Welcome to the first issue of the new year! As you have no doubt noticed, our transaction’s name has changed—from IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS PART B: CYBERNETICS to a more concise IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON CYBERNETICS (TCyb). For the past many months, the publications of the IEEE Systems, Man, and Cybernetics Society (SMCS) have been undergoing a major reorganization. The reorganization was based on numerous discussions with the SMCS membership and positive feedback that were received and on recommendations from the 2006 IEEE Periodicals Review. In November 2011, the IEEE Technical Activities Board approved the name and scope changes of all three transactions: 1) IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS PART A: SYSTEMS AND HUMANS to IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS: SYSTEMS; 2) IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS PART C: APPLICATIONS AND REVIEWS to IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON HUMAN–MACHINE SYSTEMS; and 3) this transaction. The realignment of the three transactions is meant to help better situate research topics, areas, and articles for the society through its publications. Here are the associated scopes for the three transactions.

IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS: SYSTEMS—The scope of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS: SYSTEMS includes the fields of systems engineering. It includes issue formulation, analysis and modeling, decision making, and issue interpretation for any of the systems engineering life cycle phases associated with the definition, development, and deployment of large systems. In addition, it includes systems management, systems engineering processes, and a variety of systems engineering methods such as optimization, modeling, and simulation.

IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON CYBERNETICS—The scope of IEEE TCyb includes computational approaches to the field of cybernetics. Specifically, the transactions welcomes papers on communication and control across machines or between machine, human, and organizations. The scope of TCyb includes areas such as computational intelligence, computer vision, neural networks, genetic algorithms, machine learning, fuzzy systems, cognitive systems, decision making, and robotics, to the extent that they contribute to the theme of cybernetics or demonstrate an application of cybernetics principles.

IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON HUMAN–MACHINE SYSTEMS—The scope of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON HUMAN–MACHINE SYSTEMS includes the fields of human machine systems. It covers human systems and human organizational interactions, including cognitive ergonomics, system test and evaluation, and human information processing concerns in systems and organizations.

What does this all mean for you (as a potential contributor to IEEE TCyb)? Of the three transactions, we were the least affected by the realignment. Our scope has been preserved from IEEE TSMCB (see additional discussions on scope below). As such, I expect that we will continue to grow and expand as we have been over the past decade. As of the writing of this editorial, we are projecting well more than 1600 submissions for 2012, which is yet another record we have been breaking yearly. While this means that the acceptance rates continue to go down (now ~7%), paper quality continues to greatly increase! Our 2011 impact factor was 3.08. However, some of you may also know that with the name change, there is an issue with journal impact factor that is maintained by Journal Citation Reports (JCR), an annual publication by the Healthcare & Science division of Thomson Reuters. JCR considers any name change to an existing journal to result in a new journal. Thus, the citations are not linked between the old named journal and the new named journal. Hence, there will potentially be no impact factors for IEEE TCyb until 2015 since impact factors are based on the prior two years of publications. IEEE and the SMCS are still in discussions with Thomson Reuters (at the time of this writing) to see if this can be avoided for our transactions given that we had no scope change.

Given our record number of submissions, this past year has also seen a large increase in our panel of associate editors. I have added at least 30 new associate editors to help manage our load as the existing Editorial Board was clearly getting overwhelmed despite its incredible efforts. All are volunteers providing crucial support and expertise in various areas of cybernetics in order to help me identify the important contributions and next-generation ideas found in the submitted papers. We should have an updated Editorial Board section shortly in the next upcoming issue to reflect our changes.

Last but not least, scope remains a major factor in our decision-making process. TCyb remains focused on publishing fundamental research papers that “contribute to the theme of cybernetics or demonstrate an application of cybernetics principles.” As such, to reiterate from an earlier editorial, traditional controls papers that are more appropriately published in controls journals/venues are not considered in TCyb. Other examples include robotics papers such as traditional manipulation design and image and signal processing papers, which are typically published in their respective journals such as IEEE TRA and IEEE TIP. Also, papers that are highly focused on specific domains or reviews are more appropriate to their appropriate venues. In order to not unduly delay a manuscript, scope decisions are made in a short period of time and the authors are typically informed within one to two weeks of submission.

In closing, I look forward to new and exciting paper submissions to our newly renamed but well-established publication!

Eugene Santos, Jr., Editor-in-Chief
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