Preparing for the Academic Job Market:
An interactive Panel for Doctoral Students

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ABSTRACT

This proposal expands on the basic format of the successful interactive doctoral student panel sponsored by SIG/ED at the 2011 ASIS&T annual meeting. The 2012 panel will feature several new panelists and a discussion of alternative career paths to the traditional job market, such as post-doctoral opportunities.

The function of this panel is to provide an interactive platform for faculty members at all stages of their careers to provide advice and input for doctoral students nearing the completion of their doctoral work. This panel will provide valuable insight on finishing the dissertation, weighing post-doctoral opportunities, entering the job market, and beginning an academic career. The format will allow participants to ask questions anonymously that may otherwise be embarrassing to ask. The seven panelists represent all stages of an academic career: three assistant professors, two associate professors (including an associate dean), and two full professors (including one dean). The participants come from six different institutions and represent two countries (U.S. and Canada). The panel will be of greatest use to those doctoral students at the end of their doctoral program, but, as proven in 2011, will also be of interest to doctoral students beginning their doctoral work and new assistant professors.

Keywords
Academe, doctoral students, job searching, academic life.

INTRODUCTION
Faculty members in the United States report working, on average, 53 hours a week (Axtell, 1998). At a research institution, these hours are typically divided unevenly between research (29% of time, on average), teaching (43%) and other service and administrative duties (Axtell, 1998). These averages, however, mask the complexity of institutional type and particular requirements for tenure. Within the information disciplines, there is a full range of institutional types and requirements: a teaching load for an academic year ranges from 2-8 courses, depending on the institution. For some institutions, grants are mandatory—a successful tenure portfolio must contain at least one large research contract. For others, grants represent an element of service and younger faculty members are discouraged from engaging in proposals. The requirements for service also vary, with some schools emphasizing connections to practice, some focusing on school committees and others promoting national organization experience.

For newly minted doctoral students, this transition from doctoral education to academic life can be quite jarring. While it is likely that students engaged in elements of academic life during their doctoral program (teaching a course, conducting research, and serving on committees), the increase in each of these areas may be daunting for some. Learning how to balance the increased demands along with daily schedule interruptions (student emails and meetings) and a personal life can be quite difficult. Informal advice from our panelists will be of value to doctoral students contemplating the demands of the profession.

This panel will give students a platform to ask questions about the critical transition period in academe: finishing the dissertation, considering post-doctoral opportunities, entering the job market, and working towards tenure. The interactive design of the panel will allow for the free exchange of ideas between doctoral students and professors at various stages of academic life.

FORMAT
The event will take place during a single ASIS&T paper session time slot. If possible, the panel will be assembled in a u-shape at the front of the room, allowing for better interaction among the panelists. The students will be in concentric u-shapes mirroring the panel. The informality of the room set-up will induce conversation between the panelists and the attendees.

As students and other attendees enter the room, they will be given index cards and asked to write a question of interest to them. They will take a seat and work on their questions as others enter. At the start of the session, the panelists will be asked to give a brief introduction (less than 1 minute) to give their name, position, and current and former places of employment. During the introductions, SIG/ED members will collect index cards and begin sorting the cards into similar question types for the moderator, Naresh Agarwal. The moderator will then ask panel members the questions. SIG/ED members will continue to distribute and collect index cards for the moderator throughout the panel, but the moderator will also encourage students to ask questions directly. When there are 10 minutes left in the session, we will stop collecting questions and ask each of the panelists to give one final piece of advice for the audience that they feel is important to share but that was not covered previously during the discussion.

BENEFITS
This event will provide an informal opportunity for doctoral students to interact with faculty members at all stages of their academic careers (assistant, associate, and full professors, including administrative positions). This interaction provides a sense of continuity for the student—seeing ASIS&T members at later stages in their careers implicitly highlights the continued value of ASIS&T membership for career development and networking. Explicitly, the content is something that is much desired by doctoral students—answering questions not only about obtaining a job, but what to keep in mind as they engage in academic life. The anonymity of the question-asking allows people to ask "high-risk" questions—those that may seem embarrassing to ask in a group setting. This also acts as a way to build community among the doctoral students, providing a platform for doctoral students to network and socialize.

PROMOTION
This panel will be heavily promoted using ASIS&T listservs, as well as SIG/ED Facebook and Twitter accounts. In addition, a list of all student members will be obtained from Dick Hill and the students will be emailed individually with an invitation to attend the event. The panel will also be listed in the conference program.

PANELISTS
The panelists represent all stages of an academic career: three assistant professors, two associate professors (including an associate dean), and two full professors (including one dean). The participants come from six different institutions and represent two countries (U.S. and Canada).

Naresh Agarwal, Moderator
Naresh Agarwal is an Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College, Boston. Naresh earned his Ph.D. from the National University of Singapore's Department of Information Systems, School of Computing. His research interests are information behavior (information seeking, context, source choice), theories/models/frameworks/synthesis, information systems (knowledge management, health informatics) and happiness. Naresh has published in many of these areas. His teaching interests are evaluation of information services, technology for information professionals and knowledge management. Naresh is the current chairman of ASIS&T SIG/ED.

As moderator and panelist, Naresh brings the unique experience of an international student background coupled with a successful professional career to the panel.

Carolyn Hank
Carolyn Hank is an Assistant Professor at the School of Information Studies at McGill University. She received her Ph.D. from the School of Information and Library Science (SILS) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) and is a 2010 recipient of a Eugene Garfield Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship from Beta Phi Mu. Carolyn served as project manager for the DigCCurr I project (2007-2009), an IMLS-funded project to develop graduate-level curricular framework, course modules, and experiential and enrichment components and exemplars necessary to prepare students to work in the 21st century environment of trusted digital and data repositories. She is currently an instructor in the DigCCurr Professional Institute: Curation Practices for the Digital Object Lifecycle, a component of the DigCCurr II project (2008-2012). She teaches in the areas of digital preservation and access, digital curation, human information interactions, and research methods.

Carolyn brings the perspective of the early stages of a tenure-track, assistant professor position to the panel. She also has the unique perspective of an American who accepted a post at a non-U.S. institution.

Barbara H. Kwasnik
Barabara Kwasnik is a full Professor at the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University. She teaches in the areas of organization of information, theory of classification, and information science. Barbara is especially interested in how classifications are translated from one culture or application to another. The purpose of that research is to help support increasingly diverse contexts. Other ongoing research (with Kevin Crowston) includes investigating whether genre information can help in searching, and a project (with Carsten Oesterlund) on the nature of documents and documenting work. Barbara is the Co-Founder, Co-Organizer and Co-Chair of the ASIS&T SIG/CR.

Barbara brings the perspective of a successful career of balanced research, teaching, and service to the panel.

Elizabeth Liddy

Elizabeth D. Liddy is Dean of the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University. Prior to being named Dean in February, 2008, Elizabeth was founding director of the Center for Natural Language Processing (CNLP) whose focus is the development of human-like language understanding software capabilities for government, commercial and consumer applications. She has led over 70 research projects with funding from various government agencies, foundations, and corporate enterprises and has authored more than 110 research papers and given hundreds of conference presentations on her research.

Prior to CNLP, Elizabeth was the founding president of TextWise LLC, which she led from 1994 to 1999 in the development of an NLP-based search engine which was used by the U. S. and European Patent Offices. In addition, she is inventor or co-inventor on 7 patents in the area of NLP. Elizabeth has taught in the areas of Natural Language Processing, Information Retrieval, and Data Mining. She was Chair of ACM-SIGIR for the 2007-2010 term and is Chair of the international iSchool Caucus.

As a Dean, Elizabeth serves in the capacity to hire, tenure, and promote faculty members. This position provides a unique lens for the panel and valuable insights for the doctoral students.

Sanghee Oh

Sanghee Oh is an Assistant Professor in the School of Library and Information Studies at Florida State University. Sanghee's research interests include collaborative information seeking and sharing behaviors, social media, social informatics, health information behaviors, health informatics, human information interaction (HII), human computer interaction (HCI), usability evaluation, and digital libraries. He teaches advanced online searching, digital libraries, and introduction to information architecture. Sanghee is the principal investigator on the Health Information Behaviors in Social Q&A: A Comparison between Experts, Librarians, and Questioners project funded by a grant from Florida State University.

Sanghee brings his perspective as a recent entrant to academic life to the panel.

Susan Rathbun-Grubb

Susan Rathbun-Grubb is an Assistant Professor at the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina. Susan received her PhD from the UNC School of Information and Library Science in 2009, where she taught organization of information, organization of materials, and indexing and abstracting as an adjunct instructor. Susan's doctoral research (Leaving Librarianship: A Study of the Determinants and Consequences of Occupational Turnover) focused on career satisfaction, turnover, and retention in the library and information science field. She has worked as a Research Scientist on the Workforce Issues in Library and Information Science projects at the UNC Institute on Aging. While at UNC she was named a Future Faculty Fellow and received the Margaret Ellen Kalp Fellowship and the Adjunct Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence. A Beta Phi Mu member, she has worked in academic, public, and school libraries, as well as the health information technology industry.

Susan brings the perspective of a fairly recent member of the academy as well as her unique perspective on post-doctoral experience to the panel.

Soo Young Rieh

Soo Young Rieh is an Associate Professor in the School of Information at the University of Michigan. Soo Young's research seeks to better understand people's information seeking and online searching behavior in various information use contexts with a focus on the ways in which people assess information credibility, cognitive authority, and information quality. Recently, Soo Young has been particularly interested in the credibility assessment heuristics that people use within the context of their everyday life information activities. Soo Young is the principal investigator of the Credibility Assessment in the Participatory Web Environment funded by the MacArthur Foundation from 2008-2011, investigating what new sets of heuristics of credibility assessment have emerged in the participatory Web environment (Web 2.0). Soo Young was also the principal investigator of the MIRACLE (Making Institutional Repositories a Collaborative Learning Environment) project (with Professor Karen Markey and Associate Professor Elizabeth Yakel) funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) from 2005-08. That project investigated the development of institutional repositories in colleges and universities to identify models and best practices in the administration, technical infrastructure, and access to repository collections.

Previously Soo Young held a position as a human factors research engineer at Excite@Home Search and Directory Group. Soo Young is a recipient of several awards, including the ASIST Best Conference Paper Award (2010), ASIST SIG/USE Best Information Behavior Conference Paper (2007), the John Wiley & Sons Best JASIST Paper Award (2005), and the Eugene Garfield-ALISE Doctoral Dissertation Award (2002). Dr. Rieh earned her PhD in Communication, Information, and Library Studies from Rutgers University.

Soo Young brings her perspective as a tenured professor to the panel.

Howard Rosenbaum

Howard Rosenbaum is the Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Information Science in the School of Library

and Information Science at Indiana University, where he has been on the faculty since 1993. He is the Director of the Master of Information Science program and a co-director of the Graduate Certificate in Information Architecture program in SLIS. Howard is currently interested in social informatics, ebusiness, and online communities. He has led seminars on ebusiness at Napier University in Edinburgh, Scotland, the University of Bath, and the University of Greenwich, in the UK. Howard has also spoken widely on information architecture in the mid-west.

Howard has presented his work at the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), the Association for Information Systems, the Association of Internet Researchers, HCI International, and other organizations. He is a Fellow the Rob Kling Center for Social Informatics at Indiana University and current chair of SIG/SI at ASIS&T. Rosenbaum teaches classes on digital entrepreneurship, information systems design, information architecture for the web, intellectual freedom,

and information organizations and workshops for information professionals in XML, CSS, and web page design. He has been recognized for excellence in teaching and for the innovative use of technology in education, receiving the Frederic Bachman Lieber Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence, Indiana University in 2005, a state-wide MIRA Award for Technological Innovation in Education from Techpoint in 2003, the Indiana Partnership for Statewide Education Award for Innovation in Teaching with Technology in 2002, and was named one of the first SBC Fellows at Indiana University in 2000.

Howard has chaired the search committee for new faculty posts for numerous years and brings a hiring perspective to the panel.

REFERENCES

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