

# Decision Processes Colloquia

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**Monday, April 8, 2013**

**Where:** JMHH 240

**When:** 12:00 noon to 1:20 PM

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## **The Innovator's Dilemma: The Tradeoffs of Behaving in Ways to Generate and Implement Creative Ideas**

ABSTRACT: Innovation is the generation and implementation of a creative (novel and useful) idea, and yet the literatures describing the two components –idea generation and implementation –have developed separately. This is partly because the prior literature has assumed that the two components are complementary, so engaging in processes to promote one component (e.g., idea implementation) should not deter or conflict with the processes required to successfully complete the second component (e.g., idea generation). Yet the current presentation will show a series of laboratory and one field study employing data from 514 employees in an organization which encourages creativity to build theory and provide initial evidence showing that innovators face two central dilemmas. First, when employees behave in ways the literature has shown can promote creative idea generation they incur a reputation cost which deters their ability to implement creative ideas. Second, when employees behave in ways the literature has theorized will likely aid implementation – this promotes a focus on feasibility which activates an overall aversion to novelty and subsequent diminished ability to generate creative ideas. In sum, I develop and empirically test theory showing that organizational actors face both a reputation and novelty aversion cost when they behave in ways to generate and implement creative ideas respectively. The current presentation will provide an initial glimpse of the innovator's dilemma to ultimately propose a new take on a longstanding puzzle in the creativity and innovation literatures, why organizations and the people within them often desire but reject creativity.