

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM IN CROSS-BOUNDARY INFORMATION SHARING



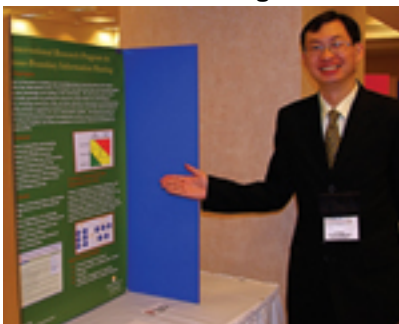
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The International Research Program in Cross-boundary Information Sharing is a new initiative at the University at Albany focused on building knowledge about cross-boundary information sharing in an international context. This innovative program is leveraging current research efforts by connecting doctoral students from the Public Administration and Policy and Information Science programs at the University with the findings from a National Science Foundation funded research project at CTG. In their dissertation research, students will draw on research findings from CTG's Modeling Interorganizational Information Integration (MIII) study and seek to contribute to the development of new theory in cross-boundary information integration and sharing through testing these findings in an international context. The students and the CTG research team meet monthly to share knowledge about relevant topics such as comparative research design and developing culturally appropriate research methods.

Dissertation studies are underway in China, Jordan, and Taiwan, with additional studies being planned in Mexico and Saudi Arabia. In addition to meeting regularly for knowledge sharing and coordination with CTG, each student works with his or her own dissertation committee at the University at Albany and with academic and practitioner partners in the host country.

Dissertations in Progress



Lei Zheng *Public Administration and Policy, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany Graduate Assistant*, CTG Lei's dissertation is focusing on cross-boundary information sharing in product quality and food safety in China. Through his dissertation research, he will build a leadership mechanism model of cross-boundary information sharing in product quality and food safety in China, and then conduct a comparative analysis between his model and the model developed in the MIII project at CTG to identify and explore similarities and differences.



Fawzi Mulki *Information Science, College of Computing and Information, University at Albany Graduate Assistant, CTG* Fawzi's dissertation is focusing on the impact of authority, executive involvement, and leadership on cross-boundary information sharing in response to chaotic events. The events are two public health crises—the outbreak of the West Nile Virus in the U.S. and the case of water pollution in Jordan. Fawzi will gather primary data in Jordan through semi-structured interviews with top-level government executives who played a key role in the crisis there and use secondary data gathered from public health officials in the U.S. through CTG's MIII project.

CTG FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT COLLABORATIONS

Over the years, CTG has brought together students from many disciplinary and cultural backgrounds. They come to CTG as graduate assistants, visiting students, and post doctoral fellows to actively participate in information management projects in government and to improve their research skills. While most move on after their studies, relationships built on mutual interests have grown into some very productive research collaborations.

One such relationship began in 2004, when Enrico Ferro from the Istituto Superiore Mario Boella in Italy joined CTG as a visiting student for six months. During that time, he discovered mutual research interests with two other doctoral students at CTG: Jose Ramon Gil-Garcia, who at the time was finishing his studies and working as a graduate assistant, and Natalie Helbig, who has worked at CTG for the past five years and is planning to finish her dissertation in December 2008. They found mutual interest in the digital divide, which they have cultivated into a productive and ongoing research collaboration. The trio explore issues of the digital divide and e-government using data from Enrico's Institute, which performs an annual information society survey.

While Natalie remains at CTG as a program associate, Ramon, after finishing his PhD and spending a year as a post doctoral fellow at CTG, has moved back to Mexico where he is now assistant professor and director at the Data Center for Applied Research in Social Sciences at Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economicas. Over the past three years, Enrico, Ramon, and Natalie have worked together through a variety of collaboration tools and successfully authored five papers together on the digital divide and e-government, including an entry in a research handbook and presentations at several conferences. Their first paper, *Understanding the Complexity of Electronic Government: Implications from the Digital Divide Literature* is forthcoming in *Government Information Quarterly (GIQ)*.