



## DEPARTMENT UPDATES

It is spring time here in Florida, a busy time of the year for students, faculty and staff in the Information Systems and Decision Sciences Department in the USF Muma College of Business to lay the foundations to further improve the experience for our students starting with us in the fall. Some of these activities are highlighted through the stories in this newsletter, which features alumnus **Swapnil Awasthi** (*page 2*), who is now an applied data science associate at DataRobot; **Jessica Beck** (*page 3*), founding captain of the **Muma Analytics team**; and new department faculty member **Logan Steele** (*page 4*).

Our department is strengthening its integration with other programs on campus. At the undergraduate level, we started a **certificate in Business Analytics and Information Systems** that is open to students in all undergraduate majors on campus. The certificate allows students to choose the degree that best aligns with their passions.

We also joined forces with the USF College of Arts and Sciences to start a **concurrent degree between biomedical sciences and BAIS**. This intense program, designed in tight collaboration with USF's Office of Health Professions Advising, allows qualifying students interested in medical careers to simultaneously earn the BAIS degree, gaining expertise in electronic medical records and related technologies and do so within the regular four years.

Our graduate programs are adapting to the changing workplace, sharpening their focus and relevance. The **MS in Management** program attracted one of its

largest incoming cohorts this spring.

This year we successfully launched the **Muma Analytics team**, in collaboration with our local industry partners. This is the competitive team supported by the department. **Clinton Daniel** coaches and mentors these students through required weekly coaching sessions. We look forward to growing and strengthening this team with your support.

We graduated 2 **PhD students** this year and both were successfully placed in faculty positions at business schools around the country, where they will start as assistant professors. This coming year, we look forward to starting a cohort of at least three new PhD students.

All this is possible due to the dedication of department faculty and partners. Our **industry advisory board** is deeply invested in the success of the department and its programs. We welcome **Mark LaPlante**, senior director of development at **Connectwise**, **Christopher Rogers**, senior vice president of **Sykes**, and **Joe Partlow**, CTO of **ReliaQuest**. The advisory board facilitated activities in the department throughout the year, including our student development trips this year (*page 5*). Your continued support helps our programs grow.

Regards,

Manish Agrawal  
*Professor & Chair, Information Systems & Decision Sciences*



*MS in Management, Spring 2018 students*

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### MS IN MANAGEMENT

The **MS in Management** just got approval for a **concentration in management information systems**. This adds to existing concentrations in **human resources** and **project management**. The MIS concentration is designed to extend the appeal of the MS in Management to professionals looking to serve as analysts and managers in the IT function in organizations.

### MS IN BAIS

The MS in BAIS program added courses in **block chain technologies and their applications**, and a **course in data science programming**.

### WEEKEND EXECUTIVE MS IN BAIS



Last fall, the MS BAIS program added a **weekend option**. The program meets alternating Saturdays for 17 months. Members of the cohort represent most of the leading organizations in the Tampa Bay area.

### FACULTY NEWS

**Professor Anol Bhattacharjee** was selected for the **Nehru Distinguished Chair by the Fulbright program**. **Professor Alan Hevner** was selected as a **Distinguished University Professor** and also as a distinguished alum by his alma mater, the Department of Computer Science at Purdue.

We look forward to **welcoming three new faculty members** in the fall – **Kellas Cameron** from Boston University, **Dezhi Yin** from the University of Missouri and **Sagar Samtani** from the University of Arizona.

**Karla “Doreen” MacAulay**, was named the recipient of this year’s **Muma College of Business Outstanding Teacher Award**.

**Professor Marv Karlins’** co-authored book with Joe Navarro, *What Every BODY is Saying* has passed a half million books sold and is the #1 international seller on non verbal communication. His new book, *A Chip and a Prayer*, focuses on the life of a poker player competing at the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas. It will be coming out May 22.



*We checked in with Swapnil Awasthi, who is currently working at DataRobot as an applied data science associate.*

**Where are you from?** Lucknow, India.

**What are you currently up to?** I have joined DataRobot as an applied data science associate. I will be working with them to enable organizations leverage data science/machine learning.

**Why did you choose BAIS as your major?** It was an analytics and data science driven curriculum.

**Did you have prior experience in the field before coming to USF?** I had a good amount of experience, about eight years, but none in analytics or data science.

**What new skills did you learn during your time here?** My idea of pursuing a master’s was to change my career track. I have developed a new skillset-languages like **R, Python, SAS**, tools like **Tableau, SAS Enterprise Miner**, etc., but most importantly, basic concepts and solid understanding of data science. Special thanks to the ‘people’s champion’ Professor Balaji.

**What skills are you looking forward to developing?** I look forward to developing data science skills which can help customers derive value out of prediction analytics and machine learning - and by value I mean DOLLARS!

**What has been your favorite part of the program?** The flexibility of the program. For most of the part, I was free to choose my subjects and decide my learning path...plus the evening classes.

**What was your favorite course?** Data mining and statistical data mining were my top two! §



### *What skills are you looking forward to developing?*

I'm definitely looking forward to continuing to develop my hard skills. I'm somewhat familiar with SQL, Java, and C#, but I know I have more to learn about developing more advanced code and I'm excited to see what projects I get that will help me learn that! I'm also excited for delving deeper into tools like PowerBI and Tableau for data visualization.

**"I loved serving as captain for the Muma Analytics team, as I got to participate in an analytics competition for the AIS and really push myself with my data skills."**

### *What has been your favorite part of the program?*

My favorite part of the program was studying abroad in Mysore, India. I had the chance to take a software development class from Infosys, one of the biggest technology service & consulting firms in the world. Having the chance to learn about the program from a completely different perspective was amazing, and spending my weekends on excursions, like going on safari and visiting the Taj Mahal with other BAIS majors and Dr. Agrawal made some memories I'll never forget! I also loved serving as captain for the Muma analytics team, as I got to participate in an analytics competition for the AIS and really push myself with my data skills!

### *What has been your favorite course?*

My favorite course was Database Design and Administration. I loved learning SQL and building a database from the ground up and visualizing how all of the data is related. It's definitely something that's helped me in the real world, as I'm currently constructing a database in my internship with PwC!

### *What are your current plans for after graduation?*

My current plans after graduation are to continue working for PricewaterhouseCoopers as a member of the strategic information services team. I hope to go back in a few years for my master's degree, but for now I'm ready to start working! §

*Jessica Beck is one of our graduating seniors. Below is her background and tips she has for fellow students.*

### *Why did you choose BAIS as your major?*

I wanted a major that allowed me to combine my passion for design with my love of computers and technology. BAIS allows this through designing systems and databases, creating unique solutions to business needs, and modeling data in visually appealing ways, so I definitely think I found the best fit major for me!

### *Did you have prior experience in the field before coming to USF?*

I've always loved technology, and I grew up playing on Linux machines with my dad at his office. I had a little bit of experience on the business side of things from serving as business manager for my high school yearbook staff, where I gathered requirements for pages and monitored staff deadlines, but I really didn't know much about BAIS before I started.

### *What new skills have you learned during your time here?*

Technically, I've learned tons of skills, from creating ERDs in Visio to programming in C#. I've also had first-hand experience with Java, Tableau, and PowerBI through the analytics team, as well as learning SQL in class. On the business side, I've been able to improve my communication and presentation skills through my internship with PwC, and I've been exposed to different corporate settings that have made me more well-rounded as an employee, and I feel that that's incredibly important as graduation approaches.

## FACULTY FOCUS

## Logan Steele



Accepting the position in the Information Systems and Decision Sciences Department at USF was an easy choice for Professor Logan Steele. While on the job market last year, Steele was searching for a place with bright and passionate colleagues, open to collaboration, and committed to doing meaningful

and impactful research. In spring of 2017, after giving his job talk to a group that described itself as “a pack of friendly hyenas,” he knew he had found the right place.

Steele’s research focuses on innovation and what leaders should try to do (and what they should try to avoid) when managing a workforce that they expect to produce and implement creative ideas. He has studied the effects charismatic and transformational leaders have on innovation across different national cultures, observing that the impact these leaders have is almost moot in cultures where people are inclined to think long-term and to embrace uncertainty. In contrast, these leaders have a strong positive influence on their teams’ innovativeness where people are more likely to avoid risk and think short-term. More recently, Steele began investigating how to design jobs in such a way that fosters employees’ interest in their work and, in turn, increases their motivation to be creative.

**“Getting one’s education is expensive and time-consuming, so it cannot be overstated the importance of having a realistic preview of the job for which one is preparing.”**

Steele teaches organizational assessment at the undergraduate level in the management program. In this course, he emphasizes applied problem-solving skills and the importance of making sound decisions based on evidence. He also gives students the opportunity to go out into the “real world” and put their newly-acquired knowledge and skills into practice by helping local businesses solve the problems they’re facing.

His advice to undergraduate students is to explore early and often jobs in which they might be interested. Research shows that people with realistic expectations of their job are more likely to be satisfied with their job and to stay longer. “Graduate school was 5 years of developing a realistic preview of life as a professor,” he says. “Were it not for that experience — and for the comparisons I could make to work I had done through internships — I don’t think the transition would be as smooth as it has been.” §

## RESEARCH FEATURE

## Vivek Singh



*Research conducted by Vivek Singh with Kausvik Dutta, Balaji Padmanabhan and Shalini Sasidharan (MS in BAIS Student) is the basis for filing a U.S. Provisional Patent (USSN 62/628367), titled “System and Method for a Secured File System” with the help of USF Research & Innovation. Below is the summary of the research:*

Data security is of paramount importance for organizations adopting cloud computing. Recently, there have been numerous incidents of data leaks due to inappropriate cloud security settings. In this research, we design and develop a novel secured cloud file system – SCARF, to protect organizational data against such data leaks. SCARF is a dual layer secured hash-based file system consisting of a control layer and a data layer. The control layer provides a mapping from the logical file system to a secured hashed file system, along with the persistence of the logical file system. The data layer persists the physical file system in the cloud environment. We have developed software libraries for SCARF which organizations may deploy without any major changes to their existing cloud implementation. We plan to further evaluate SCARF using lab experiments and field study. §



EVENT SPOTLIGHT

## CIO Breakfast

*Moez Limayem (Dean), Mike Whitaker,  
Gert-Jan de Vreede, Joni Jones*

Innovation, determination, and cutting through the noise of the workplace were topics of discussion at the fifth annual Breakfast with a CIO, sponsored by the Muma College of Business Information Systems and Decision Sciences Department.

“Innovation is a pretty thing to watch,” said Mike Whitaker, the global head of ICG Operations & Technology at Citi, “but you need to make it meaningful.”

Whitaker, who flew in from the United Kingdom to be the guest speaker at the event, discussed innovation’s place in technology, the importance of determination and communication hygiene in his talk to some of Tampa’s IT leaders and USF students.

Whitaker’s presentation had an amicable tone, though he did deliver some key advice.

“I am more interested in the idea-to-implementation ratio: What have you gotten done?” he said. “Hooking up things that work together to deliver is what matters.”

He also shared a maxim that past speaker Mark Ashton-Rigby borrowed from him.

“Determination defeats brilliance,” said Whitaker, who has always sided with the underdog. He also spoke about taking care of your own business first and not ‘minding other people’s gardens’ to the detriment of one’s own work.” §

EVENT SPOTLIGHT

## Student Development Trips

The department organized development trips to introduce students to career opportunities in their majors and encourage co-curricular development.



### KFORCE TOUR

Students in the BS and MS in Management explored career opportunities for the major, toured the facility, and met with industry professionals.

### DALI MUSEUM, CREATIVITY WORKSHOP

Students attended the Dali’s Innovation Labs, combining psychology and management research on creativity, creative problem solving, and innovation to unlock creative potential.

### VERIZON CAMPUS TOUR

Students in the BS BAIS major learned more about career opportunities in the industry, toured the facility, and met with industry professionals.

### STRAZCENTER, PUBLIC SPEAKING WORKSHOP

As the beginning of a new partnership, students will attend a workshop on public speaking; *Speaking Up for Success*, later this spring.



ISDS FACULTY

*Spring 2018* - GO BULLS!

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