

■ JULIE E. KENDALL, Feature Editor, School of Business-Camden, Rutgers University

## Research Planning Activities at the DSI Doctoral Consortium

by Julie E. Kendall, Rutgers University



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Since the 1995 DSI annual meeting in Boston, I have had the pleasure to help organize a panel and small group activity as part of the Decision Sciences Institute Doctoral Consortium held annually at the national meeting. Doctoral students who participate in the doctoral consortium can, with the support and direction of a senior, tenured professor and about eight of their peers, formulate a strategic research plan during specially designed, intimate breakout sessions.

### The Tradition of the Doctoral Strategic Research Plan

The original idea for the Strategic Research Plan was developed by Dr. Robert J. Mockler, who is the Joseph F. Adams Professor of Management and the director of the Strategic Management Research Institute at St. John's University in New York City. He first used the research plan when a demanding recruiting schedule for his urban university necessitated an efficient and effective system for screening potential junior faculty. Candidates developed strategic plans for teaching, research and service. Four of us—Dorothy Dologite (Baruch College), Ken Kendall (Rutgers University), Bob Mockler, and myself met and determined that it would be useful for students to use this set of planning tools before they completed their programs. We decided to focus on the research portion of the tools Bob had developed.

### Critical Issues Confronting Ph.D. Students

We refined the strategic research planning approach over the years and once again this year the four of us will organize and host the panel and breakout sessions for the Strategic Research Plan. The doctoral consortium will be held on Saturday, Novem-

ber 20th, at the annual meeting in New Orleans. During the course of the workshop, senior professors work with small groups of students in their discipline in developing a formal plan.

Long journal lead times and the fact that faculty typically submit their tenure and promotion materials at the beginning of their sixth year, implies that the infamous tenure clock is only three to four years, not the full six years that junior faculty may expect. Planning is important because there are so many options available at the start of one's career. A haphazard approach may lead the junior faculty member away from their intended goals and make it difficult to possess a fulfilling career.

### Development and Enrichment of Research Themes During the Session

Junior faculty need to develop research themes (or streams). It is risky to pursue interests that are too broad or too narrow. There are also choices for publication outlets—Tier A journals, Tier B journals, and conference proceedings. Journal selection alone may make a considerable difference here as well.

Joint or sole authorship of research articles is another choice junior faculty must face. While you can learn an amazing amount from coauthors (they may know, for example, how to best write papers for journal audiences), the co-author's career goals may differ from your own. Another concern is that published papers in a journal from a discipline other than your own may or may not count toward

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publications for tenure. Single-authored publications mean that you must be skilled in the development of theory, methodology, writing the paper in an appropriate style, and answering referees with a modicum of intelligence and tact.

## Elaboration of the Strategic Research Plan

In order to help doctoral students sort out all of these choices, a set of forms was developed. During the session, doctoral students draw a representation of how their research will naturally progress from their current dissertation work. The pipeline metaphor is used often, but is not usually a desirable way to write a series of articles.

Other representations include a branching approach, a big-bang approach, and a hyperlinked approach to the development of a research plan.

The advantages of each approach are discussed and the unique nature of each doctoral student usually results in many different approaches being explored during the course of the breakout session.

The remainder of the time allows doctoral students to sort out the issues involving target journals, coauthors, and a reasonable data collection and writing schedule. Once again, we assist the process by using specially developed forms that we have created to facilitate the creation of a realistic, results-oriented research plan that can evolve over time.

By the end of the session, we hope that doctoral students realize the need to develop a strategic research plan. After completing the session they can return home to their advisor with the beginning of a research blueprint to help in pursuing and eventually meet their tenure and other goals.

For more about the DSI Doctoral Consortium to be held in New Orleans, please see the formal listing in this newsletter or contact the Chair of the Consortium, Professor Jim Hershauer (Arizona State University) at james.hershauer@asu.edu. ■

## NAMES IN THE NEWS

CAROL LATTA, Feature Editor, Home Office, Georgia State University



**Jeff Camm**, a professor of quantitative analysis and head of the Department of Quantitative Analysis and Operations Management at the University of Cincinnati, has been named the Ronald J. Dornoff Fellow of Teaching Excellence.

The two-year appointment recognizes excellence, professionalism, rigor, and relevance in teaching in the College of Business Administration.



**Maling Ebrahimpour** has been named the associate dean for graduate programs and research in the College of Business Administration at the University of Rhode Island. Prior to this appointment, for seven years he served as the chair of Management Science and Information Systems Department in the College. In his new position,

he is not only in charge of overseeing three MBA programs, an MS in accounting, a PhD program, and four research centers, but he is also responsible for identifying and developing new programs, and helping to develop the research agenda for the college. In March 1999, Maling was proclaimed an advocate for quality by Providence Plantation and the governor of the Rhode Island for his service in enhancing and promoting training and education in quality management for service, manufacturing, and education industries throughout the state. Furthermore, he is the first academician to be inducted to the Rhode Island Quality Hall of Fame.



**Nancy Weida** was recently named chair of the Department of Management at Bucknell University. The Department of Management is composed of decision sciences, marketing, general management, strategy, accounting, and finance, and offers excellent undergraduate education linking business and the liberal arts.

**DSI members can share their promotions, awards, publications, photos, and other news of interest to the membership by contacting:**

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