Helping Mine the Profitable Power of Data

The Center for Excellence in Business Analytics utilizes expert faculty, student and supercomputer resources to boost business success.

In today’s competitive business world, profitability can hinge on collaboration. When a business contacts The Center for Excellence in Business Analytics at IPFW's Doermer School of Business to help solve a complex problem, everyone wins. Businesses gain revenue-boosting solutions they can afford. Faculty applies their knowledge in the real world. The next generation of problem-solvers gets valuable hands-on- experience.

What is the Center for Excellence in Business Analytics?

The Center for Excellence is a consulting arm of the Doermer School of Business. Combining research excellence, cutting edge analytical methods with deep business experience, faculty and students come alongside of Northeast Indiana manufacturing, financial/banking, insurance, healthcare, technology and non-profit companies to improve function for increased profit. For example, how does a healthcare facility schedule their medical staff and surgical space most economically? How does a grocery store figure out product quantity, when to stock what and how to best utilize their staff resources? All of these are complex questions of future-telling to which the science of business analytics can supply reliable answers that impact the bottom line.

It’s no surprise that Dr. Cigdem Gurgur was chosen to lead this center. Her resume and world citizenship reflects today’s global business economy. Born in Turkey, her first name is pronounced “Cheed-um” due to Turkish alphabet uniqueness. She received her Ph.D. in Industrial and Systems Engineering from Rutgers University and holds an M.S. in Management Science and Operation Research for Warwick Business School, England and an M.S. in Applied and Mathematical Statistics from Rutgers University.

Gurgur arrived in Fort Wayne in 2009 after teaching in the Division of Economics and Business at Colorado School of Mines, where she was also the recipient of their Excellence in Teaching and Outstanding Faculty Awards. “It looks a little different here,” Gurgur says, smiling. “More golfing now versus hiking.”

Though trained as an engineer, Gurgur’s research has been in the interface of finance, operations and risk management with expertise in both predictive and prescriptive modeling. She teaches supply chain analysis, revenue and pricing analytics and has been a consultant with Lockheed Martin, several energy, insurance and manufacturing companies. Her current interest is in the healthcare industry due to Fort
Wayne’s strong hospital networks and the biotechnical industry located close by in Warsaw. Related to the research in health-care supply chain she was an invited speaker at the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences Data Mining and Health-Informatics Conference, recently. She also gave an invited presentation in the Healthcare Systems Research Conference of the International Federation of Operational Research Societies at Barcelona, Spain.

In addition to leading the development of the Center, Gurgur directs the M.B.A. program. “Business Analytics has a lot to offer today’s businesses,” says Gurgur. Often this happens through the capacity of Business Analytics to use growing volumes of data in a way to bring out actionable knowledge. “With supercomputers today, we have tons of data, but the question is how to use the data to improve performance,” says Gurgur. “Are we using the right technique to mine the data most efficiently and effectively?”

And because problems encountered in the industry are often expansive, The Center’s multi-disciplinary collaboration is a plus. “CE is an umbrella or gate,” says Gurgur. “As businesses come to us with a problem, we reach out to other faculty.” Faculty experts include: Math, Computer Science, and Business. “The interdisciplinary approach helps to discern what are the right questions to ask and what do we do with the data,” says Gurgur. “The goal is maximizing of profits through finding quick solutions. The result is enhanced business performance.”

**A Win for Fort Wayne**

The Center for Excellence in Business Analytics is all about how to use the growing volume of computer data to enhance business performance in Northeast Indiana. The Fort Wayne community is the winner: Businesses grow more successful, a future workforce gains valuable experience and a thriving university system keep on giving. It’s a system that sounds......**excellent.**