

# CommunityMatters™

A Monthly Newsletter for the ABET Community

February 2007

## InsideABET

### President Clark Sets Priorities for 2007

2006-2007 ABET President William S. Clark outlined his vision for his term last month in a letter to the ABET Board of Directors, ABET's 28 member societies, the Executive Committees of its four accreditation commissions, and other vital stakeholders in the organization.

Clark related that a sure highlight of the year will be celebration of ABET's 75-year history and its contribution to the growth and improvement of technical education. In striving to continue this organization's evolution, three areas strike him as particularly important, and, thus, the year's agenda will focus on the following areas:

- ▶ **Strategic vision**, including a review and enhancement of ABET's vision, mission, and strategic plan at the Board's meeting next month.
- ▶ **Customer focus**, particularly the facilitation of better communications amongst all of ABET's stakeholders.
- ▶ **Extension of 2006's accomplishments** in the areas of diversity, volunteer participation, international accreditation, a new financial model, and the harmonization of the four commissions as ongoing processes for 2007.

### PAVE Brings Debut of New Volunteer Training Sessions

The Partnership to Advance Volunteer Excellence (PAVE), the implementation phase of the Participation Project, gains momentum through the spring with the advent of a comprehensive new training sequence for ABET volunteers. The workshops that are being unveiled as part of this sequence aim to provide the

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## VolunteerSpotlight

### Bob Herrick

Robert A. Herrick has had an impressive career. After earning his B.S. in chemical engineering from Iowa State University, he worked for the U.S. Public Health Service, Bethlehem Steel, and Owens Corning Fiberglas. In 1986, he founded Herrick Engineering, Inc., a Cary, North Carolina-based firm that focuses on matters of air quality, overlapping his specialties of environmental engineering and industrial hygiene. He currently serves as the enterprise's President.

What is equally impressive is how Bob has become involved in so many of ABET's activities. From 1993 to 1998, Bob was a commissioner representing the American Academy of Environmental Engineers (AAEE) on the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC). In 2000, he continued to represent AAEE as a commissioner, this time on the Applied Science Accreditation Commission (ASAC). Soon after, he became the commission's Chair for the 2003-2004 cycle.

At the same time, Bob was serving as the Chair of the ABET Accreditation Council, a post that he held from 2003 to 2005. The Accreditation Council was formed in 2001 to bring together the leadership of the four

ABET commissions in an effort to improve the effectiveness and consistency of the accreditation process across the board. As only the Council's second chair, Bob shepherded the body through some of its formative years, paving the way for its current work to harmonize the criteria and other processes today.

Last year, Bob was honored as an ABET Fellow to recognize his outstanding leadership on the Accreditation Council and on ASAC during its successful transition to outcomes-based evaluation criteria. However, Bob wasn't finished with ABET yet. Two days after his induction as a Fellow, he took his first seat on the ABET Board of Directors, representing another

ABET society of which he is a highly active member, the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA). Furthermore, he is serving on the steering committee for PAVE, the Partnership to Advance Volunteer Excellence.

Recently, Bob mentioned an incident that pretty well sums up his involvement with ABET (so far). He recalled, "When I went on the ASAC Executive Committee in 2001, Jim Plasker said, 'Bob, you ought to have a catchphrase goal, like "One ABET".' I thought that was a good idea, and I am pleased to have been in positions to enable it."



## LookAhead

- Feb. 9 — Registration deadline for Feb. 24 Workshop on Assessing Program Outcomes, Baltimore, MD
- Feb. 16 — ABET Board of Directors Executive Committee Meeting, Baltimore, MD
- Feb. 24 — Faculty Workshop on Assessing Program Outcomes, Baltimore, MD

# InsideABET

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participants with a great professional development opportunity, solidly prepare ABET volunteers for their vital role in the accreditation process, and ultimately increase consistency among evaluations.

At present, ABET's member societies are submitting the names of experienced team chairs who are interested in participating in the first Train the Trainer Workshop. This day-and-a-half session will prepare the individuals serving as support facilitators for this year's program evaluator training sessions. The first Train the Trainer Workshop will take place in Baltimore on March 10 and 11.

In addition, societies are identifying first-time ABET program evaluator candidates to participate in the newly developed program evaluator training program. The revised educational sequence will begin with a CD of pre-work, which features units on ABET basics, assessment, and applying the general criteria; potential program evaluators must complete the pre-work successfully before they are admitted to a Program Evaluator Training Workshop. The new day-and-a-half training workshops will focus primarily on preparing candidates for the experience of an on-campus accreditation visit, using mock interviews, team meetings, and program and institution debriefs based on the analysis of a mock self-study and display materials.

The initial dates for the new Program Evaluator Training Workshops are the following:

- ▶ Saturday, April 28, and Sunday, April 29, in Baltimore, MD.
- ▶ Saturday, May 19, and Sunday, May 20, in Nashville, TN.
- ▶ Saturday, June 9, and Sunday, June 10. Location TBD.

## ABET to Host International Engineering Meetings

ABET will host the eighth biennial meeting of the Washington Accord, as well as the fourth session of the International Engineering Meetings (IEM), at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., from June 18 to 22.

The Washington Accord is a multinational, mutual recognition agreement of the substantial equivalency of the accreditation systems of member signatories. Since 2001, ABET has served as its Secretariat and is tasked with maintaining meeting records, facilitating and recording exchanges of information among signatories, and advising signatories and others about the policies and procedures to be adopted to give effect to the accord's terms.

In 1997, ABET hosted the Washington Accord's third biennial meeting in conjunction with the ABET Annual Meeting. There, ABET was appointed as Chair of the Washington Accord, which involved the accreditation organizations from only six countries at that time. Today, there are 10 signatories and four provisional signatories, with Engineers Australia serving as the accord's current Chair. A complete roster of the membership is available at [www.washingtonaccord.org](http://www.washingtonaccord.org).

In addition to the meeting of the Washington Accord, the International Engineering Meetings will include meetings of the Sydney Accord and the Dublin Accord. Modeled after the Washington Accord, both are mutual recognition agreements among accreditors of engineering technology programs, with the Sydney Accord concentrating on four-year programs and the Dublin Accord addressing two-year programs. The Technology Accreditation Commission (TAC) has prepared applications for ABET's membership in both accords, which will be presented to the accords at their June meetings.

Furthermore, the IEM will include meetings of three engineering mobility agreements — the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Engineers Mobility Forum (EMF), and the Engineering Technologists Mobility Forum (ETMF). In total, participants from more than 24 countries are expected to attend the events of the IEM.

Look for additional information about these events in future issues of *CommunityMatters*.

## 2007 IDEAL Application Now Available Online

Applications are now being accepted for this summer's Institute for the Development of Excellence in Assessment Leadership (IDEAL), which will be held in Baltimore, MD, from Monday, July 30, through Friday, August 3.

IDEAL, led by ABET's Associate Executive Director of Professional Services Gloria Rogers, Ph.D., is a professional development opportunity designed to help those with "beginner to marginal" assessment experience prepare to lead the development and implementation of a program assessment plan that improves student learning and documents program effectiveness. IDEAL participants learn new assessment skills and should leave the institute with an assessment implementation plan they can initiate at their home institutions. Following attendance, participants are designated IDEAL Scholars, which entitles them to a year of Rogers' extensive support as they implement their assessment plans.

Acceptance into the institute requires completing an online application form and securing a supervisor's letter of support that details the applicant's involvement in leading assessment efforts. For more information, visit [www.abet.org/ideal.shtml](http://www.abet.org/ideal.shtml). The institute is limited to 40 participants, thus applicants are encouraged to apply early.

## ABETOnline

- ▶ Learn more about IDEAL at [www.abet.org/ideal.shtml](http://www.abet.org/ideal.shtml).
- ▶ Get answers to your frequently asked questions: [www.abet.org/faqs.shtml](http://www.abet.org/faqs.shtml).
- ▶ Find tips and tools for promoting your accredited programs: [www.abet.org/promote.shtml](http://www.abet.org/promote.shtml).

## CommunityMatters™

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**Editor:** Gloria Rogers, Associate Executive Director of Professional Services

**Writers:** Liz Glazer, Communications Manager

Keryl Cryer, Communications Specialist

**Questions or comments:** [eglazer@abet.org](mailto:eglazer@abet.org)

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# Assessment101

## Assessment Tips with Gloria Rogers, Ph.D.

### Sampling in Assessment

In a recent article (“When Is Enough Enough?” in the January 2007 issue of *CommunityMatters*), the concept of sampling was raised as a data collection strategy that could be used when doing program assessment. **It is important to remember that the focus of program assessment is on the program, not the individual student.** To keep the collection of data manageable and the overall process both efficient and effective, programs should look at ways to use sampling of student work. There are several things that need to be considered when sampling:

**1) Representation.** Is the sample representative? That is, if data is collected from a subset of the population, are the relevant characteristics of that subset representative of the population? For example, you would not want to assess students who are only in honors or remedial programs. However, you would want to be sure that these students are included in your sample in the same proportion as they appear in the population. When determining what factors to consider, think about which student characteristics are most likely to impact success (e.g., overall grade point average). Gender and ethnicity may also be factors for a specific program or institution. This is an area where your institutional research office may be able to provide some assistance if you are using a sample. The bottom line is whether you can defend that your sample is representative of your student population.

**2) Size of the program.** How many students should be included in the sample depends

on the size of your population. If the number of students in a cohort (e.g., number of seniors) is small (fewer than 60), it may not be reasonable to sample. If the program is large, sampling may be an efficient way to focus the data collection effort. It is important in any sampling methodology to meet the requirements of #1 above, representation.

**3) Frequency of data collection.** The decision may be made to collect data on every student in the cohort no matter the size of the program. In this instance, the assessment results are those of the entire cohort population, and inferences do not need to be made from a sample. However, another view of sampling is that not every student is assessed on every outcome. For example, if the program develops a three-year cycle for outcomes assessment, it may only assess any given cohort on a subset of all the outcomes. The chart below illustrates a three-year cycle of data collection.

This example illustrates that, although every student in the cohort is being assessed, every student is not assessed every year. Again, as long as the characteristics of the student population do not change significantly over time, each cohort can serve as a sample of the entire population for any given outcome.

It is important that programs use sound assessment practices and that the inferences made about student learning are based on valid data collection. At the same time, programs must find ways to reduce the faculty workload and the burden of data collection, especially additional data collection that does not add value to the findings.

Learning Outcomes Related To:	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
A recognition of ethical and professional responsibilities	✓			✓		
Respect for diversity		✓			✓	
An ability to recognize the role of professionals in the global society			✓			✓
An understanding of diverse cultural and humanistic traditions	✓			✓		
An ability to work effectively in teams		✓			✓	
An ability to communicate effectively			✓			✓

# YourCorner

## Board of Directors

The spring Board of Directors meeting is just around the corner. Don't forget this will be a two-day meeting: March 16 and 17. The extra day will provide the Board with an opportunity to focus in depth on ABET's strategic issues. It's time to make your travel plans! For additional information, contact Rachele Daucher at [rdaucher@abet.org](mailto:rdaucher@abet.org).

## Commissioners

If you have not already evaluated your fall team(s), please log on to <http://abethome.abet.org/evaluation> and do so as soon as possible. All you need is your ABET user name and password. Your evaluations are a vital part of ABET's continuous improvement processes, and we need your input!

## Institutions

If your program was visited in the fall of 2006 and you have not already evaluated your visit team, please log on to <http://abethome.abet.org/evaluation> and do so. Your evaluation is a vital part of ABET's continuous improvement processes. (Note that the evaluation will **not** be shared with the team until **after** a final accreditation action is determined this summer.) The user name and password needed to complete your evaluation were sent to you via e-mail in October. If you need these re-sent, don't hesitate to contact ABET's Accreditation Director Maryanne Weiss at [mweiss@abet.org](mailto:mweiss@abet.org).

## Member Societies

Have you submitted your suggestions for experienced team chairs who can serve as core facilitators during the PAVE training? The first Train the Trainer session will take place on March 10 and 11, so make sure to send your list to Stephanie Engelhardt at [sengelhardt@abet.org](mailto:sengelhardt@abet.org) today.

Also, if you have vacancies coming up on the ABET Board of Directors, you should have received a letter within the past few weeks that requests renominations or new appointments to fill those positions. These are due to ABET headquarters by the end of this month.

# Member Societies

ABET is a federation of 28 professional and technical societies representing the fields of applied science, computing, engineering, and technology:

American Academy of Environmental Engineers	Health Physics Society
American Congress on Surveying and Mapping	IEEE, Inc.
American Industrial Hygiene Association	Institute of Industrial Engineers, Inc.
American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Inc.	ISA
American Institute of Chemical Engineers	Materials Research Society
American Nuclear Society	National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying
American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers	National Institute of Ceramic Engineers
American Society of Civil Engineers	National Society of Professional Engineers
American Society for Engineering Education	Society of Automotive Engineers
American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Inc.	Society of Manufacturing Engineers
American Society of Mechanical Engineers	Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc.
American Society of Safety Engineers	Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers
Biomedical Engineering Society	Society of Petroleum Engineers
CSAB, Inc.	The Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society



111 Market Place, Suite 1050  
Baltimore, MD 21202-4012

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