

## South African native brings world-class experience, reputation to DMIT program

Lerine Steenkamp's resume is as much a world atlas as it is a reflection of her career. There are bachelor's and master's degrees earned in South Africa, her native country, as well as a PhD from the University of South Africa in collaboration with the University of Michigan.

She has served as an information technology consultant to private and governmental organizations in Africa, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Travel assignments and presentations have taken her to more than a dozen other countries, including her first trip to India in February.



In fact, in the last four years alone, she has delivered papers at 12 international conferences.

While Steenkamp has spent her career earning a worldwide reputation, she is most passionate about one subject very close to home: the College of Management's Doctor of Management in Information Technology (DMIT) program.

Steenkamp helped develop the curriculum for the program and has

served as its director and an instructor since the program was launched in 2002. Her research agenda has resulted in an extensive list of publications.

"It's a challenge to offer our students a state-of-the-art program because changes come fast in this industry," Steenkamp said. "And it seems to be accelerating."

The challenges of keeping up with a fast-moving industry clearly motivate Steenkamp. And that passion is not lost on students in the program.

"I attended two of her courses, and I had the privilege to have Dr. Steenkamp as chair of my dissertation committee," said Dorin Andreescu, who was among the first group of DMIT graduates and was the first DMIT student to successfully defend his dissertation, in October 2006. "I loved her as teacher and mentor."

Andreescu has more than 25 years of professional experience, including owning his own IT business in his native country of Romania. When he and his family moved to the United States, he looked around for a program that could take his IT knowledge to a higher level.

"I evaluated other programs and wasn't too excited about them, but when I saw the DMIT curriculum, I got excited and enrolled," said Andreescu, who continues to support the program as an adjunct faculty member. "Lerine inspired me with a comprehensive vision of IT management. I was so impressed; it was something I didn't find in other programs."

Not many programs can offer a director with such a commitment to her students.

"I've had three different levels of experience with her," said Tom Bilan, who entered the DMIT program in the fall of 2006 after selling his own IT company.

"I've had her as a teacher, she's

on the committee for my dissertation, and I worked with her on the presentation she made in India.

"What makes her such an asset to the program is that she does things to enhance the students' education. She believes in the scholarly way of life, and it rubs off on us. If you get to her level, it has to be more than a job."

Anene Nnolim, a recent graduate of the DMIT program, added, Dr. Steenkamp was both my teacher and chair of my dissertation committee. To her students, including me, she makes learning seem so easy and interesting. Her teaching style and approach to student-centered learning is more than professional, it is simply wonderful.

"Dr. Steenkamp worked to get me access to high-profile international conferences where I presented papers. One example was the Open Group Enterprise Architecture Practitioners Conference in Paris, France."

Directing the DMIT program and teaching her students is more than work for Steenkamp. "I like the environment and the freedom it has allowed me to practice my profession," said Steenkamp, who continues to prove she is ready and willing to go anywhere in the world to increase her IT knowledge and spread the wealth of that information to her DMIT students.

## DMIT Program Developing Innovators, Problem Solvers

The College of Management's Doctor of Management in Information Technology (DMIT) is an intensive, part-time program that integrates business practice with scholarship and emphasizes rigorous analytical skills and in-depth managerial and technical knowledge.

The program prepares students for careers as problem solvers and innovators in the information technology (IT) industry.

"If you love the technology and you're an innovator, this program has a lot of value for you," said Tom Bilan, a DMIT student who owned his own IT businesses. "This program gives you a competitive edge."

According to Director Lerine Steenkamp, the DMIT program focuses on leadership skills for industry leaders and those who aspire to chief information officer (CIO) or chief technology officer (CTO) positions. The DMIT program explores state-of-the-art technologies, theoretical frameworks, enterprise system design, and system integration.

DMIT students also contribute new knowledge to the field of IT leadership and management through their dissertation research.

"Innovation is one of the cornerstones of the program," Bilan said. "By and large, I've learned a lot concerning advanced techniques – things you might never come across unless you work for a 'monster company.'"

"I've had a lot of IT certifications, but what we learn here transcends that. We're learning technologies that manage different technologies. It's a vastly different level. For IT people, this program makes you cool."

## Expanded Connections 2008 Conference Set for May 10

The 13th annual Connections Conference will be hosted by the College of Management at Lawrence Technological University on May 10. This unique conference, which is administered by and for doctoral students, is expanding its reach in 2008. Previously, the conference was limited to doctoral students in library and information studies and information systems. The scope of this year's conference has been extended to include doctoral students in information technology management and business administration.

Proposed conference tracks include:

- Emerging issues of the 21st century
- Information technology and organizations
- Strategy, leadership, and sustainability
- Library science, telecommunications policy

The conference provides opportunities to meet fellow doctoral students, exchange ideas, and present research in a receptive atmosphere. Connections 2008 includes three types of sessions: presentations, workshops, and panels. There will also be a virtual participation option allowing presenters to make their presentations online from remote locations.

As with past Connections conferences, abstracts will be subject to blind peer review by the College of Management's doctoral students and faculty members. Additional information is available at [connections2008.ltu.edu](http://connections2008.ltu.edu).