

Editorial

This editorial is about reinventing the wheel. One of the issues we are constantly facing in many of the submitted papers is a serious lack of attention to surveying the available literature before committing the paper for submission. Moreover, even when starting to do research related to engineering education authors may not be cognizant of what is available in the literature. There are many possible explanations for this lack of awareness. The absence of a reliable database for engineering education publications is one. Others are the sporadic involvement of faculty in engineering education development activities. There are not too many academics solely devoted to research and development in engineering education-although their number is growing. Most papers are written by regular faculty who make occasional contributions to engineering education but mainly rely on support for their regular research activities on funding in their technical expertise area. Without a proper literature survey and knowledge of bygone work much is being written up which has already been dealt with in the literature, often in a deeper and more thorough way. Papers often come in with introductions presenting known and published materials in detail, the authors assuming that readers of *IJEE* are unaware of any work in the field. Introductions need to be concise and including hints to previous work in order to build up the body of the paper. This is common practice in research papers in established disciplines. Introductions for example may include an extended discourse on active learning, or on the importance of IT, or on problem based learning. These topics have been discussed in detail in the engineering education literature including *IJEE*. However, authors are often unaware of this literature availability. My plea here is that in engineering education papers it is of particular importance to make a good literature survey before submitting. This is most helpful in focusing the motivation of the paper and in establishing the author's credibility in his work. *IJEE* is becoming particularly sensitive to this aspect. It is of importance in ensuring that engineering education development and research is a valid field of academic activity. With a constantly increasing emphasis on the quality of university education, which is of secondary importance compared to research capability it is imperative that the quality and relevance of papers establish the credentials of engineering education research and development as a valid field of activity in higher education. It is an admittedly difficult endeavour due to the multidisciplinary nature of the subject area. But it needs to be accomplished if we want to see increased funding for engineering education to produce tangible accountable and quantifiable results of 'market value' for our higher education systems.

The current special section on trends in software engineering education was guest edited by Levent Yilmaz and Stephen Edwards, The editors were highly selective in their acceptance procedure. I am most grateful to the guest editors for the papers that go into this issue. A valuable addition to the software engineering education area.

Michael Wald