Editorial

Beginning with Volume 9, it will be my privilege to serve as Editor-in-Chief of *Machine Learning*. At present, Jaime Carbonell and I are occupying this position together to make a smooth transition before he steps down.

I want to thank both of my predecessors: Pat Langley, who so ably launched the journal and set high standards for quality, and Jaime Carbonell, who has presided over the rapid growth of the journal to the point where we are now publishing eight issues per year.

I have four goals for *Machine Learning* over the coming years. First, I want to maintain and strengthen the quality of the research reported here. *Machine Learning* will continue to seek papers that make a substantial, novel contribution to our knowledge of learning in machines. Clarity of writing will remain an important criterion as well.

Second, I want to shorten the total time required to move from the initial submitted manuscript to a published paper. This requires more aggressive tracking of manuscripts through the review process. It also means that manuscripts will be expected to be well-polished at the time they are submitted. Authors should not rely on the comments of the reviewers to help them write their papers.

Third, I am already working with our publisher to improve the production process so that we can accept manuscripts for final submission in electronic form (most likely in LaTeX or TeX format). This should reduce errors introduced when the manuscripts are typeset. It should also help reduce the time-to-publication by reducing the need for proofreading typeset material.

Finally, I hope to continue broadening the scope of *Machine Learning* to form bridges with other disciplines that study learning methods, such as artificial neural networks, statistics, cognitive psychology, pattern recognition, adaptive control, approximation theory, and theoretical biology. We are currently living in an exciting time, when the fundamental problems of automatic model-building, knowledge acquisition, and adaptation are receiving attention in all of these fields. Researchers in machine learning have much to offer these other fields, such as our methods for combining prior knowledge with learning from experience and our emphasis on representing learned knowledge in human-understandable form. We also have much to learn from these fields, and I believe the flow of ideas among disciplines is critical to the timely solution of these fascinating problems.

Thomas G. Dietterich