

## **A Decade of SWDSI Participation (1992-2001)**

**Lynn R. Heinrichs**

Elon University, Elon, NC 27244  
(336) 278-6192  
lheinrichs@elon.edu

### **ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of the paper is to examine participation in the Southwest Region of the Decision Sciences Institute (SWDSI) over the ten-year period from 1992-2001. Using data extracted from Southwest Federation of Administrative Disciplines (SWFAD) conference programs, the paper presents a profile of SWDSI program papers, authors, institutions, and topics. The findings enhance the current knowledge-base regarding conference participation and establish a point in time for future comparative analyses. The results will be of interest to both regular conference attendees as well as new participants.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

According to Cicero, “history is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life and brings us tidings of antiquity.” (Cicero, no date). The history of the Southwest Region of the Decision Sciences Institute (SWDSI) can be witnessed through its conference programs, vitalizing the memories of past participants and providing guidance for current members.

The purpose of this paper is to chronicle the history of SWDSI for the period of 1992-2001. Why examine this particular 10-year period? The 2001 conference was the last program under the SWFAD umbrella. In 2002, the first FBD conference was held in St. Louis outside of the traditional southwest region. Coincidentally, the author’s first year of attendance was 1992, so the decade in review has special meaning for that reason also.

Two prior SWDSI presentations have reflected on SWFAD or SWDSI conference participation. Franklin (1992) studied institutional participation at SWFAD for two years, 1990-1991. Franklin examined the change in participation of the 13 organizations included in SWFAD between the two years. Participation was calculated using a weighting scheme in which points were assigned for contributions of authors, panelists, discussants, chairs, and officers. The author concluded that participation “both by individuals and institutions declined in 1991 from the levels achieved in 1990 (Carter, 1992).”

During the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of SWFAD in 1998, a special panel session, “Southwest Decision Sciences Institute – A Retrospective Panel Discussion Recognizing SWFAD’s Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Conference,” was moderated by Stephen Lunce and included William Pinney, Roy Martin, Thomas Jones, G.W. Willis, David Douglas, Robert Pavur, and Sam Bruno. The panel reflected on major milestones in SWDSI within the context of SWFAD history. A

companion paper published in the *SWSDI Proceedings* provides an excellent historical timeline of the development of the two organizations (Jones, Martin, and Pinney, 1998).

The current paper adds to the historical record by providing a profile of papers, authors, institutions, and topics that constituted the SWSDI programs from 1992-2001. The paper’s focus differs from the two previous contributions by Carter (1992) and Jones, *et al* (1998). First, the paper examines activity specifically for SWSDI. Second, it spans an entire 10-year period.

The conference locations and program chairs during the 10-year period are shown in Table 1. The conference locations reflect the traditional four-year rotation among San Antonio, New Orleans, Dallas, and Houston. In seven of ten years, the program chair was from an institution in Texas. In nine of ten years, the program chair was male.

Year	Location	Program Chair
1992	San Antonio	Michael Hanna (TX)
1993	New Orleans	G.W.K. Willis (TX)
1994	Dallas	Kamlesh Mehta (TX)
1995	Houston	David Douglas (AR)
1996	San Antonio	Robert Pavur (TX)
1997	New Orleans	Lynn R. Heinrichs (NC)
1998	Dallas	Stephen Lunce (TX)
1999	Houston	Brian Reithel (MS)
2000	San Antonio	Bala Maniam (TX)
2001	New Orleans	Vivek Shah (TX)

**Table 1. Ten Years of SWSDI Programs**

## METHODOLOGY

Conference paper details were extracted from the SWFAD official program guides for each year of the decade examined. A “paper” is basically defined as any program presentation including a full paper, topic table, or special session (panel, workshop, or symposium). The only special session not included in the data was the SWSDI graduate student workshop from 1994-1998.

Paper details were entered into a Microsoft Access database (see Table 2) consisting of four tables: Paper, Author, Affiliation, and Association. The Paper table describes the attributes of a paper including the year, position in the program, title, and type (full, topic table, or special session). The Author table describes a paper author including an author identification, last name, and first name, and gender. While gender is included in the table, gender data was not collected and used for this analysis.

All the institutions or affiliations are contained in the Affiliation Table and described by an affiliation identification, name, location, and type (education or other). Finally, the Association

table contains one record for each author affiliated with a paper including the paper year, position in program, author identification, and affiliation identification.

<b>Paper Table</b>	<b>Author Table</b>
Year	Author ID
Paper No.	LastName
Name	FirstName
Paper Type	Gender
<b>Affiliation Table</b>	<b>Association Table</b>
AffiliationID	Year
AffiliationName	Paper No.
Location	AuthorID
Educ/Other	AffiliationID

**Table 2. Database Design**

## DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The ten years of programs generated a total of 785 papers, 892 authors, and 288 affiliations. Once the data were entered into the MS-Access database, queries were used to generate a profile of participation.

### *Paper and Authorship Profile*

Table 3 shows the total number of papers appearing on the conference program as well as the distribution by session type – full paper, topic table, or special session. The peak total occurred in 1993 (101) followed by the lowest total in 1994 (50). During other years, the total papers ranged from 65 to 90.

Year	Total No. Papers	Full Papers	Topic Tables	Special Sessions
1992	89	76	12	1
1993	101	74	27	0
1994	50	45	5	0
1995	65	56	8	1
1996	90	78	11	1
1997	81	66	13	2
1998	76	63	11	2
1999	67	51	12	4
2000	87	72	12	3
2001	79	63	9	7

**Table 3. Papers by Session Type**

Table 4 provides a summary of the number of paper authors for each year (all types of papers). The second column represents the number of unique authors (no double counting). The third column represents the number of authors cited in total (multiple counts included). If an author's name appears on two different papers, it will be counted once in column two and twice in column three. The numbers reflect the extent to which authors appear more than once on a program.

Year	Total No. Authors	Total No. Author Citations
1992	159	174
1993	165	197
1994	105	110
1995	113	123
1996	148	173
1997	134	158
1998	140	162
1999	117	132
2000	157	195
2001	140	177

**Table 4. Summary of Paper Authors**

Conference attendees often wonder if the number of paper authors has increased over time. Table 5 summarizes the number of authors for full papers only; for each author category, the number of papers and percentage of total papers is presented. In 1996 and 1999, the percentage of single-authored papers exceeded two-authored papers. On the other hand, in 1994, 2000, and 2001, the percentage of papers with three authors or more exceeded the percentage of single-authored papers.

Year	One		Two		Three		> Three	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1992	23	30%	35	46%	16	21%	2	3%
1993	16	22%	45	61%	13	18%	0	0%
1994	7	16%	22	49%	15	33%	1	2%
1995	20	36%	25	45%	8	14%	3	5%
1996	33	42%	22	28%	14	18%	9	12%
1997	18	27%	33	50%	10	15%	5	8%
1998	21	33%	23	37%	17	27%	2	3%
1999	19	37%	17	33%	14	27%	1	2%
2000	21	29%	27	38%	16	22%	8	11%
2001	19	30%	23	37%	19	30%	2	3%

**Table 5. Number of Paper Authors (Full Papers)**

While no clear pattern in number of authors is present, from 1997 through 2000, the number of papers with three or more authors remained at or around 30% of full papers. Clearly, multi-authored papers are popular conference submissions for SWDSI.

***Institutional Representation***

An examination of institutional participation demonstrates the wide geographic reach of SWDSI participation. Of the 288 organizations in the Affiliation table, 260 were educational institutions. The educational institutions represented 41 of the 50 states. Not represented were the following states, primarily in the Northeast and Great Plains: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming.

The number of participating institutions from each state is summarized in Table 6. States with less than four institutions are not included to save space. By far, the greatest number comes from Texas. Louisiana is a distant second followed by California.

State	No. of Institutions
TX	41
LA	17
CA	13
MS	10
AL, AR, GA, NY	9
FL, IL, MO, NC, TN	8
VA	7
OK, OH, MI	6
IN, KS, PA, SC	5
MN, CO, AZ	4

**Table 6. No. of Institutions by State (Educational)**

During the ten-year period examined, SWDSI also experienced international participation by authors from the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Kuwait, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Taiwan, UAE, and the United Kingdom. The data on institutional representation validates what many participants already knew: SWDSI is not just a regional organization; it enjoys both national and international participation.

Table 7 identifies the most prolific institutions from 1992-2001. Prolific is defined by the number of papers on which an institution’s name appears. If two authors from the same institution appear on a paper, the name is only counted once. The University of North Texas and University of Arkansas lead the way with over forty paper affiliations. In the interest of space, only the first nine names are listed.

State	No. of Institutions
University of North Texas	42
University of Arkansas	41
University of Mississippi	33
Texas A & M International U	30
University of Texas, Arlington	22
Sam Houston State University	20
University of Southwestern Louisiana	19
Pittsburg State University	18
Texas A & M University	18

**Table 7. Most Prolific Institutions (Full Papers)**

### *Topic Coverage*

To establish a perspective on topic coverage, a summary of program tracks for the 10-year period is contained in Table 8. A “Y” in a cell identifies a track as self-contained for that year. A “C” with a number indicates the topic was part of a track made up of more than one content area. For example, in 1992, the C1 in the cells for Academic Affairs and Innovative Education indicates the two combined to make up a single track. In 1996, the tracks were omitted from the SWFAD conference program.

Conference mainstays throughout the decade include: accounting, finance, DSS/expert systems, innovative education, management, MIS, production/operations, public/nonprofit, statistics/quant, and the student track. The following program track changes are notable:

- Academic Affairs was not included as a track after 1998.
- International first appeared in 1994 with management and remained its partner in subsequent years.
- The Internet first appeared as part of a track in 1999 as well as Web-based learning. E-commerce emerged as part of a track in 2001.
- Quality made its debut in 1997 and continued subsequently as its own track or partnered with statistics/quantitative methods.
- MIS started out the decade as a single track, was split into two tracks (technical and behavioral), and later merged back into a single track.
- The SWDSI graduate student workshop was last held in 1998. Starting in 1999, students attended the all SWFAD doctoral consortium.
- Two topics only appear once in during the ten-year period: health care and service management.

The periodic addition and removal of track themes throughout the 10-year period reflects SWDSI’s to remain a current and relevant organization. Modest changes in program track

provide an appropriate tactic for attracting new participants while maintaining the current membership.

Track Topic	92	93	94	95	96*	97	98	99	00	01
Academic Affairs	C1	C1	C1	C1		C1	C1			
Accounting	Y	Y	Y	Y		C2	C2	C1	Y	Y
DSS/Expert Systems	C2	C2	C2	Y		C3	C3	C2	C2	C2
E-Commerce										C4
Economics		C3	C3	C2		C2	C2	C1	C1	C1
Emerging Technologies								C4	C4	
Finance	Y	C3	C3	C2		C2	C2	C1	C1	C1
Economics		C3	C3	C2		C2	C2	C1		
Innovative Education	C1	C1	C1	C1		C1	C1	C3	C3	C3
Intelligent Sys/Know Mgmt or AI							C3		C2	C2
International Business			C5	C3		C4	C5	C6	C6	C6
Internet								C4	C4	C4
Health Care							C6			
Management	Y	Y	C5	C3		C4	C5	C6	C6	C6
Marketing	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	C6	Y	
Micro Apps	C2	C2	C2			C3	C4	C5	C5	
MIS–Behavioral & Managerial	C3	C4	C4	C4		C5	Y	Y	Y	C5
MIS -Technical	C3	C4	C4	C4		C5	C4	C5	C5	C5
Neural Networks							C3	C2		
Production/Operations	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	C7	Y
Public/Nonprofit	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	C6	Y	Y	Y
Quality						Y	Y	C7	C8	C7
Service Management									C7	
Statistics/Quant	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	C7	C8	C7
Student Track	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SWDSI Graduate Student Workshop			Y	Y		Y	Y			
SWFAD Doctoral Student Consortium								Y	Y	Y
Web-Based Learning								C3	C3	C3

\*Tracks not listed in SWFAD program

**Table 8. A Summary of Program Tracks**

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of the current study are dependent on the accuracy of SWFAD official programs. One difficulty in entering data over a 10-year period is that participants often change their listed name from year to year. For example, fictitious participant, William Robert Smith, might be listed as William Smith one year and Robert Smith another year. Similar kinds of problems also

occurred with institutions. The author was able to accommodate for these inconsistencies when personal knowledge signaled a problem, but inconsistencies in the data may still exist because of situations for which the author was unaware.

## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this paper is to chronicle the history of SWDSI for the period of 1992-2001. The current paper adds to the historical record by providing a profile of papers, authors, institutions, and topics that constituted the SWDSI programs from 1992-2001. The findings enhance the current knowledge-base regarding conference participation and establish a point in time for future comparative analyses.

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