



# Hickson Research Day

## Conference Program

November 20, 2009  
11am–3:45pm  
Drake Centre room 107

*Fostering  
Interdiscipli-  
nary  
Understanding:  
Getting to Know  
our Colleagues*



# PROGRAM DETAILS

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10:40 – 11:00 Coffee and muffins

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11:00 – 11:15 Opening remarks

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11:15 – 11:40 Cam and Janet Morrill – “*Accounting for Defined Benefit Pension Plans: A Simulation*

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11:40 – 12:05 Reg Litz – “*When Family is Business and Business is Family*”

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12:05 – 12:30 Mohammed El Hazzouri – “*Student Abuse of Cognitive Enhancements*”

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12:30 – 12:55 Paul Earl – *History of Agricore United*

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12:55 – 1:55 Catered Lunch – Fishbowl – Asper Commemorative Room

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1:55 – 2:20 Fang Wan – “*A Cross-Cultural Study of Gift Acceptance*”

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2:20 – 2:45 Hari Bapuji – “*Organizational Learning*”

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2:45 – 3:10 Aijing Ran – “*The Role of Cultural Diversity in Work Groups*”

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3:10 – 3:35 Malcolm Smith – “*A New Perspective on Memory and Aging*”

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3:35 – 3:45 Brief Closing Remarks

# HICKSON RESEARCH DAY

# PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

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## **"Accounting for Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plans - Drs. Cam and Janet Morrill"**

Accounting for DB pension plans is complex and varies significantly across jurisdictions. Many worry that unfavourable accounting treatment could lead companies to terminate these plans, engendering important social implications. We use simulated data to examine the behaviour of pension items over many economic outcomes over a long time period, while controlling for demographic conditions. We examine: 1) the effects of accountants and actuaries using different methods to calculate pensions; 2) the relative performance of different pension accounting standards; and 3) the impact of inconsistencies between the accounting for pension assets and liabilities versus those of the plan sponsor.

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## **"When Family is Business and Business is Family" - Dr. Reg Litz**

In this presentation I will present an overview of a conceptualization of the family business-business family interface as akin to a Mobius Strip. Drawing on this analogy I propose that we understand the family firm as the economic side of a still larger entity -- the house. I will describe my current work that seeks to understand why houses rise, stand, fall and sometime rise again.

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## **"Students Abuse of Cognitive Enhancements: The Roles of Portrayed Ability, Morality, and Legality - Mohammed El Hazzouri (PhD Candidate)"**

In the last few decades, more ability enhancing pharmaceuticals have become available (Elliott, 2004). Several studies in North America report that many university students abuse cognitive enhancements (e.g. Dupont et al., 2008). This abuse of enhancements has created ethical concerns regarding the unfair advantage that consumers of these pharmaceuticals gain over non consumers (e.g. Farah, 2002). In our research we study this phenomenon from the perspective of students. We look at the roles of the user's perceived ability and effort, and morality concerns, and legality of these enhancements in determining how students feel about and react to cognitive enhancements.

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## **"History of Agricore United" - Dr. Paul Earl**

This presentation is about research on a corporate history of Agricore United (AU), a grain handling co-operative formed in 1906, which, in 1992, became publicly traded but retained a farmer-elected board. In 2007, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, a company formed as a co-op in 1924, but converted to a CBCA company in 2005, took over AU – an enormously significant event because it ended 100 years of farmer control of grain handling. The presentation reviews the history of farmer control, discusses the impact of the takeover on the research project, and examines the relevance of this work to teaching and research in commerce.

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## ***“A Cross-Cultural Study of Gift Acceptance: The Mediating Role of Feelings of Appreciation and Indebtedness ” - Dr. Fang Wan***

Consumers are often unexpectedly offered a small gift by a casual acquaintance. Asians not only feel less appreciative than North Americans when they receive such an offer but also anticipate feeling more indebted if they accept it. For both reasons, they are often more likely to reject the offer than North Americans are. Five studies confirmed these cultural differences in reactions to the offer of a small gift and evaluated alternative explanations of its occurrence.

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## ***“Organizational Learning ” - Dr. Hari Bapuji***

*How does learning occur in organized settings? More broadly, how do people learn new things?* Hari Bapuji’s research explores these questions and highlights that learning occurs at the intersections – the intersections of people and artifacts, theory and data, and various roles played by individuals. In this presentation, Hari will share his research spanning knowledge management, organizational routines, and product recalls. Particularly, he will share his research related to minimizing towel use in a hotel, reducing product recalls through improved designs, and creating new knowledge through knowledge transfer.

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## ***“The Role of Cultural Diversity in Work Groups” - Aijing Ran (PhD Candidate)***

Cultural diversity has been characterized as a “double-edged sword” to workgroups in organizations. Aijing’s research looks into how cultural diversity influences the performance and conflict of workgroups. Most research in the area of diversity explores the effects of surface-level diversity, such as gender, race, and age; while few studies examine deep-level diversity, such as personality, attitudes, and values. Cultural diversity has both surface-level and deep-level attributes, and they work simultaneously on work teams. Drawing on team development theory, Aijing studies cultural diversity from the forming of the team to the team’s conclusion.

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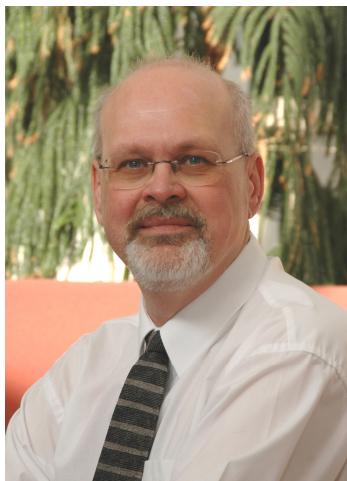
## ***“A New Perspective on Memory and Aging” - Dr. Malcolm Smith***

One of Malcolm’s research streams investigates age-related differences in cognitive processing of advertising, and in particular age differences in memory. His presentation will cover the “traditional” view of memory and aging and then present his studies and other research that support a different view – that memory losses are not necessarily associated with healthy aging. He will also discuss stereotypes associated with aging and how his research may help to dispel some of those negative generalizations.

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# HICKSON RESEARCH DAY

# IN MEMORY OF ALLISTER HICKSON



Allister Hickson  
Assistant professor  
Supply Chain Management  
Asper School of Business

Dr. Allister Hickson received his PhD in Agricultural Economics from the University of Manitoba in 1983. He obtained his Executive Development Certificate from the Certified General Accountants Association of Manitoba in 1999, and a Chartered Financial Analyst designation from the Association of Investment Management Research in 2002. Allister worked with Manitoba Public Insurance from 1987 to 2003. While working with MPI, he was asked by Dr. Barry Prentice to teach a fledgling Certificate in Logistics Management program developed by the Transport Institute of the University of Manitoba. This sparked Allister's love of teaching and he continued to teach the Risk Management and Safety course until 2003.

In 2003, Allister joined the Transport Institute full time as a Professional Associate. This allowed him to mentor the many research interns that have passed through the Institute. Allister was not just the senior researcher at the Institute, he became a close friend to all the interns and staff who worked with him.

In 2008, Allister became an Assistant Professor in the Department of Supply Chain Management in the I. H. Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba. He loved teaching and research, and he cared about his students and colleagues deeply.

In December, 2008, Allister passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. We hope that this day, which - as a member of the Research and Publications Committee - he helped to start, will foster the collegiality that he embodied.

He will be deeply missed

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## Thank you for your participation!

The Research and Publications Committee consists of Namita Bhatnagar, Jijun Gao, Nathan Greidanus, Sandy Hershcovis, and Nick Turner. We welcome your input and ideas regarding this and other initiatives.

To learn more about the research activities of faculty and students at the I.H. Asper School of Business, please visit our research website at:

**<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/management/research/>**