

CommunityMatters™

A Monthly Newsletter for the ABET Community

December 2007

InsideABET

ABET Board Approves Team Chair and Training Facilitator Competency Models at Fall Meeting

The ABET Board of Directors approved two competency models for ABET volunteers at its November 3, 2007, meeting in Incline Village, NV. These competency models — one for team chairs and one for program evaluator training facilitators — specify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that volunteers in these positions should possess to execute effectively their responsibilities during ABET activities.

The team chair competency model, which was developed by the Partnership to Advance Volunteer Excellence (PAVE) Training Team, lists the qualities that an individual would need to possess to lead ABET program evaluations, manage visit teams, and serve as the primary interface for ABET to the institution being visited. The program evaluator training facilitator competency model was developed to help member societies and training committees in recruiting, selecting, orientating, evaluating, and developing potential trainers to assist in the preparation of new program evaluators (PEVs). It also communicates what is expected of trainers in preparing for and delivering program evaluator training.

Both of these new competency models will be implemented as part of PAVE, the implementation phase for recent process improvements in ABET volunteer recruitment, selection, training, and performance appraisal, and are available in their entirety at www.abet.org/pave.shtml.

These competency models will soon be incorporated into ABET's *Rules of Procedure*. The competency model for effective PEVs, which the ABET Board approved at its fall 2005 meeting, has already been incorporated into this governance document.

VolunteerSpotlight

Dick Seagrave

Richard C. Seagrave, Ph.D., is an emeritus distinguished professor in the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering at Iowa State University. Moreover, he has become one of ABET's most beloved volunteers with his exceptional service to this organization.

Dick first became involved with ABET as a program evaluator for the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) in 1978. He served as Chair of the Engineering Accreditation Commission for the 1996-97 accreditation cycle and became a key player in its transition to outcomes-based accreditation criteria. As a result, he was named a Fellow of ABET in 1999.

The next step for Dick was to serve as a representative for AIChE on the ABET Board of Directors from 1999 through 2004. In 2002, he added the role of Secretary on the Board's Executive Committee to his existing duties. He was named ABET's President-Elect in 2004.

Dick's 2004-2005 presidency coincided with the dawn of the Partnership to Advance Volunteer Excellence (PAVE) and harmonization efforts among the four ABET accreditation commissions. His presidency also saw

the Board's landmark decision to move from substantial equivalency evaluations to full ABET accreditation for non-U.S. programs.

Last month, Dick's term as ABET Past President — along with his roles as Chair of ABET's Awards Committee and as a member of the Board's Nominating and Public Member Committees — came to an end. That doesn't mean that his ABET service will, though. He recently became the Chair of the Board's

Audit Committee, a position he will hold until 2008, and he will also serve as the Academic Representative on the ABET Industry Advisory Council through fall of 2010. In addition, he will continue leading the Board's Governance Task Group for ABET's new strategic plan.

"My first 30 years as an ABET volunteer has been a great adventure," Dick stated, "but I believe we are entering a challenging period of very rapid, dynamic change. It will be important, in the next few years, that we remain true to our mission while managing the significant changes in our structure and operation necessary to meet those challenges."

There's no doubt that Dick's expertise will continue to help ABET along its way.



LookAhead

Dec. 17 — "Preparing the Self-Study, 2008-2009" Webinar

Dec. 18 — Registration deadline for January 12 Faculty Workshop on Assessing Program Outcomes, Phoenix, AZ

Dec. 19 — "How to Develop a Survey" Webinar

Jan. 7-11 — Institute for the Development of Excellence in Assessment Leadership (IDEAL), Phoenix, AZ

InsideABET

Systems Engineering Organization Approved for ABET Membership

At its fall meeting, the ABET Board of Directors approved an application for membership from the International Council on Systems Engineering (INCOSE).

Founded in 1990, this organization's mission is to advance the state of the art and practice of systems engineering in industry, academia, and government. Currently, INCOSE has 6,000 members, ranging from the level of students to senior practitioners.

Admission into ABET requires a majority vote of the Board of Directors and the subsequent ratification by at least two-thirds of the governing boards of ABET's current member societies. If ratified, INCOSE would become an ABET member society at the first Board meeting following its membership ratification.

2008-2009 Commission Officers Ratified

During the ABET Board of Directors fall meeting on November 3, the governing body ratified the elections of the officers and Executive Committee members of the four ABET commissions for the 2008-2009 accreditation cycle. The following Chairs and Chairs-Elect will take office in July 2008:

Applied Science Accreditation Commission

- ▶ Chair: **J. Turner Hughey**, Chromcraft Corporation
- ▶ Chair-Elect: **Charles W. McGlothlin, Jr.**, Oakland University

Computing Accreditation Commission

- ▶ Chair: **Gayle Yaverbaum**, Pennsylvania State University
- ▶ Chair-Elect: **David P. Kelly**, Battelle

Engineering Accreditation Commission

- ▶ Chair: **John W. (Jack) Rutherford**, The Boeing Company
- ▶ Chair-Elect: **Douglas R. Bowman**, Lockheed Martin

Technology Accreditation Commission

- ▶ Chair: **Mohammad A. Zahraee**, Purdue University Calumet
- ▶ Chair-Elect: **Kevin D. Taylor**, Purdue University

BAP X Preparations Underway, Proposals Due by January 15

The Best Assessment Processes Symposium, which will celebrate its tenth anniversary in 2008, will take place in Atlanta, Georgia, on Friday, April 25, and Saturday, April 26. The symposium provides opportunities for applied science, computing, engineering, and technology educators to learn about assessment methods and how they can be used to validate and improve student learning outcomes.

The Center for the Advancement of Scholarship in Engineering Education (CASEE) of the National Academy of Engineering has designated the symposium as a Dissemination Channel. Activities so designated are chosen as trusted information resources that adhere to high-quality standards in the identification, selection, preparation, and transmission of knowledge. The year 2008 will mark the symposium's sixth year to hold this distinction.

The keynote speaker for BAP X will be Peter Ewell, the Vice President at the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. Ewell's work focuses on assessing institutional effectiveness and the outcomes of college and involves both research and direct consulting with institutions and state systems on collecting and using assessment information in planning, evaluation, and budgeting.

Proposals to make presentations as part of BAP X are due by Tuesday, January 15, 2008. Special consideration will be given to proposals on the following topics:

- ▶ **Direct measures**, especially examples of using direct measures of student learning at the program level as a basis for determining how well programs are achieving the desired program learning outcomes.
- ▶ **Successful assessment tools**, particularly demonstrating how assessment tools have been refined and how the results have been applied to improve programs.
- ▶ **Streamlining the assessment process**, especially demonstrating how a program or institution has been able to reduce the faculty workload and increase efficiency and effectiveness in the assessment process while maintaining quality.

Proposals are also encouraged on the topics listed below:

- ▶ Portfolio development
- ▶ Qualitative and quantitative methods
- ▶ Faculty engagement in accreditation processes
- ▶ Use of industry advisory boards in the accreditation process
- ▶ Use of technology in assessment
- ▶ Use of standardized testing
- ▶ Links with regional accreditation requirements
- ▶ Elements of an effective assessment process
- ▶ Examples of how results are reported
- ▶ Embedded assessments
- ▶ Collaborations between technical programs and assessment/evaluation professionals

Proposals can be submitted through the symposium's website: www.abet.org/bap.shtml.

ABETOnline

- ▶ View the PowerPoint presentations from the 2007 ABET Annual Meeting at www.abet.org/annual.shtml.
- ▶ Purchase the ABET 75th Anniversary Retrospective book from www.abet.org/order.shtml.
- ▶ 2008-2009 accreditation criteria have been posted at www.abet.org/forms.shtml.

CommunityMatters™

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Assessment101

Assessment Tips with Gloria Rogers, Ph.D.

Engaging Faculty in Assessment Processes

At the 2002 General Education Embedded Assessment Conference,¹ participants were asked to brainstorm ideas for designing assessments that were most likely to have a positive impact on the learning environment. Later, a report summarizing that conversation was released, and someone provided a copy to me. This article includes selected excerpts² from the report and expands in areas consistent with good practice.

Faculty Involvement

Faculty are more likely to respond to assessments in constructive ways if they have been engaged in the assessment process. Faculty should be involved in

- ▶ Determining the learning outcomes to be assessed.
- ▶ Defining the outcomes into measurable performance indicators. Because the assessments focus on the performance indicators, it is critical that faculty have a clear understanding of what the program is going to assess related to the program outcome.
- ▶ Examining the alignment of the curriculum with those learning outcomes/indicators. Once the outcomes are defined, program faculty should understand how the courses that make up the curriculum provide students an opportunity to learn, practice, develop, and get feedback on their performance related to the performance criteria.
- ▶ Integrating the learning outcomes into their syllabi and courses where appropriate.
- ▶ Determining the implications of the findings. Faculty need to be engaged in the evaluation of the results. What are the implications for the program, and how can improvements that will enhance student learning be made?

Engaging Faculty

Faculty engagement in the assessment process is crucial. Among the ideas for encouraging faculty engagement are

- ▶ Feed them by welcoming them into the assessment process and rewarding their participation. Food is always welcome.

- ▶ Provide time, as this is a precious commodity for busy faculty. This is especially critical for those who have been charged with leading the process within the program.
- ▶ Reward, recognize, and celebrate assessment efforts, including recognizing their work in reports and in public forums. It is especially important that this recognition come from the dean or the person who has access to needed resources.
- ▶ Use the “infection model” — involve key faculty in assessment and let them “infect” their colleagues with the assessment “bug.” Remember, the key is “infection,” not “inoculation,” as an inoculation is just enough of the virus to keep someone from developing the real thing.
- ▶ Be sure that faculty who are new to assessment are successful early on so they can see the value of assessment and won’t become discouraged with the process.



- ▶ Be patient and persistent. Good quality assessment takes time. Use existing data when you can, eliminating or reducing the data collection phase of assessment projects. This could be accomplished through embedding assessment within course activities, assignments, and exams.
- ▶ Provide support to programs and faculty who have identified needs through their assessments. Once the assessment data are analyzed and needed areas of improvement identified, it is important that faculty are supported in their efforts to make the necessary improvements. This may require the development of new curriculum modules or the complete overhaul of courses. Faculty must have support in terms of time and resources to be able to act on their findings, or they will come to the conclusion that all the effort put into the assessment process was a waste of time.

¹ The author could not find any information about this conference other than its name and year.

² The author has taken the liberty of substituting the word “objectives” with the word “outcomes” for consistency with how ABET uses these terms.

YourCorner

Board of Directors

The Report to the Board from the ABET Board of Directors meeting, held in Lake Tahoe on November 3, is online at www.abet.org/board_report.shtml.

Commissioners

The Report to the Board from the fall ABET Board of Directors meeting, held in Lake Tahoe on November 3, is online at www.abet.org/board_report.shtml. The report contains all recent actions of the Board, including changes to the accreditation criteria and *Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual*.

Institutions

This fall, the ABET Board of Directors approved for first reading the ASAC Proposed Program Criteria for Industrial Hygiene Programs and for Safety Programs as well as the TAC Proposed Program Criteria for Bioengineering Technology Programs and for Nuclear Engineering Technology Programs. These criteria will be published for a one-year period of review and comment. The commissions invite your feedback on these proposed changes.

All 2008-2009 accreditation criteria and policy and procedure information have now been posted at www.abet.org/forms.shtml.

Member Societies

ABET’s first society webinar for PEV training, mentors, and train-the-trainers will take place on December 3 and 4 at 2 p.m. EST. Both sessions are the same, so participants need only attend one session. Please send the names and e-mail addresses of those attending to Gloria Rogers at grogers@abet.org to ensure they are sent the log-in/call-in information. And look for more informational webinars in the near future!

Don’t forget: Nominations for your vacant commission seats are due on Sunday, December 16!

Program Evaluators

Thanks for all your efforts this fall! Don’t forget to submit all expense reports with *original receipts to your team chair* and to complete the evaluations for your team chairs and the other PEVs on your visit. See you next year!

Member Societies

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

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| 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 | SAE International |
| American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Inc. | Society of Manufacturing Engineers |
| American Society of Safety Engineers | Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc. |
| ASME | Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers |
| Biomedical Engineering Society | Society of Petroleum Engineers |
| CSAB, Inc. | The Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society |



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