

iSchool welcomes new faculty members

By Michelle Mallette.

Two new faculty members have joined the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies (SLAIS), The iSchool at The University of British Columbia.

Dr. Giovanni Michetti arrives from The University of Rome, where he has been an assistant professor in the Special School for Archivists and Librarians, now part of the Department of Documentation Science, Linguistics, Philology and Geography. Dr. Michetti is no stranger to UBC, having taught at SLAIS twice as a visiting professor. He has already taken up teaching duties this term with two classes.

Rafa Absar comes to UBC as a Visiting Lecturer from McGill University in Montreal, where she is completing her Ph.D. at the School of Information Studies. Her dissertation is in the area of human-computer interaction, addressing "Enhancing Navigation using Auditory Feedback." She will be at the iSchool until December 2012, and during her year at UBC, she is teaching five courses.



New brand identity for SLAIS: The iSchool@UBC

As many BCLA members know, SLAIS recently celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2011. Also in 2011, the School was accepted into the iSchools organization, joining 32 other schools from around the world that focus their study and research at the intersection of information, people and technology.

The two events coincided to create an opportunity to review our history and consider our future directions. Our history is long and distinguished – more than 3,000 degrees have been conferred thanks to the efforts of the faculty and adjunct faculty, all the while continuing to contribute in research and knowledge, and earning awards and accolades along the way.

For 2012 and beyond, the focus is on maintaining that strong commitment to research and teaching, and also doing a better job of explaining just what it is that we do in the information, library and archival

fields. To do that, SLAIS engaged the services of a design firm, emerging with a fresh and lively brand.

We are pleased to present it here, as we believe it captures our role as an essential and connected place of research and learning, focused on people, information, and technology. The school remains the School of Library, Archival & Information Studies. Experience has shown that the acronym SLAIS by itself is rather meaningless, and people often comment that the school's full name is a mouthful. The new identity gives us another option, and so we are pleased and proud to promote ourselves as The iSchool at The University of British Columbia, more commonly visible as The iSchool@UBC.

We look forward to continuing to research and educate new professionals as The iSchool@UBC.

Faculty news: Major awards and a PhD

Faculty members Eric Meyers and Heather O'Brien received major awards at the annual conference of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE). Dr. Meyers won the prestigious ALISE/Eugene Garfield Doctoral Dissertation Competition Award for his dissertation, "The Nature and Impact of Information Problem Solving in the Middle School Classroom." This is first time this competitive award has been presented to a SLAIS faculty member, though Dr. Rick Kopak won the Eugene Garfield Doctoral Dissertation Award Certificate of Distinction.

Dr. Heather O'Brien and 2011 MLIS graduate Mahria Lebow won the ALISE/Dialog Methodology Paper Competition for their co-authored paper, "Is There a Role for Physiological Methods in the Evaluation of Human-Information Interaction?" Dr. O'Brien joined the UBC faculty in 2008, and is currently on a year of leave, returning in January 2013.

Finally, faculty member Aaron Loehrlein successfully defended his doctoral dissertation this month. He will be conferred his Ph.D. from the University of Indiana at Bloomington, and will hold the rank of assistant professor at UBC.

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