

TEACHING ORMS IN A BUSINESS SCHOOL

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly...

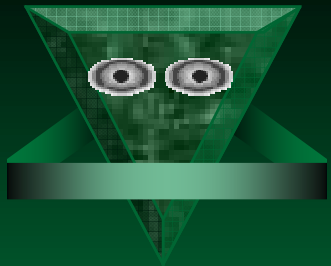
James J. Cochran

Bank of Ruston Endowed Research Professor

Louisiana Tech University

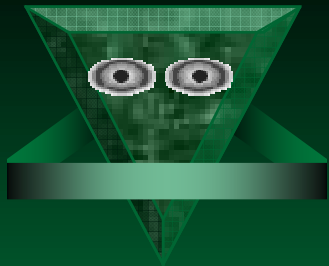
INFORMS Future Academicians Colloquium

Friday, October 23, 2009



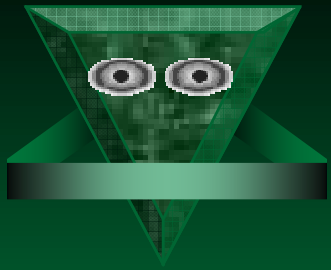
My Background?

- ✔ BSEC, BSBA, MSEC, MBA, PhD (Statistics & Operations Research)
- ✔ Associate Prof of Quantitative Analysis
- ✔ Two-term President of INFORM-ED
- ✔ Director of INFORM/IFORS International Education Initiative
- ✔ Editor of Education Issues column for IFORS' Quarterly Newsletter *OR in Developing Countries*
- ✔ Editor-in-Chief of *ITE*
- ✔ Editor-in-Chief of *Wiley Encyclopedia of Operations Research and Management Science*
- ✔ Taught since 23 years old -100+ sections, 18 preps, 8000+ students, six universities
- ✔ Have *never taken an education course*



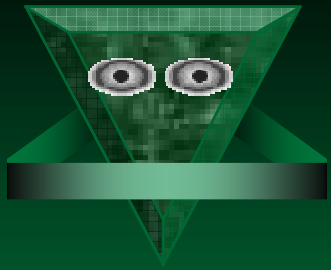
Louisiana Tech University?

- ✓ Mid-sized Carnegie II residential public university (Doctoral/Research Intensive) in rural north LA
 - 280 miles from Dallas
 - 160 miles from Little Rock
 - 130 Miles from Jackson
 - 370 miles from New Orleans
- ✓ Engineering orientation
- ✓ Poorly funded (it is *Louisiana*)
- ✓ Seven doctoral programs
- ✓ Relatively high standardized test scores
- ✓ Considered the 2nd strongest LA university
- ✓ Little ORMS presence



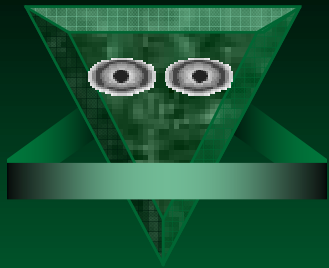
B Schools - What is Typical?

- ✓ Depends on the school and its orientation
 - Extreme (Basic) Research
 - Research
 - Balanced
 - Teaching
 - Extreme Teaching
- ✓ Generally expect an orientation toward business problems
- ✓ Generally expect a very practical course



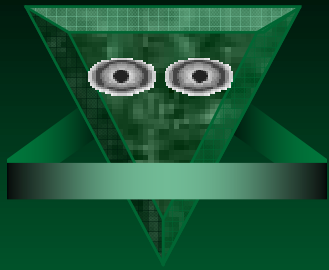
B Schools - What is Different?

- ✓ Students... students... students...
 - Preparation
 - Technical skills
 - Motivations
 - Intellectual curiosity
 - Tolerance for frustration
- ✓ Definition of Research
- ✓ Grantsmanship orientation
- ✓ Salary
- ✓ Accreditation Body



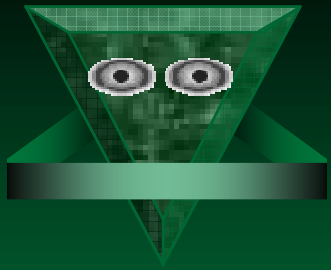
What is *the Good*?

- ✔ Problems from several disciplines
- ✔ Opportunities to work with private industry on real problems
- ✔ Examples to motivate students from all disciplines/majors
- ✔ Opportunities to teach abroad
- ✔ Comfort with spreadsheets
- ✔ BIG payoff when you reach a student



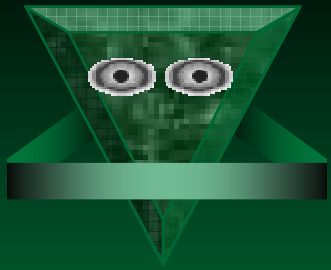
What is *the Bad*?

- ✓ Student issues
 - Motivations
 - Expectations
 - Anxiety
 - Low tolerance for frustration
- ✓ Disassociation with engineering and science
- ✓ B schools are often not the *king of the hill*
- ✓ Often hard feelings over salary differentials across campus



What is *the Ugly*?

- ✔ Colleagues' lack of understanding/ knowledge of ORMS
- ✔ Isolated academicians syndrome
- ✔ Possible limitations on journals considered for tenure/promotion
- ✔ Possibly assigned to teach other quant courses (statistics, POM)
- ✔ The student is the *customer*...



THANK

YOU!