



## Cultural Sensitivity in Inter-Disciplinary Research

---

The increasing complexity of the problems that we as engineers address often necessitates integrating knowledge or research practice from other disciplines in order to more fully answer critical questions or to facilitate the application of knowledge in a specific area. Biochemistry, biophysics, and medical informatics are just a few examples of new fields that have arisen from such interdisciplinary work. Pitula and Dysart-Gale, as researchers from the fields of Informatics and Communication Theory, joined in a collaborative project aimed at understanding how people collect, preserve and share information in order to integrate an electronic information system into their daily work practice. This experience has shown the importance of cultural sensitivity, not only in respect to end users, but also in respect to the culture of the particular disciplines involved, both to ensure that we fully understand the concepts within the discipline from which we are borrowing, and to make the concepts intelligible to the discipline in which they are being applied.

In this presentation we share our experiences of conducting interdisciplinary research and some of the findings from our own research. We will follow our presentation with a discussion of your own interdisciplinary experiences in your respective fields.