Informatics Research Institute (IRIS) September 2008 newsletter

Vadera, S

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Dr Chris Bryant - Chris' research concerns how symbolic machine learning may be applied to real-world applications, mainly in the field of biology. His current projects look at understanding and simulating the learning of young children in learning to read, and also at understanding how artificial intelligence programs can learn the structure of the world around them.

The course: "Learning how to learn" - the first in a series of research seminars.

We strongly encourage all researchers to attend these seminars, which will be held in Maxwell Building, 5th Floor, Office 513b.

New Members and Staff

Nathalie Audren Howarth
IRIS Research Assistant, University of Salford.
Maxwell Building, 5th Floor, Office 513b.
Tel: 0161 246 2825.
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Ruth Breckill, recently joined IRIS as our Programme Assistant. Ruth has many years experience in the education sector in Salford. She now joins IRIS as our Programme Assistant.

PhD Student News

Our congratulations go to the following students for successfully defending their theses:

**Sophia Kousidou** "Assisting Exoskeleton for Task Based Physiotherapy in 3-Dimensional Space", supervisor: Dr. Samia Nefti-Nezami, external examiner: Dr. Tally Natafziz, Brunel University, and Ja Wu (supervisor: Sunil Vadera) "A Study and Development of Bayesian Exemplar Based Models", supervisor: Sunil Vadera, external examiner Prof. Duncan Gilles - Imperial College.

It was a long journey for Aleksey Heinze to reach his PhD milestone, which sometimes felt like a millstone - but it finally all came together on the 15th May 2008.

"Reading for a PhD as well as holding down a full time job is a struggle for many academics but despite the 5 years hard work it was worth it. The support for me in the IRIS research institute has been very much appreciated and I am very grateful to Chris Procter and co-supervisor Professor Elaine Ferneyhough" Aleksey Heinze.

Pride Winning Poster

Hambeltoni (Ambai) Abiba, a PhD student in IRIS, won the poster prize at ALT2008 - Rethinking the digital divide. Her poster was entitled Dimensions of the Digital Divide: the case of the Namibian school link partnership and attracted a great deal of attention from the Poster presentation session. Hambeltoni, dressed in Namibian national dress, is seen in the picture discussing her work with Ian Pearson, Microsoft. She was well received by Delegates from Universities and Skills. Linda Creanor, outgoing President of ALT, presented her with the poster prize at the Conference Dinner at Headley Cricket Ground.

Recent Events
Upcoming Events

The UK BCS Knowledge Discovery and Data miningSymposium will be held at Salford in April 2009. If you do not find out more or attend please contact S.Vaidera@salford.ac.uk.

The second Digital Cultures Workshop will be held at the University of Salford, 4-5 June 2009, and prior to ECS 2009. A call for papers will be issued during September.

Professional Activities

Mrs Frances Bell has been appointed co-editor of ALT, the journal of the Association for Learning Technology. Frances is commissioning editor for a Special Issue of ALT, Learning and Teaching in Immersive Virtual Worlds, with special issue editors Dr Robert Bell and Professor Maggi Sabin. See http://www.alt.ac.uk/callforpapers_altj_2008.php. This has attracted a large number of submissions, and the list is due for publication latest of this year. Frances Bell and Janet Howarth are members of the programme committee for ALTJ 2008: Rethinking the digital divide. See http://www.alt.ac.uk/altjc2008/.

Prof Elaine Ferneley, Dr Gordon Fletcher, Dr Marie Griffiths and Prof Ben Light are as acting Associate Editors for ECS 2009. Dr David Kreps has been made Secretary of IFIP 9.5 working group on Virtuality and Society.

Prof Ben Light was track chair, with Remko Helms of Utrecht University, the Netherlands of the Social Networking and Information Systems track at the European Conference on Information Systems, Sweden. He is also an Associate Editor for the 2008 International Conference on IS and the 2008 UK Academy for IS conference.

Prof Ben Light has joined the Editorial Review Board of the Journal of Organizational and End User Computing.

Dr Samia Nefti-Meziani has been invited to be a member of an advisory editorial board of Bentham Science Publishers and has been invited to edit a special issue on recent patents on computer science for them.


Prof Alison Adam was invited to speak on her research philosophy of AI in a paper "Is there anything Computers Still Don't Know and Does It Matter?" University of Cambridge, Horizon Workshop "The Thinking Machine", March 2008. She was the only speaker not from Cambridge University to speak at that event. She has also presented research in a paper "Women as Knowledge Workers: Some Historical Reflections", CRESC Workshop on Gender, Service Work and the Cultural Economy, Manchester, October 2008. The workshop was organized by Helen Richardson and Debra Howcroft.

Dr Apostolos Antonacopoulos has been invited to give a plenary tutorial on the "Analysis of Historical Documents" at the 8th International Workshop on Document Analysis Systems (DAS2008) to be held in September 2008 in Nara, Japan.

Dr Sunil Vadera gave a keynote address at IEEE AI 2008 conference held in Palermo annually on IT. Marie who contributes to the Knowledge Centre service provided by the IT Forum for their clients has also been asked to join the round table debate regarding the recruitment, development, and retention of the IT workforce with its managers and employers.

The keynote address, together with a three-day follow up workshop on Privacy and Human-Computer Interaction, has been supported by Google and it will be available to the wider audience.

Research projects completed:

Manchester & Salford Enterprise Culture, Engagement & Support Pilots - £10K collaboration of: Vanessa Avelino, Alex Avellogo, Derek Heinz, Clare Maclean, University of Salford and Dr Julia Rouse, Helen Crompton, Manchester Metropolitan University

EUROPEAN SUCCESS FOR THE ESMOS PROJECT, Helen Keegan

The EU has editing a Special Issue of Journal of Operational Research Society which aims to strengthen further the UK's pedigree in UAV technology.

The workshop will be critical for the whole internal integration of the ASTRAEA T7.

Dr Samia Nefti-Meziani, £10,000 Dr Nefti-Meziani has secured funding through the EU to organise a workshop on cognitive systems.

Journal Papers


Maggi Savin Baden, see http://www.alt.ac.uk/callforpapers_altj_2008.php. Virtual Worlds, with Special Issue Editors Dr Robert Ward and Professor Ben Light. Google - Dr Apostolos Antonacopoulos, $12,000 Towards delivering additional services on-line. IMPACT - Dr Apostolos Antonacopoulos, 1,000,000 Google has supported and it will be available to the wider community.

 branded as "Pimlico". A â€œGOVANIS projectâ€‌. Continuing professional engagement with IS managers and employers.

The project will develop a software mechanism to present test cases to the ASTRAEA vehicle with an intelligent reasoning system for the handling of fuel system failure events within an open architecture.

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