From The Chair

It has been said that the only two things for sure in life are death and taxes. However, depending on your religious belief, death is not certain, and you only pay taxes if you make money. My personal opinion is that the only for sure thing in life is change. Whether it’s growing older or being a member of Facebook it seems that change is the one thing we cannot stop. Sometimes it’s good and sometimes it’s bad. As we look to our futures, high school students moving to college, college students entering the workforce, or employees moving to a new position or a new job, change is a given. Each of these changes provides a new opportunity for success and growth. That is exciting! The CIS Department at Texas State works hard to provide opportunities for students to create positive changes in their lives. Through a comprehensive curriculum of courses, designed with input for employers, to a variety of extracurricular activities, our students have the ability to set themselves apart!
In the News

Speaking of change, it seems the news is about nothing else these days in the world of technology. The Apple iPad may finally have some competition? Amazon introduced the Kindle Fire for $199. While not a direct competitor its price and capabilities are enough to make people think. Another big newsmaker has been Facebook’s makeover. Not without some controversy, Facebook has made significant changes. It has introduced a timeline of Facebook activity histories, you can do more than just like something, you can watch movies and tv, and you can find out if friends are still friends. Is this in response to the challenge of Google+ now that it is open to the public? Only time will tell.

Apple’s iPhone 5 is expected to rollout October 4th and Google has posted the Dead Sea Scrolls online. Netflix raised its prices and has opened a window of opportunity for its competition to make advances. Remember Kodak the photography giant? Where is it today? They were the leader in photographic technology, all it took was a shift in technology to take a 100 year old company and threaten it with obsolescence. Finally, it’s been proven, Digital monkeys with typewriters were able to recreate Shakespeare.

CIS has 3 seniors invited to be a part of Beta Gamma sigma the National Honor Society for all schools accredited by AACSB International. Beta Gamma Sigma is the international honor society for business students enrolled in programs accredited by AACSB (Academy for Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business) International.

Beta Gamma Sigma was established in 1913. It is the business equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa (liberal arts honor society) and membership is the highest honor bestowed on undergraduate and graduate business students at AACSB accredited institutions. There are over 480 Beta Gamma Sigma collegiate chapters on six continents throughout the world. The top 10 percent of junior and senior students and the top 20 percent of graduate students are invited to membership each year.

Everyone should congratulate Jack Chen, Jonathon Garcia and Justin Martin on this great accomplishment.

Memorable Quotable

“In today’s knowledge-based economy, what you earn depends on what you learn. Jobs in the information technology sector, for example, pay 85 percent more than the private sector average.”
William J. Clinton
Network architects or network engineers are the designers of computer networks. They set up, test, and evaluate systems such as local area networks (LANs), wide area networks (WANs), the Internet, intranets, and other data communications systems.

Education Requirements:

Bachelor’s degree in a computer-related area or a master’s degree in business administration with a concentration in information systems.

Typical Job Activities of a Network Architect

As a network architect, your daily work would require combining design skills and business knowledge with strong technical expertise. Your responsibilities might include the following:

- Performing network modeling, analysis, and planning, which often require both hardware and software solutions
- Developing or recommending network securities
- Designing equipment configuration prototypes, such as network software, hardware and servers
- Designing, organizing, and implementing product education and awareness for staff and other users.
- Creating disaster recovery and emergency game plans, developing and implementing solutions for any ongoing network problems, and devising ways to track or report network ability, capacity, and reliability
- Spending time coordinating network operations, repairs, maintenance, and upgrades
- Coordinating the installation of new equipment
- Enhancing computer-user efficiency and effectiveness by adjusting network sizes to meet volume demands or capacity
- Constantly monitoring or analyzing network performance to detect problems or figure ways to improve the network

Salary Expectations

High salary levels for network architect positions reflect the value of these roles to their employers. The InformationWeek 2009 IT Salary Survey (registration required to access) indicated a median total annual compensation (salary and bonuses) of US$113,000 for network architects in the United States. The Robert Half Technology 2009 Salary Guide reports a starting salary range of $86,000 to $123,500 for network architects in the United States, up 4.1 percent from the previous year.
Dr. James R. Cook is Professor and former Chair of the Department of Computer Information Systems and Quantitative Methods at Texas State University – San Marcos. Dr. Cook has been at Texas State University since January 1974. The fall 2011 semester concludes 38 years as a dedicated teacher and administrator at Southwest Texas State University/Texas State University.

Dr. Cook received his Ph.D. from Texas Tech University in Information Systems and Quantitative Science in 1973. He holds the C.D.P. and C.C.P. professional certifications from the Institute for Certification of Computer Professionals (ICCP). Dr. Cook has published over 80 journal articles and refereed papers. His primary research interests are in management information systems, IT security, innovative education, information systems curricula design, forecasting, optimization and multivariate statistics.

Dr. Cook organized the Southwest Texas State University Student Data Processing Management Association (DPMA) chapter in the fall of 1978. Later, DPMA changed its name to the Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP). Dr. Cook has served continuously as either faculty advisor or co-faculty advisor of DPMA/AITP from September 1978 through May 2011, a total of 33 years of working with MIS/CIS students.

Dr. Cook organized CIS 4395 in 2008, which selects and prepares students for both regional and national IT competitions that are sponsored by AITP. The course is team taught by several CIS professors. The result has been numerous first, second, and third place awards, plus several honorable mentions, at both the regional as well as national conferences.

Dr. Cook has either designed or re-designed in excess of 20 courses in the MIS/CIS curriculum over the years. The current degree program was known as a major in MIS (Management Information Systems) until 1980, after its creation by Dr. Marvin A. Johnston in 1973. Dr. Cook was the first faculty member to be hired to assist Dr. Johnston in the development of the MIS (later changed to CIS) degree program in the School of Business (later changed to the McCoy College of Business). The MIS (CIS) degree program, which was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 1973, was only the second business-oriented computer science program established in the state of Texas. West Texas State University (now called West Texas A&M University) was the first such program, and that was where Dr. Cook received his BBA in Computer Information Systems and also his MBA.

The semester is off and running for the Student Chapter of the Association of Information Technology (AITP). Our first meeting was standing room only and attended by over 60 students. The speaker was Dr. David Wierschem the Computer Information Systems Department Chair who talked about the extracurricular opportunities that students have to set themselves apart, and why they should. They also had Mr. Mark Wey at their second meeting come and speak about starting your own technology business. He gave a lot of examples of how business work and how technology is a major part of their success. This month the student chapter will be competing at the AITP Region 3 Student Conference to be held at Sam Houston State University. They will have over 35 students, from freshmen to seniors participating in a wide variety of competitions. We will let you know how well they did in next month’s newsletter.

If you want to be a part of, support, or get more information on any of these events please contact one of the student chapter advisors: Mr. Kevin Jetton at kj02@txstate.edu, Dr. Randy Cook at jc09@txstate.edu, or Dr. Sam Lee at sl20@txstate.edu.

Keep an eye out for the upcoming High School Symposium. The goal of the symposium is to educate and excite high school students about career opportunities in technology. This event is growing every year and provides opportunities for high school students to interact with technology professionals, compete in technology contests, and listen to presentations from technology experts in a variety of fields. If you want more information about attending or supporting this event please contact either Dr. David Wierschem at dw50@txstate.edu or Mr. Kevin Jetton at kj02@txstate.edu.

For back copies of Bits & Bytes, or for white papers on What is CIS? What are the different types of technology degrees? Why get involved with Extracurricular Activities? Visit the CID & QMST website at http://www.cis.txstate.edu/. You can find them under the Newsletters and Resources tabs.