eHealth Researchers to Meet in Lisbon

Several UT researchers specializing in health communication will fly to Lisbon this February to meet with their Portuguese colleagues and work on collaborative research projects first proposed last summer. The researchers include faculty members Jay Bernhardt, the Director of the Center for Health Communication; Keri Stephens of Communication Studies; Jacek Gwizdka of the School of Information; and Michael Mackert of the Stan Richards School of Advertising and Public Relations at UT, who is sending graduate student Allison Lazard as the team's representative. Sharon Strover of the UTA-Portugal Digital Media program, who organized the research meeting and grant process, will also attend. The Digital Media program is providing seed funding for the collaborative projects, which explore ways digital media can improve health communication. Topics include approaches to engaging men in prenatal communication, with principal investigators Mackert and Manuel José Damásio of the Lusophone University of Humanities and Technologies; using digital media to increase physical activity in dialysis patients, with PIs Stephens and Damásio; the use of smart watches to monitor health among users in the US and Portugal, led by PIs Bernhardt and Paulo Moreira of the New University of Lisbon School of Public Health; and improving understanding of how consumers search for and evaluate online health information, with PIs Gwizdka and Yan Zhang of UT Austin and Carla Teixeira Lopes of the University of Porto.

Strover and Alves to Attend Kickoff of NEM Portugal

Sharon Strover of the UTA-Portugal Digital Media Program and Rosental Alves, the Director of the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, will be in Lisbon this month to attend the kickoff of New European Media Portugal. NEM Portugal will be a platform for the discussion of national research on new media technologies, content production, and innovation, and will promote the export of

Portuguese cultural products. The initiative is led by INESC, the Institute for Systems Engineering and Computers, working with ADDICT, the Agency for the Development of Creative Industries Portugal, and TICE.PT, the Centre for Information and Communication Technology and Electronics. It will mirror a larger, existing organization, [New European Media](#), that includes major telecommunications and media companies in addition to research organizations. Alves will serve as a keynote speaker for the inaugural event, speaking on the importance of partnerships between technology companies and content producers.

Carlos Figueiredo Awarded Doctorate in Digital Media

Carlos Figueiredo of the University of Porto enrolled in the Digital Media program in 2010. Last month he completed his doctorate, submitting a dissertation titled "Emotions and Recommender Systems: A Social Network Approach." Advised by faculty members José Azevedo and co-advisor Eduarda Mendes Rodrigues from the University of Porto, and by Luis Francisco-Revilla and Wenhong Chen from UT, Figueiredo performed innovative research on the personalization of information presented to online users. Specifically, he focused on the tension between the convenience of content highly tailored to each user and the danger of reducing the diversity of perspectives, which can create a Social Echo Chamber Effect as the user only encounters results echoing his or her perspectives and expectations. Applying these concepts, Figueiredo examined how to stimulate the perception of novelty in a predictive way through online recommendation, with results that may create surprise and higher levels of user satisfaction. He is now participating in the Business Ignition Programme at University of Porto Innovation, serving as a mentor for business modeling and the creation of spin-offs. Congratulations, Dr. Figueiredo!

Visiting Researcher Rodrigo Carvalho Returns to UT

This January, U. Porto doctoral student Rodrigo Carvalho returns to the University of Texas, where he will spend most of the spring semester as a visiting researcher. At UT, Carvalho works primarily with Bruce Pennycook, the Director of the Center for Arts and Entertainment Technology. He visited Austin last spring and participated in various collaborations with his UT colleagues during the semester, including the creation of Breakdown, an interactive audiovisual dance performance produced with a team including dual degree candidate Yago de Quay and other UT graduate students. Carvalho's multi-method research looks at the relationships and synergies created between sound, visuals, and movement in interactive audiovisual spaces.

Exploratory Visitor Ricardo Baptista to Arrive in February

Ricardo Baptista of U. Porto will arrive in Austin on February 1 to conduct an exploratory visit. Baptista, who enrolled in the doctoral program in 2010, is working on a research project with professors Craig Watkins of UT Austin and António Coelho of U. Porto. The project, titled "New Tools for Certification in Game-based Learning," complements his dissertation research, which focuses on training competences certification and the interconnection of specific game designs

with assessment methods. Baptista has been developing his research in the computing graphics group at U. Porto's Department of Informatics Engineering and will spend a week in Austin contributing to the research project and exploring UT's scholarly resources, with the intention of returning later as a visiting researcher.

Marcela Canavarro Visits Austin

U. Porto student Marcela Canavarro visited Austin in November, meeting with several faculty members to discuss her research on digital media activism in Brazil. During her week-long stay, she met with Rosental Alves, the Director of the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, Joseph Straubhaar, an expert on Brazilian media in the Radio-TV-Film Department, and Laura Stein, an authority on social activism and media, also in the RTF Department. Additionally, Canavarro had the opportunity to meet with Rachel Mourao, a UT doctoral student with overlapping research interests. Canavarro studies social media content generated during political demonstrations, and found advice on research methods and data mining software especially useful.