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Editorial Statement

Martin Savelsbergh

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Editorial Statement

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It is a great honor and definite privilege to be asked to serve as Editor-in-Chief of *Transportation Science* (*TS*), especially given the renowned scholars who have preceded me. Their efforts have resulted in the journal it is today. My goal is to follow in their footsteps and to ensure that *TS* continues to enjoy its excellent reputation and remains at the forefront of the journals that focus on the scientific aspects of transportation.

It is an exciting time to be involved with transportation. The changes, technological and societal, taking place in the world around us are having a tremendous impact on transportation and, thus, on the science of transportation. For example, it may not be during my tenure as Editor-in-Chief, but autonomous vehicles will become an integral part of our lives: we will see automated truck platoons on the highways, we will go to work in a driverless vehicle, and we will have packages delivered by drones. Companies like Uber and FlixBus will continue to challenge and change public transportation. And how will the big data and analytics movement impact transportation? And the need and desire for more sustainable transportation? And...the list goes on and on. Exciting times indeed, and *TS* is there to publish the scientific underpinnings that drive the consequent innovations in transportation.

In this first issue published under my stewardship, I want to elaborate on what I see as my main duties as Editor-in-Chief of *TS*. First, to serve the readers of *TS* and the transportation science community by producing a journal that publishes rigorous articles presenting state-of-the-art research on a wide scope of transportation topics. In doing so, I will take care not to lose sight of the mission of the journal: to publish articles on transportation science. I emphasized science on purpose. It serves as a reminder that an article needs to bring new knowledge to our readership and the community, and that an article should clearly articulate what that new knowledge is. Second, and equally important, to serve the authors that submit articles to the journal; without articles, there is no journal to publish. I will do everything under

my control to ensure that authors are treated fairly and respectfully and that papers are reviewed as quickly as possible. I am keenly aware that lengthy reviews are a great source of frustration to authors and that, at times, lengthy reviews can create situations in which articles lose their timeliness. Regarding fairness, I will try to avoid situations of conflict-of-interest and narrow-minded reviews. I will strongly encourage (and work with) associate editors and referees to provide authors with constructive feedback that will help them improve their submissions. Third, to serve the reviewers, i.e., the associate editors and referees, who freely contribute a good deal of their time to the journal and, thus, the community. Beyond recognizing their work, which is a longstanding tradition at *TS*, I will review the procedures in place in Manuscript Central to support their efforts. That not only includes sending them reminders at appropriately chosen times, but making sure they are kept informed about the complete review process for a submission to which they contribute, e.g., provide them with other referee reports for the paper, the associate editor's report, and the final decision. Because the time of good reviewers is an extremely scarce commodity, I will work hard with the associate editors to recognize submissions that are not likely to meet the standards of *TS* or that have yet to be put into readable English and return them to the authors immediately rather than sending them out for review. Such accelerated handling of submissions will also be beneficial to authors as they will not have to wait several months before seeing their article turned down.

Although I see the duties above as my highest priorities, be assured that I will regularly discuss and seek input on initiatives that might create value for the readership and the community with the associate editors, the advisory board members, and the INFORMS publication committee, and that I am open to all suggestions that could help make *Transportation Science* an even better journal.

Finally, as I mentioned above, technological and societal changes are taking place in the world around

us and are having a tremendous impact on transportation. What will the future bring? Urbanization continues across the globe; already more than 50% of people worldwide live in cities. What does that mean for city logistics and public transportation? Africa is now the fast growing continent in the world (in terms of population). What does that mean for international trade and ocean freight routes? Climate change and global warming are real challenges. In 2012, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation accounted for about 28% of the total U.S. GHG emissions, making it the second largest contributor of U.S. GHG

emissions after the electricity sector. How can our community contribute and help reduce GHG emissions? The above examples illustrate a need for more cross-disciplinary approaches, e.g., consider freight and passenger movements together, integrate transportation and economics, and combine engineering solutions and improved decision technology. Scientific advances are needed in all cases. I would like *Transportation Science* to become the go-to journal to find the answers to these and similar questions, and I encourage submissions addressing these challenges and opportunities.