Building an International Academic Discipline in Information Systems

Gordon B. Davis
Honeywell Professor of Management Information Systems
Carlson School of Management
The University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota U.S.
gdavis@csom.umn.edu

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Most academic disciplines within the broad field of management or economic sciences developed within the context of a country or a region. Examples are accounting, marketing, and industrial relations. They are working to be international. The academic discipline of information systems (or whatever name may be used in different universities or different countries) became international very quickly. Several conditions facilitated this development, and it has been remarkable in its scope and impact. Mats Lundeberg is one of the academics who have nurtured the international discipline of information systems. It is appropriate to honor that contribution on this occasion.

I have been fortunate to have been a part of many of the developments that helped the formation of an international community of information systems scholars. This article describes my perception of some of the critical decisions and events that helped build the international network. Since it is also a personal journey, I often mention personal involvement and personal experiences. I recognize that the description is limited by my own experience. It is not complete; I may have missed some critical contributions. Rather than being a complete historical account, this article is my view.

The article discusses the name issue and why it took time for information systems to develop an identifiable, well-defined international community. It then focuses on seven critical events or developments that made it possible to have an international academic discipline for information systems. These are the development of computing devices, the use of English as the common language for computing-related disciplines, the formation of the International Federation for Information Processing and its Technical Committee 8 (Information Systems), international efforts by scholars in several countries, locating the IFIP TC8 working conferences internationally including the Manchester Conference sponsored by WG8.2, the founding of the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS), and the founding of the Association for Information Systems (AIS) with an international governance structure.

The Name of the Systems, the Business Function, and the Academic Discipline

In organizations, the term Information System or some equivalent refers to both:

- ☝ the systems that deliver information and communication services
- ☝ the organization function that plans, develops, and manages the information systems

The name for the academic discipline more or less mirrors the organization use. Some of the names that are used illustrate the common theme:

- Information Systems
- Management Information Systems
- Information Management
- Management of Information Systems
- Informatics (usually modified by organization, administration, or similar terms)

Informatics has some appeal. It appears to have originated with the French informatique. It was not used in the US because it was a copyrighted term for a business (that later went bankrupt).

The term Management Information Systems or MIS reflected the strong theme that the function and the academic field were most concerned about the new, powerful uses of computers to change the information presented to management and the analysis for management decision making. Transaction processing was, in the early years, not considered very interesting.

Over time, there has been a trend to employ the simple term, Information Systems, in referring to the academic discipline, but there are still many variations in practice. Within the academic discipline, many use terms that reflect the management or administrative use of computers. For example, the Stockholm School of Economics (Handelshögskolan i Stockholm) unit for information systems refers to itself as the Department of Information Management.

It is interesting to note the problem of terminology is found elsewhere. A simple, non-encompassing term of *computer* is used for complex computing and communications and processing devices. The academic field is termed Computer Science. There are other alternatives. For example, the Swedish term *dator* for computer seems to reflect an emphasis on data processing rather than computation.

Why it Took Longer to Build an International Information Systems Academic Community Than a Computing Community

The short review that follows of the international development of computing machinery shows the significant time lag between formation of an international community for the overall field of computing and the formation of an identifiable, well-defined community of scholars in an academic discipline for information systems. Some key dates I recognize (and I may have missed some important ones) in the evolution toward an international academic discipline illustrate the time lag:

1954   First business use of computers
1958   First speculation of importance to business of computers in *Harvard Business Review*
1960   Forming of International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP)
1965   Börje Langefors appointed as professor (joint chair at the Royal Institute of

Technology and the University of Stockholm) in Information Processing, with special emphasis on Administrative Data Processing.

1968 First formal MIS academic degree programs in the US (M.S. and Ph.D.) at University of Minnesota.

1968 Establishment of organization for information system executives (CIOs); first called Society for Management Information Systems and now Society for Information Management (SIM)

1976 Establishment of IFIP technical committee on information systems (TC8)

1977 The journal *MIS Quarterly* started at the University of Minnesota

1980 First International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS)

1994 Formation of Association for Information Systems (AIS) as an international academic organization with an international governance structure. Merger in 2001 with ICIS as world conference for AIS. Alliances with regional conferences in Europe, Asia, and America (ECIS, PACIS, and AMCIS).

In my view, the time lag was caused by three major factors: the time lag between the introduction of computers and the recognition of an interesting, important business function and related interesting, important research issues; the diverse backgrounds of academic researchers and conflicting loyalties with existing organizations; and existing conferences and journals that accepted IS research results.

☞ The time lag between the introduction of computers and the recognition of an interesting, important business function and related interesting, important research issues.

Punched card data processing and the related use of business machines were not an interesting academic subject, either for teaching or research. Even faculty and students in accounting viewed the subject as not suitable for the curriculum. Since early use of computers focused on simple transaction processing, it didn't look interesting. What sparked interest very early was the possibility of improved analysis, improved reporting, and improved decision making. As business developed and implemented computer-based data processing systems, it became apparent that there were many interesting problems ranging over topics such as requirements determination, development methodologies, implementation, design of work systems, and evaluation. It became interesting, but this emerged slowly. Why so slowly? Probably because the cycle of technology innovation is very short; the cycle of process and system innovation is much longer (say roughly two to three years for technology and six to nine years for process and systems).

☞ The diverse backgrounds of academic researchers and conflicting loyalties with existing organizations.

Early academic researchers came from a variety of backgrounds such as management, accounting, computer science, and management science. Doctoral students in the 1960s who were interested in information systems took doctorates in these subjects but researched interesting problems in information systems. Although information system research was emerging rapidly, it was not until 1968 that the first formal doctoral program in information systems in North America was established at the University of Minnesota (along with an MIS research center).

An important consideration for researchers in schools of administration or business (especially in North America) was the fact that their colleagues, with academic training and traditions that did not incorporate information systems and the information systems function, often did not understand or appreciate the importance of the new technologies, systems, and organization function. A safe way to maintain academic credibility was to fit within an existing management, accounting, marketing, or operations research discipline. Some of the most prestigious universities were slow to recognize the new realities of the computer age.

☝ Existing conferences and journals that accepted IS research results.

Given the diverse backgrounds of researchers and the diverse department affiliations, the early researchers looked to their home discipline for opportunities to present and publish their work. Several organizations formed special interest groups around the issues of information systems. Examples were SIGMIS by ACM and College on Information Systems by Management Science (now INFORMS). Journals such as *Management Science* and *Communications of the ACM* published MIS research. SIGMIS created *Database* to cover the topic. There were journals in Europe that focused on information systems research, but these had not yet become key outlets for the entire community. IFIP was important, especially its technical committee on information systems, in sponsoring conferences and publishing conference proceedings during the development period.

Given the three issues discussed above, the time delays in formalizing the international community of scholars in a new academic discipline are understandable. However, it should be recognized that the formal developments such as conferences and organizations were the result of informal networks of scholars that developed rather quickly and inputs from forward-looking practitioners who recognized the need for good research.

Critical Development 1: Development of Computing Devices

After World War II, there was interest in many universities around the world in the design and development of computing machinery. Well-known efforts took place at the University of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States and Manchester University in the UK, but there were similar research efforts in Sweden, Switzerland, and other countries. The community of researchers shared designs and experiences, so the development of computing machinery can be considered an international effort.

Building a computer in a university laboratory is one thing; building a commercially viable computer is another. As frequently happens, a sponsor emerged. The United States government was interested in a computer to use for tabulating the 1950 census of people in the US. There was an historical precedent. Punched card data processing had been invented for use in the 1890 US census. During the next 60 years, it grew to dominate processing of simple transactions and preparation of fairly simple reports for business and government. IBM was the leader in this industry. IBM was not, however, the developer of the first commercial computer. It was done by a start-up company, the Eckert and Mauchly company, headed by two of the

developers from the University of Pennsylvania. Their product was the UNIVAC I.

The business use of computers happened in1954 in two countries. The first business use was in the UK by the Lyons Tea Company, owner of a chain of tea shops. They commissioned Manchester University to develop a business computer. It was named LEO for Lyons Electronic Office. In the US, General Electric began a business use of a UNIVAC I for payroll at its Louisville Appliance Park. The *Harvard Business Review* published a futurist article by Leavitt and Whisler in 1958, "Management in the 1980s" that forecast large changes in organization structure and management in the next 30 years based on the availability of computers.

Computer Science developed very early as an international community even though each country tended to have its own organization. In the US, the Association for Computing Machinery was founded in 1947 when research was being done on new devices for computation. The first Computer Science departments with formal degree program in the US were started at Stanford University and Purdue University in 1962. Research on computer science issues resulted in doctorates earlier than this but not from formal degree programs.

Why didn't Information Systems begin at the same time as business use began? As mentioned earlier, the problem was that data processing, as typified by card punch equipment and various business machines, was not academically interesting. The systems were easily learned by observation; the processes were applied mainly to simple transactions and simple reports. Applying computers to the same processes did not create an academic interest.

There was interest in computers in schools of administration and management, but the focus was mainly on the computer as a tool for analytical models and sophisticated analysis. Almost every major management school had one or more faculty who taught some elements of computer technology. I observed that development first hand. My first book, *Introduction to Electronic Computers* (1965), was directed not at a new discipline but the general business students. I believed they should understand something about computer technology and its use in business. Langefors began as Professor of Information Systems in Sweden in the same year and published his *Theoretical Analysis of Information Systems* in 1966. My second book, *Computer Data Processing (1969)* had much more emphasis on how the computer is used for data processing and other business applications. Note these books were 10 to 15 years after the first use of business computers.

Critical Development 2: The Use of English as the Common Language for Computing-Related Disciplines

A common language is very important in building an international community of scholars in a discipline. Greek, Latin, German, and French have provided such a common language for various communities at different times in history. The development of computers, although occurring in different countries, had major developments in the US and the UK. This encouraged the use of English as the language for the computing field. As will be noted later, English was adopted as the language for the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). At the same time, there was a general recognition by scholars and business leaders of the value of an international language. English became the common language of international commerce and of

research and education in many fields. The Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries had taught English as an important second language; the English emphasis was further increased during the period when computing was developing and the field of information systems was beginning to emerge.

The common language of English has meant that international conferences on computing and information systems can be held at almost any location in the world, research is freely exchanged across boundaries, and textbooks and trade books are made available internationally. For example, the Swedish ISAC methodology developed by Mats Lundeberg and others was published in English (*Information Systems Development–A Systematic Approach*, 1981). Information systems instruction and research in Sweden illustrate the importance of a common international language. Any English language book needed for instruction in Sweden can be used without translation.

I was fortunate to write a significant book in the field in 1974 with second edition in 1985 (with Margrethe Olson). Many rank the book as a defining book for the field. It was used throughout the world by scholars who now form the nucleus of the discipline. The book, *Management Information Systems: Conceptual Foundations, Structure, and Development*, 1974, 1985, outlines the major concepts employed in the field and their relationship to the structure of systems and management of the function. A revision today would add concepts and modify some of the structure that is defined, but it has been noted as a classic textbook in the field. Similarly, Börje Langefors *Theoretical Analysis of Information Systems,* 1966 was important for the development of the discipline in the Scandinavian countries.

Critical Development 3: The Formation of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) and its Technical Committee 8 (Information Systems)

In the early development of computing and its use in organizations, national organizations were forming, but there was no accepted international forum. The United Nations provided the impetus for the formation of an international information processing organization. UNESCO sponsored the first World Computer Conference in 1959 in Paris (five years after the first business uses). This was followed by the organization in 1960 of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). IFIP is a non governmental, nonprofit umbrella organization for national societies working in the field of information processing (essentially a society of societies).

Technical work, which is the heart of IFIP's activity, is managed by a series of Technical Committees (TCs). Each member society (usually identified with a country) may appoint a representative to the governance committee for each technical committee. There are currently 12 technical committees. Each technical committee forms working groups. Individuals throughout the world may be members of a working group by demonstrating interest and continuing activity in the work of the group.

The IFIP technical committee of interest in this view of the development of an international academic discipline is TC8 (Information Systems). It was established in 1976. Its

aims are to promote and encourage the advancement of research and practice of concepts, methods, techniques, and issues related to information systems in organizations. Note that it was formed 22 years after the first use of computers in business. It currently has seven working groups.

> WG 8.1 Design and evaluation of information systems
> WG 8.2 The interaction of information systems and the organization
> WG 8.3 Decision support systems
> WG 8.4 E-business: multidisciplinary research and practice
> WG 8.5 Information systems in public administration
> WG 8.6 Diffusion, transfer, and implementation of information technology
> WG 8.8 Smart cards, technology, applications & methods

TC8 was important in helping to build an international community. Its first chairman was Börje Langefors of Sweden. It started as somewhat Europe-centric but rapidly expanded to worldwide participation. I personally observed the building of that community through the TC8 national representatives and the meetings of the working groups. I was the second US representative to TC8 and remained in that position (and as chairman) for 20 years. Mats Lundeberg was already the Swedish representative to TC8 when I was appointed, so he was part of this important early nurturing of the field. The structure of IFIP and TC8 was a limiting factor that prevented it from becoming the focus of an emerging international community for an information systems discipline. Those limiting factors are another story; however, its role in the early development was important.

Critical Development 4: International Efforts by Scholars in Several Countries

It is difficult and somewhat dangerous to start mentioning specific names of important innovators and contributors. Even a casual reading of the history of inventions shows again and again that important innovations are "in the air." Several people are working on the same problem and coming to the same solutions, but one or only a few are recognized as the inventors. We all thought of Eckert and Mauchly as the inventors of the first computer, but another won a lawsuit establishing prior invention. In fact, scientists and engineers in many countries were working on the problem and converging on a solution. Given this caveat, I recognize a few critical innovators who helped in the formation of the international discipline. The Association for Information Systems has recognized some of these by giving them the LEO award for lifetime exceptional achievement in information systems.

☞   Colleagues at the University of Minnesota. The founding of the Minnesota academic programs in MIS in 1968 was a joint product of Professor **Tom Hoffmann**, Professor **Gary Dickson**, and myself. Tom was chairman of the Management Sciences Department to which we were finally attached. Gary was tireless in building the program. He started the *MIS Quarterly* and nurtured it through the growing pains of its first six years. He was one of those who started the first International Conference on Information Systems in 1980. Also important to mention is **Janice DeGross**, my administrative assistant starting in 1977 and now the Production Editor of the *MIS Quarterly*. She has edited and prepared

for publication numerous publications in the IS field including several of my books, ICIS proceedings since 1987, several IFIP WG8.2 conference proceedings, and the MIS faculty directory. She has been a resource for the field.

☞ Early academic innovators in information systems as an academic discipline. This list is representative and illustrative; it is certainly not exhaustive.

J. Daniel Couger from the US (LEO). He was one of the important providers of information on information systems education. He traveled the world to communicate on IS curricula and his own research.
Börje Langefors from Sweden (LEO). First information systems professor in Sweden. He not only contributed to the early conceptual literature; he also was doctoral supervisor for many of the important contributors in the field in Scandinavia, including Mats Lundeberg.
Enid Mumford from the UK (LEO). She brought to the information systems field the perspectives of organization behavior and especially a socio-technical view. Her participation in IFIP WG8.2 gave international exposure to this approach to system design.
Jay F. Nunamaker Jr. from the US (LEO). Innovator in system development methodologies, decision support systems, group systems, and so forth. Leader in model curriculum development.

☞ There were other early, important leaders in the development of the international academic discipline of information systems. I mention a few who influenced me. Many have been recognized as AIS Fellows for their contributions to the development of the discipline.

Niels Bjørn-Andersen of Denmark (AIS Fellow). Active in Denmark, Europe, and internationally (brought ICIS to Europe). Second president of AIS (1996)
Pentti Kerola of Finland. Active in building the Scandinavian contributions and building the international community.
William King of the US (AIS Fellow). Participant in most of the important developments in the field. Editor-in-Chief of the *MIS Quarterly* (1983-1985), and principal architect and first president of AIS (1995).
Ephraim McLean of the US (AIS Fellow). Active in building the field through ICIS and AIS. Currently Executive Director of AIS.
Richard O. Mason from the US (LEO). A scholar with a broad background, he has added to the intellectual quality of the discourse about information systems.

☞ Some not in the information systems academic discipline who directly contributed to its intellectual foundations.

Robert N. Anthony from the US. His 1965 Harvard University Press monograph, *Planning and Control Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, was one of the most cited publications in the early MIS literature because it provided a basis for the structure of an organization information system.

Peter Checkland from the UK. His work on a soft systems approach made him one of the most cited authors (*Systems Thinking, Systems Practice, 1981)* in the early European MIS literature**.**
C. West Churchman from the US (LEO). He was one of those who clearly laid out the systems approach that underlies the systems work of information systems designers and developers.
Herbert A. Simon from the US (Nobel prize). He contributed to system concepts (*The Sciences of the Artificial,*1969*)*, cognitive science, artificial intelligence, and administrative science. He was perhaps the most important conceptual person for decision- making concepts that provided a basis for systems to support decision making in organizations (*The New Science of Management Decision,* 1960).

I could mention many others who were pioneers in building the discipline (in the US: McFarlan, McKenney, Rockart, Scott Morton, Emery, Kriebel, Zmud, Teichroew, Keen, Lucas, etc.) and some of the early doctorates from Minnesota (Benbasat, Ives, Olson, Weber, etc.), but the above list illustrates the diverse group from several countries who have built the current international discipline of information systems. I have tended to list the "old timers," so many not-so-old leaders and recent contributors are not mentioned.

Critical Development 5: Locating the IfIP TC8 Working Conferences Interntionally Including the Manchester Conference Sponsored by WG8.2

I have noted the importance of IFIP in nurturing the emerging field of information systems by the technical committee on information systems. The working group conferences became a vehicle for building an international network of scholars, both by the subjects of the conferences and the locations. This has been especially true of working group 8.2 on information systems and organizations. It is the group I worked with most, so my view is biased. This group now has an equal number of European and North American members. The conference venues rotate in order to involve more researchers.

A very important conference in building the international community was the IFIP WG8.2 1984 Manchester Conference on information systems research methods (E. Mumford, R. Hirschheim, G. Fitzgerald, and T. Wood-Harper, eds. *Research Methods in Information Systems,* North Holland, Amsterdam, 1985). This conference was a landmark. The plan is to have a second Manchester conference in 2004 with new proceedings plus a reprint of the 1985 book.

The reason I count this conference as very important is its role in opening up the discussion of the different research paradigms. Most of the researchers in North America at that time tended to emphasize a positivist approach to research with experiments, surveys, hypothesis testing, and so forth. Many of the Europeans were doing post-positivist, interpretive research. The conference opened the minds of many of the conferees and helped open the field of information systems to a variety of research paradigms. Currently, there is reasonable acceptance of the following:

o   Positivist, hypothesis testing, data-based research
o   Interpretive research including research based on case studies

o   Design science research

The IS research literature clearly defines the first two; the third is less well defined. Design science research (the term used by Smith and March) is based on the research paradigms of engineering and Computer Science. In design science, designing and building a new, novel artifact such as a computer application program, development methodology, or model is a contribution to knowledge. In general, information systems research publications have expected that an artifact will not only have been built but will also be tested to demonstrate proof of concept or value of the artifact.

Critical Development 6: The Founding of the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS)

As mentioned previously, early researchers in information systems had disciplines to which they belonged. Their conferences often provided opportunities to present information systems research. This was especially true of management science, operations research, and decision sciences. The IFIP working groups on information systems focused on information systems but tended to be around narrow topics. There was no general, well-accepted, high quality information systems conference.

The first Conference on Information Systems (later renamed as the International Conference on Information Systems or ICIS) was held in 1980 in Philadelphia (hosted by the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania). The second was held in Boston hosted by Harvard and MIT. A major sponsor was the Society for Information Management, a society for CIOs. The conference included a doctoral consortium. ICIS began as a North American conference but grew quickly to a high quality international conference. It was held in Copenhagen in 1990 and has been held four times outside North America in the past eight years. A major feature is a high quality, invitational doctoral consortium with a mix of doctoral students from different countries.

ICIS is high quality based on acceptance rates of about 15 percent. Printed proceedings were produced from 1980 until 2000 and on CD-Rom from 1996 through 2000. Starting with 2001, conference proceedings are only available online. Searchable past proceedings are available to all members of AIS from www.aisnet.org.

There has existed a very open attitude at ICIS to subgroups within the field. Several subgroups hold conferences immediately preceding or immediately following ICIS. Examples are the Workshop on Information System Economics (WISE), the Workshop on Information Technology Systems (WITS), IFIP WG8.2, and several others.

Critical Development 7: The Founding of the Association for Information Systems (AIS) with an International Governance Structure

From the time of the first ICIS in 1980, there had been discussion of a new international

organization devoted exclusively to the academic field of information systems. A poll of those attending ICIS showed that academics were about evenly split on the issue. It became more and more evident that the lack of a single organization resulted in a lack of a strong voice in matters affecting the field.

The need for such an organization was first spelled out in a March 1993 editorial in the *MIS Quarterly*. The editorial was coauthored by the current and four past editors-in-chief (Gary Dickson, William King, Warren McFarlan, James Emery, and Blake Ives). Bill King was the leader among many key persons who helped in establishing the Association for Information Systems. It was formally established in 1995 with Bill as its first president. The governance structure was designed to create a truly international organization. The position of president rotates among three regions: Americas, Europe-Africa, and Asia Pacific Area. The term of presidents is now from mid-year to mid-year. The presidents since inception have all been leaders in the field:

1995	Bill King	Americas
1996	Niels Bjørn-Andersen	Europe-Africa
1997	Ron Weber	Asia Pacific
1998	Gordon Davis	Americas
1999	Robert Galliers	Europe-Africa
2000-2001	Michael Vitale	Asia Pacific
2001-2002	Blake Ives	Americas
2002-2003	Philip Ein-Dor	Europe-Africa
2003-2004	K.K. Wei	Asia Pacific

Since its inception, AIS has grown to include close to 50 percent of faculty members worldwide (I estimate 6,000 IS faculty worldwide). Attendance at ICIS is 1,000 to 1,200 indicating about 15 percent of faculty attend the annual conference. This represents significant participation.

AIS has proved to be all that those of us who promoted its founding hoped it would be. It has allowed the field to concentrate and rationalize many of its resources. There has been an amalgamation of ICIS into AIS. It has taken over responsibility for preexisting assets of the field such as the Directories of IS Faculty, the past proceedings of ICIS, doctoral dissertation lists, survey of salaries for new hires, etc. It has created chapters and special interest groups. It maintains loose ties with many conferences and organizations that existed prior to its formation. AIS provides sponsorship support and doctoral consortia support for the three regional IS conferences.

One of the issues in creating AIS was that of a journal. Given the existing journals, AIS decided to create two e-journals: one was to contain a variety of communications about pedagogy, curriculum, and issues in the field. (*Communications of the AIS)* and the other to be a high quality academic e-journal (*Journal of the AIS).* Both are operating. With respect to print journals, AIS adopted an interesting strategy. It first offered a choice of a journal from a short list of IS research journals; this was changed to offer members discounted subscriptions to many of the top-rated IS research journals published in both North America and Europe.

The discounts for journals continues as a benefit of AIS membership; a new initiative was to offer electronic access to one print journal as a part of membership. Since only one of the top three print journals was published by an academic institution (*MIS Quarterly)*, a proposal was made to partner with the *MIS Quarterly* and offer members online searchable access to current and past issues. A governance structure was established to allow AIS to have some influence on the *MIS Quarterly*.

Information systems as an academic discipline clearly began in the developed countries. Many in the field have been concerned about reaching out to developing countries. IFIP has sponsored conferences in developing countries. AIS has initiated programs to make conferences available and less costly to faculty from developing countries. Since the cost of journals is a major impediment to developing countries, AIS has an outreach program that provides access to its e-journals, its proceedings, and the *MIS Quarterly* at a very nominal cost.

Summary and Conclusions

It has been a very interesting saga of development of an international academic discipline of information systems. There is much yet to do; there are some countries that are under represented. However, the momentum has been established. There is an incredibly high rate of participation in AIS, the international academic organization. Members have access to a menu of high quality, useful resources.

It has taken almost 50 years from the first business use of computers to reach this point. However, 1954 is probably not the starting point, since business use of processing devices was not interesting for research until systems became more complex and management of the systems required special skills. Therefore, I count the beginning of the journey from the mid-1960s with the 1964 IBM System/360, the appointment of Langefors as Professor of Information Systems in 1965, the first academic program at Minnesota in 1968, or from the widely used MIS conceptual foundations book in 1974. Others may count from the first ICIS in 1980. Depending on when one starts counting, it has taken anywhere from 23 to 39 years for us to come from a fragmented group to a fairly cohesive international field.

Issues that remain revolve around the boundaries of the field. Some scholars argue we will continue to find interesting research opportunities at the intersection of information technology and other fields; other scholars say we work at the boundary only if the resulting research can speak to issues in the field. Still others, such as Weber, argue we need to pay more attention to the core of the field (that which is not "owned" by any other discipline). Perhaps there is a middle position: pay more attention to the unique aspects but feel free to work at the intersection with any other field as long as the result can be applied to the design, use, and management of information systems.

Coming back to the occasion that prompted this story of the journey of the field (and my journey along with it), the Swedish participants in the journey have had significant impact. Mats Lundeberg has been one of these. He has been an active participant in IFIP TC8, ICIS, AIS, the *MIS Quarterly*, and other developments I haven't remembered. He has helped his doctoral students to be part of the worldwide community of scholars. His contributions are well worthy of

celebration on this occasion.

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To build the knowledge base in Information Systems through research and publications. To administer teaching activities within the discipline of Information Systems and provide leadership at the module or course level. To establish a national and international research reputation in the field of Information Systems. Professor. A PhD or equivalent in Information Systems, Information Technology, or any other relevant field. Preferred Areas: E-Learning, E-Health, E-Governance, Information Systems Research. A minimum of ten (10) years post-doctoral experience in research and teaching. Excellent knowledge of the international academic discipline environment. Involvement in professional activities where applicable. Effective communication skills.