

Editorial

This issue brings the first instalment of the special papers on applications of MATLAB and Simulink in engineering education. The software by Mathworks is in extensive use by all disciplines in engineering education. This is manifested in the applications in the current issue alone, and there are more to be published in the next issue. Applications in filter design, DSP, power electronics, CDMA, electromagnetic fields, sensors, biomedical systems, food engineering, chemistry, and vehicle engineering are just some of the fields represented in this issue. As an interdisciplinary journal it is appropriate for the International Journal of Engineering Education to host these papers from the varied disciplines so that readers may be able to look over their shoulder and see applications in areas other than their own. My sincere thanks are due to the untiring Ahmad Ibrahim, both for suggesting the topic, selecting the papers and organising their presentation.

Recently I have returned from the annual American Society for Engineering Education conference in Portland. The event is by far the largest engineering education conference of its kind. It serves both as a mirror of what is happening in engineering education and as a venue for meeting and discussing plans, problems and new ventures. The plenary sessions, reflect mostly the 'US' view on developments in engineering education. This year, more than ever, speakers stressed their concern that the USA may be on the way of losing its 'leadership' in engineering due to the emigration of basic industries, vital to the US economy, to other countries. Of particular concern is the establishment of chip production in China. The arguments is that once such industries are relocated from the US, research and education will soon follow. From the vantage point of this journal this concern should be some time away. We recently received a paper for consideration from a top engineering university in China proudly presenting its curriculum reform and openly and unabashedly following the curricula of the top US engineering universities. (needless to say we did not accept the paper, and returned it with the question 'so what is new?'). However, it is nevertheless inevitable that China will eventually overtake the USA in science and engineering as it is already doing in textiles and consumer electronics. The sheer size of the country makes these future developments natural. At present, at least in engineering education the USA is still firmly established as number one in achievement as well as in its attraction for international students and faculty. This may change in the future—we may not be there to know.

Michael Wald