AT&T Distinguished Speaker Series

“Algorithmic Interactions in Open Source Work"

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Zoom Link:
https://utsa.zoom.us/j/92903362037
Abstract
This study, co-authored with Maha Shaikh and forthcoming at *Information Systems Research*, focuses on algorithmic interactions in open source work. Algorithms are essential in open source because they remedy concerns incompletely addressed by parallel development or modularity. Following algorithmic interactions in open source allows us to map the performance of algorithms to understand the nature of work conducted by multiple algorithms functioning together. We zoom to the level of algorithmic interactions to show how residual interdependencies of modularity are worked around by algorithms. Moreover, the dependence on parallel development does not suffice to resolve all concerns related to the distributed work of open source. We examine the Linux Kernel case that reveals how algorithmic interactions facilitate open source work through the three processes of managing, organizing, and supervising development work. Our qualitative study theorizes how algorithmic interactions intensify through these processes that work together to facilitate development. We make a theoretical contribution to open source scholarship by explaining how algorithmic interactions navigate across module rigidity and enhance parallel development. Our work also reveals how, in open source, developers work to automate most tasks and augmentation is a bidirectional relationship of algorithms augmenting the work of developers and of developers augmenting the work of algorithms.

Bio
Emmanuelle Vaast is Professor of Information Systems and Associate Dean of Research at the Desautels Faculty of Management of McGill University. She is a Past Division Chair of the Organizational Communication and Information Systems (OCIS) division of the Academy of Management. She has served as Senior Editor at *Information Systems Research* and is incoming Senior Editor at *MIS Quarterly*. Her research examines how social practices emerge and change with the implementation and use of new technologies and how these new practices are associated with organizational and change dynamics. She has in particular investigated the learning and knowledge dynamics taking place at different levels (communities and networks of practice, for instance) and the boundary spanning involved in these dynamics when new Information Systems get implemented and used. Professor Vaast has been fascinated by the new practices and social and societal changes associated with social media such as blogs and microblogs. Some of the themes she has especially been interested in deal with the emergence of new organizational forms and with new dynamics associated with organizational and occupational identification, as well as the future of work. Professor Vaast is interested in methodological issues. Most of her research so far has been qualitative, relying upon case-based evidence analyzed from an interpretive perspective. She has however become increasingly in the opportunities and challenges of combining qualitative and quantitative analysis of electronically-collected data.