

DECISION LINE

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1998-99 Officers Elected

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Lee J. Krajewski, *University of Notre Dame*

TREASURER

Thomas W. Jones, *University of Arkansas-Fayetteville*

AT-LARGE VICE PRESIDENTS

P. George Benson, *University of Georgia*

Robert Collons, *IMD*

Soumen Ghosh, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONALLY-ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT

Norma J. Harrison, *Macquarie University*

MIDWEST REGIONALLY-ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT

Jatinder (Jeet) N.D. Gupta, *Ball State University*

NORTHEAST REGIONALLY-ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT

Mark M. Davis, *Bentley College*

The tabulation of the ballots was conducted and audited by Datamatx, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia. See page 30 for more information on the new officers. ■



President's Letter: The Learning Organization

by James R. Evans, University of Cincinnati

Brian Joiner, in his book *Fourth Generation Management* (McGraw-Hill, 1994), states that the "cornerstone of rapid learning is Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)." PDCA (or PDSA for "Study") is widely known as the Deming cycle, and became the foundation for improving Japanese quality. The idea is simple: plan an improvement or innovation, try it out, evaluate the outcomes and learn from the results, and take action. Because the key activities of the Institute are designed and implemented by various committees through a cycle of strategic planning activities leading to charges approved by the board of directors, committee activity and feedback reports, and finally board review, the Deming cycle is inherently built into our approaches to managing the Institute. Every committee is always at some stage of the PDSA cycle; thus, we have been a "learning organization" for some time, and I believe this structure has contributed greatly to the success of the Institute. So much of this goes on behind the

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Production/Operations Management. "Easy simulation on spreadsheets without add-ins," by John T. Simon, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman. **6**

Information Technology. "Doctor's orders: Do an annual I.T./I.S. check-up," by Lance B. Eliot, Feature Editor. **9**

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scenes, and most members are probably not aware of the incredible amount of work that each committee performs every year. I really want to commend all the committee members and chairpersons for their professionalism and work toward achieving the mission of the Institute. The committee chairpersons were:

- Ceyhun Ozgur (Alpha Iota Delta Liaison Committee)
- Larry Ritzman (Development Committee for Excellence in the Decision Sciences)
- Julie Kendall (Doctoral Student Affairs Committee)
- Bill Perkins (Fellows Committee)
- Bob Jacobs (Information Technology Committee)
- Ernie Houck (Innovative Education Committee)
- Mike Showalter (Investment Advisory Committee, and Ad Hoc Committee on Regional Financial Affairs)
- Mark Davis (Member Services Committee), with assistance by Scott Shafer
- Betty Whitten (Nominating Committee)

- Larry Jacobs (Programs and Meetings Committee)
- Soumen Ghosh (Publications Committee)
- Terry Rakes (Regional Activities Committee)
- Bob Markland (Strategic Planning for International Affairs Committee)
- Stephanie Robbins (Ad Hoc Committee on Regional Membership and Voting)

With my charges last year, I tried to strengthen our learning cycle through better strategic planning at the board level, an increased emphasis on better member information and services, benchmarking other professional organizations, documenting and streamlining our core processes, and improved measurements of progress. The response from the committees and the enthusiastic dedication by the board was impressive! I would like to highlight some of the major accomplishments achieved through this process over the past year.

For several years, Institute activities have revolved around a set of five "priorities"—increased internationalization, increased attention to improving instructional competencies, increased visibility in promoting interdisciplinary research, instruction, and service initiatives, increased use of advanced technology, and continuous improvement. While these priorities have helped to focus our activities, we realized that the first three are true goals, while the last two are operational strategies. In developing the new strategic planning process, the Board identified seven mission-driven goals of the Institute:

- Improve dissemination of innovation in teaching, curriculum, and scholarship.
- Increase the number and variety of professional development activities.
- Increase globalization of the Institute.
- Increase membership and participation of all disciplines.
- Enhance member services at the international and regional levels.
- Expand interdisciplinary activities.
- Promote the development and dissemination of research having educational and practical importance.

These now replace the five priorities, providing more focus for Institute

Advertisement



The University of Mississippi

Robert M. Hearin Chairs in Business Administration

THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION solicits nominations and applications to fill several chairs for distinguished professors funded by the Robert M. Hearin Support Foundation. While fields of academic specialization are open, holders of the Hearin Chairs in Business Administration are expected to be truly outstanding scholars with exceptional records of published research who will help lead the School of Business Administration to national prominence. Compensation will be commensurate with these expectations, including a wide range of support that will allow the Robert M. Hearin Chairholders to sustain ambitious research agendas.

The University of Mississippi is located in Oxford, a literary community of 10,000 people in the rolling hill country of northern Mississippi, seventy miles south of Memphis, Tennessee. The School of Business Administration, housed in a newly completed state-of-the-art instructional facility, consists of 55 faculty members and offers an array of undergraduate and graduate (M.B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.) degree programs in economics, finance, management, marketing, management information systems and operations management. Long a leader in business education in the state and region, the School is now positioned to aggressively pursue its goal of becoming one of the nation's top schools of business. Additional information about the School of Business Administration, the University of Mississippi, and Oxford can be found at <http://www.bus.olemiss.edu>.

Letters of nomination or application, curriculum vitae, and names of three references should be sent to Professor William F. Shughart II, Hearin Search Committee Chair, School of Business Administration, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677 (e-mail: shughart@bus.olemiss.edu). The committee will begin evaluating applications on June 1, 1998, but the search will remain open until the positions are filled. The University of Mississippi is an Affirmative Action/Americans with Disabilities Act/Equal Opportunity Employer.

activities. The Development Committee, led by Larry Ritzman (Boston College), generated a large set of suggestions to accomplish these goals, which will be addressed carefully during strategic planning meetings in March and April, as well as an improved annual process to establish/review long-range strategic goals, and to identify potential threats and opportunities.

The use of information technology as a means to improve member services and streamline many Institute functions has benefited from the hard work and excellent leadership provided by Bob Jacobs (Indiana University). As a result, future program chairs will appoint a web coordinator to maintain the annual meeting site. We will also publish a searchable, but not downloadable, membership directory. Beginning with this year's dues cycle, members will have an option to be included in the web directory. The board also endorsed the acceptance of credit cards for conference registration and international membership dues. We are investigating the possibility of CD-rom proceedings, but several issues still must be researched and resolved.

Scott Shafer (Auburn University), the new coordinator of member services, will be writing a regular column in *Decision Line*, focused on two-way communication between you "the membership" and the Institute. Many of his ideas are linked to DSI web site improvements and revitalization of the campus representative program. However, to improve your services, we need your input. I was a bit disappointed

at the response to the membership survey (only about 10 percent) that participants at the San Diego meeting were asked to provide. Nevertheless, we will continue with efforts to survey our members and obtain important feedback and ideas. As part of this initiative, board members will be calling some of you with some simple survey questions; please support us in these efforts.

Ram Narasimhan (Michigan State University) was appointed to serve as the next journal editor for *Decision Sciences*. I hope you join me in congratulating him; I am sure he will continue to provide the fine leadership we have been accustomed to in the past.

Many actions were taken to support and improve Institute efforts to expand globally. The Board approved a proposal for the 1999 International Meeting in Athens, Greece. My thanks go to Steve Zanakis (Florida International University) for many hours spent in working with organizations in Athens to bring this proposal to reality. The guidelines developed by Norma Harrison for the highly successful 1997 Sydney meeting were adopted as the benchmark for planning future international meetings. The board approved a recommendation to design and conduct an award competition for an Instructional Innovation Award at international meetings, similar to the one held at our annual meeting. In addition, an award will be created for the best international theme paper at the annual meeting.

As my term of office comes to an end, I look back at how quickly this year has flown by. We have accomplished much in the past 12 months toward improving the infrastructure and operation of the Institute through the hard work and dedication of many committee members, chairs and coordinators, board officers, and everyone who participated in the annual and regional meetings and Institute publications. I sincerely want to thank all of you for your support, dedication, and spirit of professionalism. In particular, I would like to thank the retiring board members with whom it has been an honor and pleasure to serve: Betty Whitten, Mike Showalter, Barb Flynn, Ken Kendall, Kee Young Kim, Ram Narasimhan, Aleda Roth, and Nancy Weida, and welcome the newly-elected board members.

I am privileged to pass the gavel on to Terry Rakes, knowing that the Institute will be in extremely capable hands. I have thoroughly enjoyed working closely with him over the past year, and I certainly look forward to working with him over the next year. Finally, my gratitude goes to our Executive Director Carol Latta and all the Home Office staff for everything they have done to make my life a bit easier and this job less intimidating. I leave this office with a great sense of pride in knowing that DSI has taken another turn along the cycle of learning and improvement. I will always cherish this experience as one of the best highlights of my career. To put it simply, it's been a rush! Thanks, and best wishes to all. ■

The AACSB/EBI 1998 Management Education Faculty Survey

WHILE BUSINESS SCHOOLS HAVE MANY IMPORTANT CONSTITUENCIES, all would agree that faculty are among the most important. The faculty design and present the academic programs, contribute to the body of knowledge in their disciplines, advise students, and create the basic organizational culture of the school. Faculty are critical in establishing the reputation of the school and they are the glue that holds the organization together as students come and go. The faculty *are* the business school.

Beyond conversations in the hallways and in faculty meetings, it is difficult to know how faculty perceive the school across a variety of dimensions. For the first time, AACSB is endorsing a comprehensive, industry-wide faculty survey designed to provide the leaders of business schools with information from and

about faculty perceptions of their business schools. In addition to gaining substantive feedback from faculty of your program, there is an opportunity to compare your faculty's perceptions with perceptions of faculty at peer institutions. You may also incorporate up to 20 questions unique to your institution.

The AACSB Board of Directors have enthusiastically endorsed the AACSB/EBI 1998 Management Education Faculty Survey. Survey forms will be available in the spring of 1998 with results available to participating schools in the summer. You are invited to participate in this project. ■