EDITORIAL

Letter from the Editor

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It is 3 years since JIBS embarked on its strategic renewal journey. Although the proverbial 'buck' stops at the desk of the editor in chief, the backbone of JIBS are its Departmental Editors (DEs) and the Editorial Review Board. The collective voluntarism that is so central to the functioning of peer-reviewed academic journals is a community effort that never ceases to amaze me. It is indeed a labor of love. As the Editor in Chief of JIBS I feel privileged to be supported by a most distinguished group of committed DEs and Editorial Review Board members. I wish to take the opportunity, at the start of my second term as Editor in Chief, to express my deep gratitude and thanks to each and every one of them for their commitment and self-less effort to establish JIBS as the pre-eminent Journal in International Business Studies.

As JIBS looks to the future almost all indicators are positive. Submissions are up (17% for first quarter of 2005 compared to 2004), the publication backlog continues to grow (36.3 is in production, 36.4 and 36.5 are fully scheduled) and JIBS is on target to publish 700 pages in this volume year. Moreover, JIBS manuscript average processing times and accept/reject rate compare favorably with the performance metrics of the top tier journals. However, while the online manuscript processing system has become very robust and manuscript processing times have improved dramatically since 2003, JIBS continues to struggle with a few outlier cases. This year a renewed effort is underway to eliminate outlier cases. This effort includes replacement of Editorial Review Board members who consistently fail in their commitment to complete reviewing a paper within 30 days of receiving invitation to review or who neglect to inform the Managing Editor of their inability to review assigned paper within 1 week of receiving invitation. The table below summarizes the distribution of published (or accepted for publication) papers for 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 (through 30/3/2005).

The distribution of papers indicates an emerging trend of diversifying the range of topics published in JIBS. Building on this trend is a major challenge for JIBS, especially as other top tier management journals begin to publish papers relating to international business. In this new competitive environment, JIBS faces a new challenge attracting authors and a readership beyond the traditional IB community. Although the JIBS metrics of submissions and accept/reject rates are matching those of other top tier journals, it will require several more years before the impact of the new editorial strategy is reflected in rising ISI Impact scores. ISI Impact scores are calculated on the basis of a 2-year moving window. However, a recent analysis of all highly cited papers in

Organization Science suggests that a 4- or 6-year window would be more appropriate. In other words, it might take 4 or more years before the market for ideas yields definitive signals on the effectiveness of the turnaround editorial strategy that JIBS is following.

This past year has seen a turnover in the ranks of DEs and the appointment of new ones. Much of this realignment is due to a review of the editorial structure. Four DEs – Jose Campa, Michael Lubatkin, Mari Sako and Mary O’Sullivan – have stepped down as DEs. In each case, the circumstances were special. In addition, the editorial areas have been realigned. The changes include combining Economics with International Political Economy; Comparative Capitalism has been combined with Institutions and IB; Finance is now its own department and Accounting has been dropped as an editorial area. I am very pleased to welcome the following new DEs:

Ari Ginsberg, New York University – Entrepreneurship and New Ventures
Bruce Blonigen, University of Oregon – Economics and International Political Economy.
Helen De Cieri, Monash University – Strategic HR and Industrial Relations
Witold Henisz, University of Pennsylvania – Economics and International Political Economy
Mark Peterson, Florida Atlantic University – Culture, Conflict and Cognition

Hildy Teegen, George Washington University – Comparative Capitalism, Institutions and IB
David Tse, University of Hong Kong – Marketing, Consumer Behavior and Operations
Yadong Luo, University of Miami – Business Dynamics Strategy
Shaker Zahra, Babson College – Entrepreneurship and New Ventures

Klaus Meyer, JIBS Book Review Editor, and I have been rethinking the strategy and process of the JIBS book review section. Book reviews provide a valuable service to JIBS readers. Our thought is to decentralize the book review process by establishing a book review board under the guidance and leadership of the JIBS Book Review Editor. The board will consist of six members appointed for a term of 3 years. Each board member will be expected to complete two book reviews per volume year. The choice of books to be reviewed will involve a joint process between the JIBS Book Review Editor and the board. Publishers interested to have a book reviewed in JIBS send their new books to the JIBS Book Review Editor. Under the new process, the editor will share the list of books received with book review board. In addition, board members will be encouraged to suggest books (with the exception of text books) that they believe should be reviewed in JIBS. Although the ultimate decision of books to be reviewed in JIBS is the responsibility of the JIBS Book Review Editor, this

Area	2002 ^a	2003 ^b	2004	2005 ^c
Finance	2	1	1	5
Comparative capitalism, institutions and international business (EFA)	3	4	1	1
Marketing, consumer behavior and supply chain mgt	6	4	1	2
Business dynamics & strategy	16	15	14	11
Organization & mgmt	1	2	1	4
Culture, conflict & cognition	4	3	2	1
Economics & int'l political economy		2	1	3
Entrepren. & new ventures				2
Strategic HR & industrial relations		2	2	3
Technology & innovation		2	2	
Perspective/cross boundary papers			6	2
Total number of manuscripts	32	35	31	34
Number of pages	592 ^d	599	566	700 ^e

^a32 papers accepted by Thomas Brewer, former EIC.

^b31 papers accepted by Thomas Brewer, former EIC.

^cAccepted Papers thru March 2005.

^dEquivalent to new JIBS larger format.

^eProjected.

new process has the potential of increasing the variety and quality of books reviewed in JIBS. If you have an interest in being considered for the new JIBS Book Review Board please write to me ayl3@duke.edu and to Klaus Meyer km.cees@cbs.dk.

As Editor in Chief of JIBS with its unique decentralized editorial structure, I have received a very small number of appeals (four out of 1253 submissions) of the editorial decision made by the DEs. This is clearly another positive feature of a decentralized editorial structure. When an author appeals the editorial decision of a DE, the appeal is addressed to me. The appeal letter must clearly present the author's reason for appealing the decision. The entire file is first reviewed by me for quality of the reviews and for the consistency of the editorial decision. In one instance, I concluded that the reviews were not up to the standard of JIBS. After consultation with the DE, we arrived at a decision to seek a *de novo* review of the paper under the guidance of a second DE. Unfortunately, the editorial decision did not change. However, the author did feel that the process was fair and that the

new set of reviews was more appropriate. In another case, I interpreted the reviews more positively than the DE. After consultation, we mutually agreed to seek another review. The fourth reviewer was able to better articulate the central contribution of the paper and I am pleased to note that the drastically revised paper has been accepted for publication in JIBS and will appear in volume 36. In the remaining two cases, the subject matter was outside my range. In that case, the process involves obtaining an evaluation from a JIBS Associate Editor in Chief, or from a JIBS Consulting Editor or from another DE. In the two remaining cases, the above procedure was used. In both cases, the new editor concluded that there was no basis for the appeal. I wish to conclude by noting that it is impossible for the Editor in Chief to review every active file. However, I do Review, Revise and Resubmit (R&R) files and work directly with the DE when in my judgment the process could be improved. In summary, appeals are taken very seriously and serve as an important indicator of the reliability and consistency of the JIBS review process.