

DECISION LINE

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER: Leadership and Innovation

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This year we will celebrate the thirtieth birthday of the Decision Sciences Institute. As a charter member of the Institute, I feel honored to be its president as it reaches its third decade of service to business scholars throughout the world. I am also humbled by the thought that many outstanding individuals have set the stage for the Institute to enter the next millennium. I have inherited the leadership of an organization that is poised to make a significant difference in the academic community in the next millennium, and I only hope that I can contribute to that achievement. Last year the Institute made great strides in accomplishing the goals set forth by the Board of Directors under Terry Rakes' leadership (see the accomplishments of the 1998-99 Board of Directors in Terry's President's Letter, March 1999 *Decision Line*). I wish to thank Terry, Past President Jim Evans, the 1998-99 Board of Directors, 1998 Program Chair Mike Parent, and Executive Director Carol Latta and her staff for their unselfish contributions and hard work over the past year. Not only did we make significant progress toward accomplishing our goals, but we had a record-breaking attendance at our annual meeting in Las Vegas. This will be a tough act to follow; however, the new team is ready for the challenge. I am very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with Past President Terry Rakes, President Elect Mike Showalter, Treasurer Tom Jones, Vice President Mark Davis, and Executive Director Carol Latta on the Executive Committee. I also have an outstanding group of individuals on the 1999-00 Board of Directors. With help of that caliber I feel much more confident undertaking the challenges for this year.

Over the past 30 years the Institute has continually grown in membership and attendance at annual meetings. Nonetheless, I believe it is time we take an introspective look at what we do as an institute and ask ourselves two interrelated questions. First, what are we doing to become a visible leader in the academic community? I am not implying that we have not provided leadership to the academic community in the past. I am suggesting that we become more proactive about it. We should explore the ways we can provide a forum for open discussion of trends and changes in teaching and research within each of our academic disciplines as well as

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New Faculty Development Consortium Coordinator

1. Report on the 1999 New Faculty Development Consortium.
2. Work with Hal Jacobs to ensure that current information about the Consortium is available on the Institute's web page.
3. From the perspective of New Faculty Development, identify the key initiatives the Institute should undertake to (a) increase DSI membership and participation of all disciplines, and (b) enhance its position as a leader and innovator in the academic community. Recommend any specific actions the Institute should take in the short and long term.

Regionally-Elected Vice President Charges

1. Work with the regional presidents to implement the action steps in Item 4 of the 1998-99 Regional Activities Committee report.
2. Act as a liaison between the regions and the Institute's Board of Directors to ensure that the secretary of the Institute receives all relevant information on regional, national, and international meetings and activities that might benefit the Institute.

3. Through membership on the Regional Activities Committee, identify the specific actions your region can take to strategically support the goals of the Institute.
4. From the perspective of the regions, identify the key initiatives the Institute should undertake to (a) increase DSI membership and participation of all disciplines, and (b) enhance its position as a leader and innovator in the academic community. Recommend any specific actions the Institute should take in the short and long term.

Treasurer

1. Continue to provide a brief note regarding any explanations necessary preceding the audit report published in *Decision Line*.
2. Work with the Regional Activities Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on Regional Accounting Practices to assess the implementation success and/or problems with the new regional accounting procedures.

2001 Annual Meeting Program Chair

1. Organize and conduct a "visionary" meeting for the 2001 Annual Meeting during the 1999 Annual Meeting. Consider including track

chairs, coordinators, and others involved in the 1999 and 2000 Annual Meetings. The most recent directory of elected and appointed officials of the Institute is enclosed for your information.

2. The Home Office will compile information on each Fellow's area of expertise and interests. Share this information with the appropriate Theme/Track Chairs, encouraging them to solicit Fellow participation. Contact Fellows inviting them to organize sessions supportive of the Meeting theme.
3. Explore the desirability and feasibility of holding workshops on teaching international business concepts in the functional areas at the 2001 Meeting. Perhaps focus on teaching stand-alone classes as well as teaching international concepts in existing functional classes.
4. From the perspective of the 2001 Annual Meeting, identify the key initiatives the Institute should undertake to (a) increase DSI membership and participation of all disciplines, and (b) enhance its position as a leader and innovator in the academic community. Recommend any specific actions the Institute should take in the short and long term. ■

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collectively as a multi-disciplinary institute. However, we need to go beyond discussion. We should facilitate the implementation of the exciting activities members wish to pursue. The Institute should seek to improve its status as a source for current thought in teaching and scholarship.

The second question relates to the first. How can we become more innovative in what we do? The advent of widespread use of web-based technologies is but one way we can leverage innovation in the way we communicate with each other. We should explore the ways we can provide information about other members' interests as well as other information members find important for their teaching and research interests. We can also explore ways to provide new experiences at our annual meetings so as to improve our skills, while still providing ample time for collegial interactions. We should also explore new and better ways to provide professional development activities to our members. There are no simple answers to these two questions. Nonetheless, I would like to focus on them during my term as president. You can help

by sending your thoughts to me or to the chair of the appropriate national committee. (The 1999-2000 committee appointments for DSI will be listed in the upcoming July 1999 issue of *Decision Line*).

In light of these two questions, the Executive Committee met in April to discuss the strategic plans for the Institute. We made use of the many suggestions provided by the committees last year, the outstanding work of the Development Committee for Excellence in the Decision Sciences led by John Anderson, and the comprehensive membership survey conducted by Scott Shafer. Two major issues came out of the session. First, we need to develop a modern information system for the Institute. This issue has strategic implications for the Institute because the information system must provide all the information needs of both the Home Office and the members, now and in the foreseeable future. Without ample, well-organized information, the ability to make good decisions is compromised. Further, our ability to provide new and innovative information services to our members

is limited. This year we will replace our present membership information system. In addition, we will develop specifications for the information system we would like to have in place three years from now and an implementation plan for that system.

The second major issue discussed at the strategic planning session can be summarized as the need to enhance member services. Many activities were discussed, although they can be placed into two broad categories: annual meeting and professional development. While our annual meetings are growing in attendance, we must explore improvements in the activities or the format of our annual meetings if we are to be a visible leader and a purveyor of innovation in the academic community. We should explore ways to increase the involvement of distinguished scholars and other prominent individuals at the annual meeting, perhaps through multiple plenary sessions or forums for open discussion. In addition, we should look for ways to provide more opportunities for collegial interaction, which, according to the membership survey, was the single most important

factor for a successful annual meeting. Further, we must address the needs of the doctoral students. The doctoral students of today are the future of the Institute. We should explore ways to provide the greatest possible breadth of placement opportunities for them, and increase the number of innovative activities in the doctoral consortium. Collectively, these activities can only serve to enhance our annual meetings, which are already popular.

We put professional development into a separate category because we feel that it is a core service the Institute provides. As we examine professional development this year, we do so with regard to all faculty ranks. We will explore innovative ways to enhance the professional development activities at the annual meetings. In addition, we will look into the feasibility of developing specialized conferences in professional development at a different time and location than the annual meeting. Finally, we will explore new approaches for recognizing excellence in innovative teaching developments. We already have outstanding competitions in innovative education and case studies at the annual meeting, however we can do more. Perhaps it is in the form of a publication on teaching excellence.

Following the strategic planning session at its April meeting, the Board of Directors reviewed last year's goals for the Institute, the report from the Development Committee for Excellence in the Decision Sciences, and the recommendations from the Executive Committee regarding an update and reprioritization of the goals. At that point, a new list of six prioritized goals was adopted:

- Develop an information system for the Decision Sciences Institute that captures information about members, generates information needed by members, supports Institute decision making at the national and regional levels, and uses current web-based decentralized technology.
- Enhance member services.
- Increase membership and participation of all disciplines.
- Increase globalization of the Institute.
- Promote the development and dissemination of research having educational significance and managerial relevance.
- Expand interdisciplinary activities.

This set of six goals provided the foundation for the charges to the 1999-00 committees and the Board objectives. (See the 1999-00 Board of Directors Objectives.) While a major focus will be on the top two goals this year, you can see that each goal will be addressed at least partially. The standing committees will provide much of the input to the Board for its January meeting; however, the Board decided that three ad hoc committees should be formed to address several focused issues of importance. First, there is the Ad Hoc Committee on a Teaching Publication. Chaired by Karen Brown (kbrown@seattleu.edu). This committee will be looking into the feasibility and desirability of a publication devoted to teaching excellence. Using the work of last year's committee, this committee will come forward with a proposal specifying the direction the Institute should take regarding the dissemination of innovative teaching practices. Second, the Ad Hoc Committee on Regional Accounting Practices chaired by Dick Jensen, (rjensen@b202.usu.edu, will look into the ways we can improve the flow of financial information between the home office and the regions. Finally, the Ad Hoc Committee on Improving the Annual Meeting will explore modifications to the activities or format of the annual meeting so as to enhance the

visible leadership of the Institute and the innovativeness of its offerings. I will chair that committee. If you have any ideas that may help those committees, please contact the chair of the appropriate committee.

This will be an exciting year. In July we will have the 5th International Meeting of the Decision Sciences Institute in Athens, Greece. Steve Zanakis, program chair, has organized an outstanding meeting. In November we will celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Institute in New Orleans. Tom Jones, program chair, has a great meeting planned along with some surprises for the celebration. Nonetheless, as you can see from the Board's objectives, there is much to do in a short amount of time. The Board is dedicated to accomplishing the task. Together with you, we hope to provide a sound foundation for the Institute as it moves into the next millennium. If you have any questions or comments about any aspect of the Institute as this year unfolds, please do not hesitate to contact me. ■

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Decision Sciences Institute Budget Summary FY 1999-2000

Revenues summary

Publications	\$ 83,807
Membership Revenues	164,846
Electronic Publishing	0
Convention	315,809
Total revenues	<u>\$564,462</u>

Expenses summary

Publications	\$177,509
Member Services	164,430
Electronic Publishing	14,946
Convention	207,394
Total expenses	<u>\$564,280</u>
Net Revenue Over (Under) Expenses	\$182
Less Depreciation Expense (Not a cash expense)	\$3,838
Net Revenue Over (Under) Cash Expenses	\$4,020