

# CommunityMatters™

A Monthly Newsletter for the ABET Community

September 2008

## InsideABET

### Commission Summit to Answer FAQs About Preparing Self-Studies

Each year, ABET encourages institutional representatives — from all schools interested in keeping up-to-date about accreditation but particularly from those that have an ABET accreditation visit scheduled soon — to attend its annual Commission Summit. This day-long event is designed to immerse institutional representatives in the ABET accreditation process and provide an opportunity for them to interact with commission leaders who can address many of their questions and concerns.

This year's Commission Summit will take place at The Seelbach Hilton in Louisville, Kentucky, on Wednesday, October 29. The event will begin with a two-hour session that aims to help all institutional representatives prepare an effective self-study report for their program(s). Leaders from the four ABET commissions will explain what the self-study is, how it is organized, how visiting teams will use the report, and what ABET is doing to simplify the process of creating it. In addition, they will address frequently asked questions, such as the following:

- ▶ What's a good process and time table to use to complete the self-study?
- ▶ How should our program respond to certain self-study questions, such as those about curricula, course descriptions, and faculty vitae?
- ▶ How do we approach the self-study if our institution has multiple programs being evaluated? What about if we have a joint program that crosses more than one commission, like computer science and engineering?
- ▶ How do we complete the institutional appendix?

— continued on page 2

## VolunteerSpotlight

### Dan Bradley

*CommunityMatters* congratulates ABET's Treasurer, Daniel J. Bradley, Ph.D., on his recent appointment as President of Indiana State University. Most recently, Dan served as President of Fairmount State University in West Virginia for more than seven years.

Dan's professional life didn't start in finance, university administration, or even a field that ABET accredits. After earning a doctorate in physical chemistry from Michigan State University, Dan became an assistant professor of chemistry at Montana Tech, where his interest in engineering began to develop.

Dan went on to obtain a bachelor of science in petroleum engineering from Montana Tech, followed by a master of science in that same field from the University of Tulsa.

Dan returned to Montana Tech, where he held numerous teaching and administrative posts over the next 15 years. It was during this time that Dan became involved with ABET, prompted in part by his department having an unfortunate experience with an evaluation visit

during the 1980s. He believed in what ABET was doing and thought that the best way to improve the organization was from the inside.

In 1989, Dan volunteered to become a program evaluator for the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE). He later served five years on the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC), where he assisted in developing its early outcomes-based criteria. In 2000, Dan joined the ABET Board of Directors representing SPE. As a member of the Board's Finance Committee and later its chair, he helped to redesign the ABET financial model to answer the "who is paying for what" question.

Dan was elected as ABET Treasurer in 2006.

So, what's kept Dan around for nearly two decades? Certainly, there's seeing first-hand how ABET's commitment to continuous quality improvement has benefited accredited programs and their graduates. Anything else?

"I have universally enjoyed my experience as an ABET volunteer," Dan said. "Working on important business with good people is its own reward."



## LookAhead

**Sept. 26** — Pre-registration fee deadline for 2008 Commission Summit and 2008 ABET Annual Meeting, Louisville, KY

**Sept. 26-27** — ABET Board Executive Committee Meeting, Baltimore, MD

**Oct. 6** — Society Summit, Baltimore, MD

**Oct. 7** — Hotel registration deadline for Oct. 28 Faculty Workshop, Commission Summit, and Annual Meeting, Louisville, KY

**Oct. 19** — Full registration fee deadline for Oct. 28 Faculty Workshop on Assessing Program Outcomes, Louisville, KY

— Registration fee deadline for 2008 Commission Summit and 2008 ABET Annual Meeting, Louisville, KY

# Inside ABET

— continued from page 1

During the remainder of the Summit, participants will break into smaller groups where they can focus on commission-specific issues related to the self-study. In addition, they will learn about approaches for collecting, organizing, and displaying materials, such as student work, course syllabi, and assessment evidence, for the ABET team to examine during the campus visit. The segment's format encourages the representatives' participation, and their questions and concerns will direct a lengthy open dialogue on these topics.

Representatives from programs that have a visit scheduled during the 2009-2010 or 2010-2011 accreditation cycles are **strongly** encouraged to attend this event. However, representatives from all programs are invited to participate so that they may keep abreast of changes to ABET accreditation processes.

Register for the Commission Summit online at [www.abet.org/summit.shtml](http://www.abet.org/summit.shtml).

## PAVE Brings Revised Online Tools, Better Volunteer Evaluations, and Much More

For the past two years, ABET has implemented improvements in its volunteer recruitment, selection, training, and performance evaluation practices with the help of the Partnership to Advance Volunteer Excellence (PAVE). This major initiative has encouraged ABET's member societies and volunteers to actively engage in the development and improvement of volunteer activities, share best practices with each other, and provide feedback about the new processes, tools, and materials before they are institutionalized system-wide.

Recent results from the PAVE project include the following:

- ▶ The online application for potential program evaluators has been revised and tested by representatives from ABET's member societies. As of July 10, all ABET member societies will use this application to collect information from potential volunteers. It is currently available as a secure link from [www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml](http://www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml).
- ▶ The centralized program evaluator training sequence, which was introduced in 2007 and includes independent pre-work and one-and-a-half days of face-to-face visit preparation, was used to train 119 program evaluator candidates this year.
- ▶ A team chair competency model has been developed, revised, and approved by the ABET Board of Directors. Team chair evaluations have been revised to align with the competency model and will be used this fall.
- ▶ Requirements for program evaluators who are assigned to non-domestic evaluation visits have been recommended and approved by the ABET Board.
- ▶ Online evaluation forms used to assess the performance of team chairs and program evaluators have been revised and made more user-friendly. They employ a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Any score other than a 3 (meets expectations) requires the reviewer to enter comments that assist in the evaluated individual's recognition or remediation.
- ▶ Communications detailing much of this information have been distributed to the program evaluators, team chairs, institutional representatives, and college and university administrators.

The PAVE project is nearly complete and will be phased out as these and other improvements continue to be implemented and institutionalized. The Accreditation Council is in the

process of establishing a Training Committee, comprised of the training chair from each of the four commissions and four at-large representatives from ABET societies, who will oversee the continuation and maintenance of training improvements. This committee will take primary responsibility for the design of ABET's training materials and the development of its training programs, including reviewing training performance metrics, identifying and implementing improvements to volunteer training, and selecting training facilitators.

## ABET Offers Resources to Help Promote Your Program's Accreditation

ABET aims to support the efforts of all accredited programs to communicate their accredited status to their constituents as well as to the general public. Therefore, the organization offers several helpful resources that are available to all ABET-accredited programs but may be particularly beneficial for programs that have received notification of their accreditation just recently.

Visit [www.abet.org/promote.shtml](http://www.abet.org/promote.shtml) to find the "Proud to Be an Accredited" program brochure and coordinating poster for recruitment efforts, ABET-accredited logos for use in print materials and on program websites, a press release template, and much more!

### LAST CHANCE!



Take advantage of ABET's special "Buy 4 Webinar CDs and Get Any Fifth Free!" Offer.

Expires September 30!

More details at [www.abet.org/webinar.shtml](http://www.abet.org/webinar.shtml).

## ABETOnline

- ▶ Register for the 2008 Annual Meeting at [www.abet.org/annual.shtml](http://www.abet.org/annual.shtml).
- ▶ View the presentations from this year's Institutional Representatives' Day events at [www.abet.org/presentations.shtml](http://www.abet.org/presentations.shtml).
- ▶ Download the latest self-study materials at [www.abet.org/forms.shtml](http://www.abet.org/forms.shtml).

## CommunityMatters™

*CommunityMatters* is a monthly publication of ABET, Inc., produced for and distributed to more than 3,000 stakeholders, including ABET-accredited programs; ABET commission, Board, and council members; ABET member societies; and program evaluators.

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

**Writer:** Keryl Cryer, Communications Specialist

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

*CommunityMatters* is online: [www.abet.org/newsletter.shtml](http://www.abet.org/newsletter.shtml)

Copyright© 2008 by ABET, Inc.® Printed in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

# Assessment101

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

### Support for Program Assessment — Plan Now

As the new school year begins and you decide how to use the year's limited resources, start thinking about which

ABET services can best support your program assessment efforts. This article focuses on identifying some of the services provided and what you will gain from participation.

### Faculty Workshop on Assessing Program Outcomes

This one-day workshop is designed for faculty from any academic discipline who will be involved in developing processes for the purpose of program assessment. Participants will sharpen their assessment knowledge, broaden their understanding of continuous improvement processes, and learn new assessment methods. Faculty work in small groups applying the concepts learned throughout the day and receive a workshop booklet containing all slides and reference materials.

As a result of attendance, participants should be able to

- ▶ Identify key elements of a functional assessment plan
- ▶ Clarify the similarities and differences between course and program assessment
- ▶ Develop measurable performance criteria for outcome statements
- ▶ Develop rubrics to assess student learning
- ▶ Understand the pros and cons of various assessment methods
- ▶ Utilize an assessment-planning matrix
- ▶ Describe formats for reporting results

### Institute for the Development of Excellence in Assessment Leadership (IDEAL)

This is an intensive, 4½-day Institute for those who have been assigned to lead the assessment process at the program, college, or institutional level. It is especially designed for the novice with little or no formal education in assessment planning and leadership methods.

IDEAL focuses on basic assessment principles, change management, and facilitation skills. Faculty work in small groups, applying the concepts learned and getting feedback throughout the Institute. Each participant completes a capstone project, developing a

comprehensive assessment plan that can be implemented upon his/her return to campus.

One year of follow-up activities are offered after attending IDEAL. This provides participants with support after returning to campus and includes access to a SharePoint portal for discussions. Also, there may be webinars on topics that interest IDEAL scholars. These services are included in the registration fee.

In addition to some of the same topics in the one-day workshop, IDEAL covers

- ▶ Critiquing program educational objectives
- ▶ Critiquing and writing measurable outcomes
- ▶ Designing systematic processes to support assessment efforts
- ▶ Developing and implementing effective surveys
- ▶ Writing the assessment report
- ▶ Leadership skills to manage the program assessment process (meeting planning)
- ▶ Using facilitation tools for effective leadership (consensus and decision-making tools)
- ▶ Dealing with resistance
- ▶ Communication skills and change management
- ▶ Leading upwards

### Best Assessment Processes Symposium

2009 will be the 11<sup>th</sup> year for the symposium, which has had over 2,000 in attendance from institutions around the world. This two-day event is designed for faculty at all levels of experience in program assessment to interact with colleagues, participate in sessions and workshops, meet with accreditation leaders, and take away materials from all the sessions. The 2008 Symposium had over 60 sessions and workshops, presented by faculty who have successfully implemented different aspects of the program assessment process. Plan to attend now in Indianapolis on April 3-4, 2009.

### Webinars

In 2008, there were several interactive webinars on assessment and the accreditation visit process. These webinars are available at [www.abet.org/webinar.shtml](http://www.abet.org/webinar.shtml). Additional webinars will be held throughout the year.

Look for more information about these assessment opportunities in future issues of *CommunityMatters* and at [www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org).

# YourCorner

## Board of Directors

It's time to make your travel plans for Louisville! The fall Board of Directors meeting is on Saturday, November 1. Rachelle Daucher will contact you about registration and other details.

## Commissioners

It's fall, so you should be reading those self-studies! Also, if you think that a pre-visit conference call with your team would be helpful in preparing for your trip to campus, contact Ellen Stokes at [estokes@abet.org](mailto:estokes@abet.org) about your needs.

## Institutions

If you are scheduled for a visit during the next few months, review section II.E.3, "On-Site Visit," of ABET's *Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual* (available online at [www.abet.org/forms.shtml](http://www.abet.org/forms.shtml)). Also, make sure that you are communicating regularly with your team chair about your upcoming visit.

## Member Societies

This year's Society Summit is on Monday, October 6, at the Sheraton BWI Airport. If you wish to make hotel reservations, please call (443) 577-2100 by September 11, and tell them you are with the ABET Society Summit to receive our \$119 room rate. The hotel provides a complimentary shuttle to and from BWI Airport and the MARC/Amtrak rail station at BWI.

The Summit will begin with a continental breakfast at 7:00 a.m., and the meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. We will finish by 4:00 p.m. This event is free, but attendance is limited to five staff/volunteers per society who are in positions of direct responsibility for the accreditation activities of the society.

Also, have you completed the Society Survey that was sent out July 21? If not, please do so! If you did not receive it, contact Donna Clark at [dclark@abet.org](mailto:dclark@abet.org).

## Program Evaluators

Have you begun reading your self-studies? Make sure that you bring any concerns to the attention of your team chair and other team members *before* you get to campus. Your team chair will contact the institution you are visiting to discuss such matters further, if warranted.

# 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	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



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

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BALTIMORE, MD  
PERMIT No. 5196