

■ Barbara B. Flynn, Babcock Graduate School of Management, Wake Forest University

We have an interesting set of articles in this issue of *Decision Line*. We begin with the President's Letter from Bob Jacobs of Indiana University. Bob encourages us all to attend the upcoming meeting in San Francisco. There are several exciting new things going on at the conference, plus the normal schedule of presentations, workshops, innovative education competition, etc. Be sure to check out the new options for meeting people and networking.

In the Classroom contains an article by Jayanel Sounderpandian of the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. He builds on Rick Hesse's July 2001 *Decision Line* article on interpretation of sensitivity analysis when there is a high degree of degeneracy in the solution. According to Professor Sounderpandian, explaining the concept of ranges can be a real challenge when students are taught linear programming using Solver, rather than the simplex algorithm. He concludes that a better approach is to simply teach students to resolve the problem with changed data if they are using Solver, using the sensitivity analysis report only if the problem is too large to re-solve.

The Ph.D. Issues column focuses on the doctoral dissertation. Jay Aronson of the University of Georgia, who has a wealth of experience working with Ph.D. students, offers his tips and advice relating to the doctoral dissertation. Both Ph.D. students and advisors will find some useful ideas in this interesting article.

The E-Commerce feature provides insight into corporate board members and their perceptions of ecommerce, particularly in terms of risk. Ernie Jordan of Macquarie University interviewed board members in Australia to determine how they approach risk governance of electronic commerce projects, including the risk of increased organizational complexity and security risks due to the openness of the Internet. He found that board members tend to rely on management or the audit committee to evaluate the risk, and that they deal with it in some new ways that haven't been used in other contexts.

In From the Bookshelf, Andrew Ruppel of the University of Virginia re-

views five books that deal with structuring the thought process in various ways. Each sounds like an interesting book, dealing with high level issues in a readable style. *Boltzmann's Atom* describes the competition between Boltzmann and Nach, which is essentially the eternal argument between empiricists and theoretists. *Euclid's Window* covers the work of Descartes, Gauss, Einstein and Witten on the power of geometry. *Brunelleschi's Dome* describes the story of the goldsmith who designed and oversaw the construction, without the benefit of modern design tools, of the world's largest masonry dome in Florence. *Newton's Gift* focuses on the life of Isaac Newton, from his work on the structure of the universe and of light to his work as the warden of the British Mint. Finally, *Mendeleev's Dream* describes the work of Mendeleev to find a structure among the elements to bring coherence to the field of chemistry, resulting in his discovery of the Periodic Table of Elements.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all in San Francisco! ■



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