

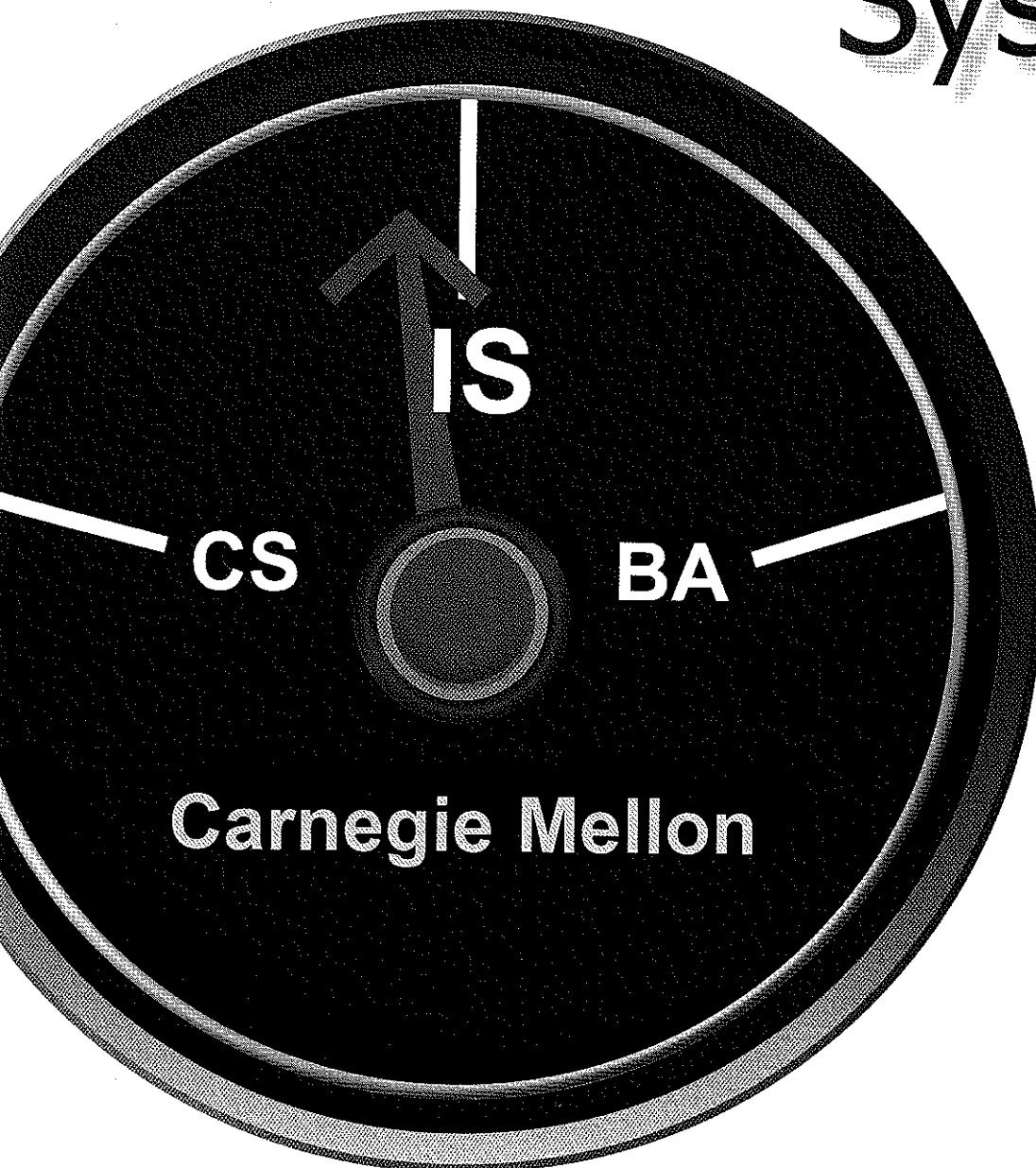
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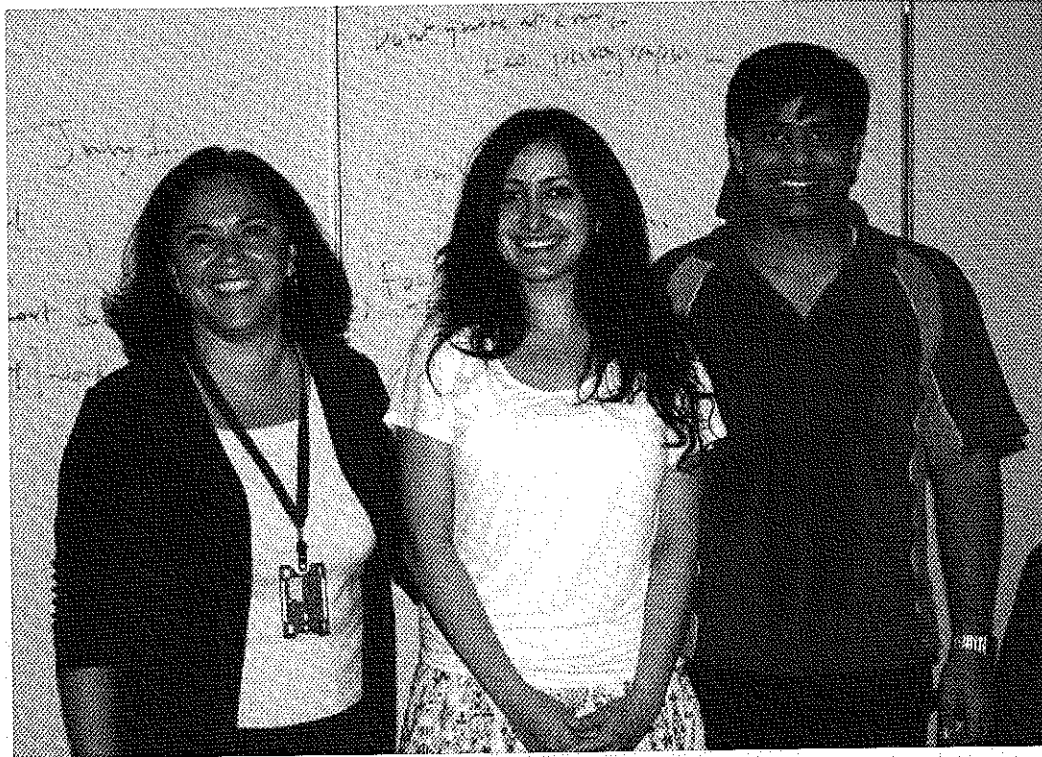
Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar

November 2007

Information Systems

New
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Computer
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Cleotilde Gonzalez, Ph.D., poses with some of her summer school students. Gonzalez, a longtime professor at Carnegie Mellon Pittsburgh, spent much of the summer in Doha teaching Dynamic Decision Making.

SUMMER REFLECTIONS

IS professor teaches summer course in Doha

Cleotilde Gonzalez, Ph.D., had been wanting to teach at Carnegie Mellon Qatar since the campus opened in August 2004. But as a full-time Information Systems professor and researcher, in addition to having a husband and children, it was just out of the question.

Then she received an e-mail from John Robertson, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs at Carnegie Mellon Qatar, looking for professors to teach summer classes for six weeks. And she knew that was her chance. "I wanted to teach in Qatar from the start," she says. "And summer was the perfect opportunity."

She spent six weeks teaching Dynamic Decision Making, a course designed to teach better ways to think, visualize problems and make decisions. She had six students enrolled in her class and found the experience of teaching in Qatar very different from that of teaching in Pittsburgh.

"I felt very comfortable there," she says. "In Pittsburgh I only teach large classes with around 90 students. So it was nice to be able to

interact so closely with students."

Gonzalez says the teaching environment in Qatar was very relaxed and students felt comfortable coming to her office often. And solely focusing on teaching for six weeks was very rewarding. She also was able to use the opportunity to teach a class that aligned more closely with her research.

In addition to teaching, Gonzalez also enjoyed learning about Doha and the Arab culture. Her husband, who is from Jordan, and her children joined her in Doha for a few weeks at the end of the course.

"I managed to learn so much more about the students here," she says. "Plus the summer session was perfect to enjoy the city. There's a lot of culture here and I'm glad I was able to come and experience it."

This was the first summer Carnegie Mellon Qatar offered summer courses, with seven electives to choose from. Summer courses are expected to be on the academic schedule every summer henceforth.