The Big Data Rush

Practically every major funding agency is kindling (or rekindling) the idea of ‘big data’ as key to solving important problems in the sciences, engineering, business, and the humanities. The White House has recently launched a major initiative in this space (Google for “Big Data Across the Federal Government”) highlighting the pervasiveness of big data programs across multiple government units.

The Wall Street Journal has highlighted Big Data as one of three technologies that will transform the future. How much of a game changer will these efforts be? What types of problems can be tackled through data mining technologies? How ubiquitous will such technologies become? We will discuss the breadth of big data research and identify opportunities within VT for collaboration in this space.

Naren Ramakrishnan, Thomas L. Phillips Professor of Engineering Department of Computer Science, will lead the discussion.

Background
In the NY Times best seller, “The Black Swan”, the author (Nassim Nicholas Taleb) defines a Black Swan as an event that has three characteristics: it is an outlier; it carries an extreme impact; it has retrospective predictability. He further makes a claim that our world is dominated by Black Swans. This seminar series will provide an environment in which engineers, scientists and humanists from different disciplines can come together to move beyond the predictable and incremental advances in the current technologies to the disruptive technologies of the future – a breeding ground for future Black Swans.

April 27, 2012
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
ICTAS Café X,
located just inside the foyer of the
ICTAS Building on Stanger Street