The Engineering Design Graphics Journal is the official publication of the Engineering Design Graphics Division of ASEE. The scope of the Journal is devoted to the advancement of engineering design graphics, computer graphics, and subjects related to engineering design graphics in an effort to 1) encourage research, development, and refinement of theory and applications of engineering design graphics for understanding and practice, 2) encourage teachers of engineering design graphics to experiment with and test appropriate teaching techniques and topics to further improve the quality and modernization of instruction and courses, and 3) stimulate the preparation of articles and papers on topics of interest to the membership. Acceptance of submitted papers will depend upon the results of a review process and upon the judgement of the editors as to the importance of the papers to the membership. Papers must be written in a style appropriate for archival purposes.

From the Editor

Dear Members:

A recent article in the local paper was entitled "Educators divided over push for taking college courses on Internet." It was reassuring to know that I wasn't the only one wondering about "whether a seat in front of a computer is as good as a seat in a college classroom" (McQueen, 1999, Journal & Courier, p. A8). The article points out that currently we don't know a lot about the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning. The reports offer a variety of conflicting information about their effectiveness, costs and value. This suggests that it is important to go slowly and lay a strong foundation based on success before committing major resources to on-line education.

I remember in the past telling one of my students who didn't like to attend lab that this was not a "correspondence" course. Face-to-face interaction with students is important to the student, as well as, the faculty member. Although new technologies have made it possible to present information and interact with students in many new ways, personal interaction has its merits. Interacting with a student as they tackle a project or solve a problem is what teaching is all about. Sharing viewpoints, critiquing ideas and discussing concepts leads to better solutions and better learning.

There is no doubt that the potential of distance learning is vast. However, let's find the right balance of interaction between students and faculty to ensure we are not trying to package an education and ship off to our targeted audience. There are other benefits to attending college than getting an education. Interaction with those who don't think, act or look like you, standing up in front of your classmates and presenting your ideas or working in a team environment to solve a problem helps student grow in many new directions. We will have wonderful distance learning programs in the near future. We can only hope that we don't loose those great interactions between student and educator that we all strive for.

Judy Birchman

Cover illustration by Chris Creager