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## Message from the Program Chair

On behalf of the council, officers, and program committee, I would like to welcome you to the 47th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Chapter of the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (SE INFORMS). I hope this year's meeting be a pleasant and worthwhile experience for you. It has been an honor to serve as your 2011 Program Chair. I am most grateful to the SEINFORMS Council for their confidence in appointing me.

The energy surrounding our annual meeting comes from the opportunity to renew old acquaintances and to meet new colleagues from universities, governments, businesses, and other organizations. I encourage you to pursue existing connections, also to promote our meetings at your institution and to encourage your colleagues to join us in future years.

Everyone is invited to attend the business meeting which is scheduled from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday. This inclusive meeting provides a forum to learn about the operations of Southeastern INFORMS as well as to present your opinions regarding our future direction. Our program committee will be formally recognized at the Business Meeting. Please join us to thank them for all their work. The meeting is followed by the President's reception at 6:00 pm. Here you can socialize and relax with colleagues while enjoying a fine selection of foods and drinks.

Our President's luncheon on Friday will conclude this year's meeting. Please plan to attend and help me recognize our officers as well as the winners of the student paper competition and the authors of outstanding papers.

As always, many individuals and organizations have provided the support necessary to ensure that this meeting will be a success. I would like to thank my fellow officers, Ali Nazemi, Shanan Gibson, and Ed Showalter who have answered many questions and provided important advice and assistance and acted as my mentors all the way; the track chairs, Adel Novin, Nikki Finlay, Uma Sridharan, Chuck Leska, Allen Smith, Shona Morgan, Jay Teets, Ajay Aggarwal, John O'Malley, Shabnam Mousavi, Nozar Hashemzadeh, Michelle Hagadorn, Steven Lang, and Ali Dadpay who have provided all necessary support to bring you well thought-out, organized tracks; and the judges in the student paper competition who contribute significant time and energy reviewing and judging papers and presentations. Special thanks go to those who have developed and presented special sessions. These sessions give all of us a chance to explore new ideas and discuss our own thoughts and ideas with colleagues. And of course special thanks goes to all Presenters, Reviewers, Session Chairs, and Discussants without whom we would not have an excellent program this year.

Generous organizations provided the financial resources necessary to make this conference affordable, comfortable and enjoyable. I start by thanking Dr. Alphonso Ogbuehi, Dean of College of Business and Professor Greg Kordecki, Chair of Department of Law, Economics, Accounting and Finance at Clayton State University, for providing me the support necessary to perform my duties as Program Chair and sponsoring the conference. I offer my thanks to Clayton State University for allowing me

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to get help from our administrative assistants, supporting me for the preparation for the conference and the daily registration duties here at the conference. Great and sincere thanks to Al Avery who has responded to countless questions and provided invaluable support at all times. This program and our proceedings would be nearly impossible without his dedication; certainly, the role of Program Chair would be much harder, if not impossible.

I would especially like to thank Shabnam Mousavi, for her invaluable assistance in preparing for this conference and George Lowry, Amit Shah, and Tim Burwell for their advice and counsel and Diane Prince for the support she provided me as my Associate Dean and then Interim Dean of School of Business at Clayton State University, when I was first elected as 2011 program chair. The abovementioned individuals' efforts, attention to detail, and dedication have enabled us to enjoy a conference of such high quality. Sponsoring schools and organizations are acknowledged on specific pages of the program: Appalachian State University, Clayton State University, East Carolina University, Georgia State University, North Carolina State University, and Roanoke College. Their support makes it possible to have a successful conference, offer travel scholarships for all graduate student paper entrants and generous cash prizes for the top graduate student authors. Please take a moment to personally thank our sponsors if you get a chance to talk to them.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the individual participants, who actually make these meetings happen. Given the recent economic downturn that led to many schools cutting their travel funds, I am aware how hard it is to attend an academic conference these past years and I appreciate your continuous support for SEINFORMS despite the current economic situation. Now that you are here for the conference, I urge you all to sit in on as many sessions as possible and to participate in the meeting to its fullest. If you learn something new, renew an old acquaintance, or meet some new colleagues by the time you leave, the conference will have been a success. And finally, do not forget to come back next year and bring a new member with you!

Enjoy the conference!

Yours Sincerely,  
Reza Kheirandish  
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2011 Program Chair