courses and discussed each in detail while explaining how important this knowledge is to businesses. It was then that I saw all the potential and possible opportunities MIS could provide me. MIS has taught me how to use effective business practices and techniques to manage and organize business projects using technology. Each MIS course has provided valuable knowledge and skills that can be applied to other aspects of my learning experiences. Not only have these classes helped me grow as a student but also as a team member, a presenter, and as a real business professional. Knowledge I gain from one course can vary drastically from another. I have gained experiences ranging from project management to working with databases and a variety of applications. Compared to other learning areas, I have found that MIS provides an extremely well-rounded base of skills that I can use and apply to a wide range of job opportunities.

Since my time at Central, I’ve been on the Dean’s List four semesters in a row as well as become a member of the Golden Key National Honour Society. The professors have been the biggest help through my education here at CCSU. They encourage students to do well and also provide them with any guidance or advice they may need in school and in the work force. I have never seen so much dedication from professors to their students in and out of the classroom. Dr. Gendron has even offered his students learning opportunities in workshops outside of class during his own personal time. He chose to do this simply because he wanted to offer his students extra learning opportunities and to give them valuable knowledge and a competitive advantage. I have also worked on a variety of business projects for organizations such as Connecticut Children with Incarcerated Parents (CTCIP) and Eureeka BI that gave me experience working on team projects and in presenting projects to clients. Projects like these gave me first-hand practice using skills and knowledge that I can apply to my potential career.

CCSU has provided many resources and networking and internship opportunities. I believe that the broad range of skills and knowledge I have acquired will enhance my standing as a viable candidate for any position in the field.

**Nicholas Vitale**

I expect to graduate in December 2015 with my Bachelor’s degree in MIS. Throughout my journey at CCSU, I have developed into a confident business professional who is ready to take on the challenges the future holds for me. Wherever my path in life takes me, I will always carry the experiences, knowledge, and confidence CCSU has given me. I am grateful that CCSU has been the foundation for the student I have grown to be today and for the career path I hope to embark on in the future.

Directly out of high school I had set my mind on joining CCSU because of the need for me to commute to the convenient location in New Britain. Additionally, multiple members of my family have graduated from CCSU with both undergraduate and graduate degrees and have found great success in their professional careers. This focus on convenience was trumped greatly by the excellent experience and professional development I received at CCSU and, more specifically, the School of Business. Upon joining CCSU I did not decide on a major and had no idea what my potential future employment opportunities would be. Once I reached my sophomore year I knew that I wanted to focus my efforts on acquiring a business degree, and my research led me straight to the Management Information Systems program. The MIS program combines and focuses on both technical and business knowledge essential to laying a solid framework for professional advancement. The knowledge that I have gained while completing my undergraduate degree has given me a solid understanding of some of the principles required to transition from the academic setting to a corporate environment.

Currently, I have been managing a used car dealership handling their online advertising and vehicle sales. During the fall semester of 2014, I accepted a position in the Operations and Technology Leadership Development Program at The Hartford. My education at CCSU has prepared me for this position and for bringing value to the organization.

Overall, I am excited to finish my undergraduate program but at the same time I am going to miss coming to the university and interacting and learning with my fellow classmates and professors. This has been an amazing 4-year journey and has prepared me to start the next chapter in my life. In my career I am going to continue to learn and grow as a young professional with the values that CCSU has instilled within me.
Alums in Focus

Alex Heinen

“‘I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.’” – William Ernest Henley, “Invictus” (1888). Personally I have found this quote to be a source of inspiration and focus. In any given situation it is ultimately up to you to seize the moment to achieve more. However, one must also be given the right opportunity and tools to succeed. Central’s MIS program has provided me with several of the foundational skills necessary to be successful in the world. Developing public speaking, network architecture, database queries, programming, leadership, and teamwork skills among others helped to provide a perfect blend for success.

The choice to pursue an MIS degree began shortly after I completed my first year at Central. At the time I was a management major in search of a degree which offered a good balance of technical and leadership skills. After speaking with several professors I elected to enroll in the MIS program which in retrospect was certainly the right choice.

Leveraging the many opportunities provided at CCSU was key to building a well-rounded skill set centered on three key topics: academic performance, leadership accountabilities, and volunteer activities. Through careful planning I was able to maintain a Dean’s list GPA while working part time as a desktop support intern for Stanley Black and Decker, and volunteering with the Newman club during my spare time.

After graduating in the spring of 2012, I joined The Hartford’s Technology Leadership Development Program (TLDP). There I continued to build upon these base skills while rotating among different areas of the company in 6-12 month increments. Over the next 2.5 years I held various positions including: web developer, security analyst, process engineer, digital data analyst, and infrastructure analyst. In each of these positions I was granted the opportunity to push beyond my comfort zone to continue learning about technology and the business. Finally, in February of 2015 I accepted a non-rotating role outside of the program working as an analyst of operations and infrastructure in The Hartford’s Chief Technology Office.

After 2 years in the TLDP I decided to pursue higher education as part of my goal to continue learning and growing. After considering many schools, I elected to return to Central and join their newly revised MBA program. Mid-way through the program’s second semester I am pleased with the correlations between my work at The Hartford and the concepts taught in class.

In conclusion, never forget that you have plenty of opportunities available but it’s up to you to make the most of them. CCSU offers an exceptional blend of resources through their faculty, classes, study abroad opportunities, internships, and extra-curricular activities. Be the master of your fate and become the next success story here at Central.

Eric Trout

I graduated CCSU in May 1991 with a BS in Management Information Systems. My experiences at CCSU helped prepare me for a successful career in the field of information technology. The course work as an MIS major prepared me for various positions such as an Application Developer, Technical Lead and IT Manager. This was all possible due to the challenging course work but more important was the practicality of the classes as they mirrored software languages used by many corporations. I would be remiss not to mention the job experience I acquired as a participant in the CO-Op program which was key in helping me compete for my first position.

I started my career as an entry level programmer with Cigna Corporation. I subsequently worked with a number of other companies in the banking, financial services, computer consulting and insurance industry. I am currently Director of Application Development at Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company where I have been employed for the past fourteen years. My entire career has been guided by a plan along with a strong desire to continue learning.

I would like to encourage current students not to let anyone discourage them from pursuing their dreams. However, dreams by themselves may not allow you to accomplish your goals. Dreams need to be coupled with a plan and a willingness to work hard. It is important for students to seek ways to gain work experience prior to graduating as it will allow them to be better able to compete in the very competitive field of Information Technology. I encourage students to seek out internships as well as take advantage of CCSU’s CO-Op program.

All of my career opportunities are a direct result of my academic experiences at CCSU. Being an MIS major afforded me the technical skills to be a developer as well as the management skills that allowed me to work in a leadership capacity throughout my career.

I would like to conclude by saying that two years ago my son decided to attend CCSU as an MIS Major, which was a proud moment for me. I am confident that he, too, will have a fruitful career as a result of a CCSU education.
Partnering with Business

Enhancing the Teaching of Business Intelligence and the Cloud through Community Engagement and Industry Support

In the Spring 2015 Management Information Systems students and their professor had the opportunity to use live data provided by EureekaBI (www.eureekabi.com) in the Business Intelligence and the Cloud course (Emerging Technologies for Business, MIS 460).

EureekaBI (U-reeka Business Intelligence) is a business intelligence and analytics company helping supply chain professionals understand the market and make better decisions. Being able to teach business intelligence concepts with live data is a win-win for students and faculty. The students benefited because they learned about the complexities of “real” data, and the professor benefited because he was teaching in an active learning environment.

During this class, students learned to blend the live data provided by EureekaBI with other data including Total Housing Starts, Consumer Price Index, and Diesel Fuel Prices. All of this was enabled by the live data provided by EureekaBI and a generous grant from Amazon Web Services. This grant allowed students to use live data and to blend it with local data sets giving them access to this data from any Internet enabled location.

The students also used business intelligence software provided by Tableau Software (www.tableausoftware.com) for data visualization. All of these components created a course where students learned cutting edge skills and EureekaBI benefited from the students’ critical thinking.

Using Industry Mentors to Enhance Learning

MIS 410 – Business Driven Infrastructure Design - is a core course in the Management Information Systems department’s curriculum within the CCSU School of Business. This course introduces networking concepts and integrates technical and business needs analysis with network component selection and Internet technologies.

Students design business processes and price the necessary components within a large enterprise network using a business case approach with Network Analysis and Design methods. The course is delivered with the assistance of several industry mentors, who guide students through the process of responding to a fictitious request for proposal for Ticket Sales, Inc. Each mentor works with a student group before each simulated bidder’s conference to assist the group in developing questions. The mentor negotiates the final project proposal with the group before submission to the professor and provides the group with guidance on completing the deliverables and reviewing the project deliverables (MIS 410 assignments) before submission to the professor for grading. By having an industry professional as a mentor, students learn how to create a response to a request for proposal from a pro that does this every day. A great way to learn!

The Management Information Systems Department Wants To Hear From You!

Please keep us informed with both your latest contact information as well as your professional accomplishments. You can do so by going to the following site: http://www.ccsu.edu/misfriends or, tear off the bottom section of the newsletter and mail your updates to: Dr. Marianne J. D’Onofrio, Management Information Systems Department, Central Connecticut State University, Room 449, Robert C. Vance Academic Center, New Britain, CT 06050.