

## Why Alpha Iota Delta?

Alpha Iota Delta, the national honor society in decision sciences and information systems, was chartered by members of the Decision Sciences Institute (DSI) in 1971. Over 30 years later, the honor society continues its link to DSI and supports those activities of DSI which are aimed at student involvement in disciplines of interest to the Institute. The purpose of the society is threefold:

- Confer distinction to students in the decision sciences and information systems disciplines for academic excellence.
- Promote the infusion of functional and behavioral areas of business with the tools, concepts, and methodologies of the decision sciences and information systems.
- Promote interest in the disciplines of decision sciences and information systems.

Why should a student seek initiation into Alpha Iota Delta and why should a member of DSI promote and support this honor society? DSI was established to provide a focus on the integration of research in the art and science of managerial decision making across traditional functional academic disciplines, including, but not limited to: accounting, management, management science, operations research, quantitative analysis, statistics, and management information systems. The mission statement of DSI states, "The Decision Sciences Institute is a multidisciplinary international association dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving instruction in all business and related disciplines. To pursue this mission, the Institute will facilitate the development and dissemination of knowledge in the diverse disciplines of the decision sciences through publication, conferences, and other services." The dissemination of new knowledge is part of the mission of most, if not all, business schools, colleges, and universities. The recognition of students who

perform above the norm has long been a part of the academic profession. The answer to this question is as simple as the realization that the purpose of the honor society and the Institute are historically and philosophically intertwined.

If the goals and vision of DSI and Alpha Iota Delta are intertwined, and if this is the justification for faculty interest, why should a student be interested in being initiated into the Society? The answer to this question can be found, in part, in an excerpt from an Alpha Iota Delta Initiation Ritual which addresses the meaning of the Greek letters: Alpha, Iota, and Delta.

**ALPHA** represents the beginning. It not only signifies the beginning of a career in the decision sciences and/or computer information systems but it also signifies a commitment to leadership. A leader develops guiding ideas and articulates them deliberately, demonstrating philosophical depth and recognizing the process as ongoing. The meaning, and sometimes the expression, of these guiding ideas evolve as people reflect and talk about them, and as they are applied to guide decisions and actions.

**IOTA** represents integration, both of knowledge and also of concept. The synergy among theories, methods, and tools lies at the heart of any field of human endeavor that truly builds knowledge. The continuous cycle—creating theories, developing and applying practical methods and tools based on the theories, leading to new insights that will improve the theories—is the primary engine of growth in decision sciences and computer information systems.

**DELTA** is the universal symbol for change. It signifies that the initiate will respond to change with rationality and logic (Initiation Ritual, Alpha Iota Delta Chapter, University of Detroit Mercy).

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### Madjid Tavana

is a professor of management information systems and the Lindback Distinguished Chair of Information Systems at La Salle University, where he also served as the chairman of the Management Department,

director of the Center for Technology and Management, and the executive director of the E-Commerce Institute. Dr. Tavana has been a Faculty Fellow in Aeronautics and Space Research at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, developing Group Decision Support Systems for the Space Shuttle Program and Johnson Space Center, developing Intelligent Decision Support Systems for Human Exploration of Mars at the Mission Control Center. In 2005, he was awarded the prestigious Space Act Award by NASA. He holds an MBA, PMIS, and Ph.D. in management information systems and received his post-doctoral diploma in strategic information systems from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He has published in such journals as *Decision Sciences*, *Interfaces*, *Information & Management*, *Computers & Operations Research*, *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, *Advances in Engineering Software*, among others. He is a vice president of Alpha Iota Delta.

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## Best Case Studies Award Competition Presentation

Monday, Nov. 20, 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Session Chair: Bin Jiang

### Wilkins, A Zurn Company: Material Requirements Planning

The materials manager at the Wilkins plant was stunned that the auditors had insisted on a second annual physical inventory count. In addition, the general manager had repeatedly expressed his concern about the high inventory level. Changes were needed, and the materials manager wondered what alternatives he should consider. The objectives of the case are to provide a holistic view of manufacturing, planning and control systems and to introduce students to MRP.

Presenter(s): Carol Prahinski (University of Western Ontario)

Author(s): Carol Prahinski (University of Western Ontario), Eric O Olsen (Cal Poly)

### Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Since 2004, Shiraiishi Garments, a famous men clothes company in Japan, began to outsource its manufacturing businesses to China in order to improve its profit margins. Even though it did achieve some benefits of outsourcing, it also found that buying

low cost goods at the expense of Chinese workers' health, safety and welfare was morally bankrupt. This case focuses on social dimensions of sustainability in terms of labor conditions and ethical-social concerns.

Presenter(s): Patrick Murphy (DePaul University)

Author(s): Bin Jiang (DePaul University), Patrick Murphy (DePaul University)

### Barco Case—Manufacturing Strategy of Printed Circuit Assembly

Barco is a multinational in Image Processing Technology. 4 BU's have a PCA department, supplying final assembly of the BU. The management considers merging the PCA departments. The 4 BU's supply different markets, with different requirements. The case describes CSF's in these BU's. Final assembly is critical in accomplishing these market requirements. In some BU's, the PCA department is also very critical for competitiveness. Performance improvement resulting from merger of PCA's is discussed.

Presenter(s): Ann E. Vereecke (Ghent University)

Author(s): Filip Goeman (Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School), Ann E. Vereecke (Ghent University)

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Honor society membership, like most worthwhile things in life, does not come easily. Therefore, when an invitation to membership arrives, it truly is a matter of honor, reflecting exceptional academic achievement and, perhaps, outstanding campus leadership and service. It is an honor typically bestowed upon students by faculty, and it provides lifetime distinction. The members of an honor society share similar interests; in the case of Alpha Iota Delta, the members share an interest in the decision sciences and information systems. Through the society and the parent DSI, members can maintain currency in their fields of interest. Alpha Iota Delta enables its members to connect

at the annual DSI meeting, and it provides lifelong recognition of a member's search for excellence.

If you are interested in creating a chapter of Alpha Iota Delta at your college or university, or if you are interested in membership in the national chapter, please contact Greg Ulferts (ulfertgw@udmercy.edu) or Steve Lunce (stephen.lunce@mwsu.edu). For more information about Alpha Iota Delta, please visit the Website.

[www.alphaiotadelta.com](http://www.alphaiotadelta.com)

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