

CommunityMatters™

A Monthly Newsletter for the ABET Community

January 2009

InsideABET

ABET Begins Search for Executive Director

With George D. Peterson's new assignment as Managing Director for International Business Development, ABET has begun an active search for a new Executive Director, its top staff leadership position. The first stage to this process is identifying a pool of qualified individuals. The search committee for this position, which is being chaired by 2000-2001 ABET President **Joe R. Fowler**, is accepting applications from and nominations for candidates through Sunday, February 15, 2009.

The ideal candidate for this position must be able to combine the ability to think strategically with a determination to create and execute an operational plan that supports ABET's long-term goals. Since he or she is the organization's chief staff executive, evidence of a high personal integrity and a commitment to excellence is essential. Ideal candidates must possess superior oral and written communication skills, along with the capacity to inspire others. Furthermore, candidates should be able to engage individuals and organizations with diverse characteristics and views to create a powerful force for achieving ABET's mission.

The Executive Director leads and manages a staff of approximately 30 professional and administrative employees from ABET's headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland. In addition, this individual provides vision and leadership for the organization in collaboration with ABET's Board of Directors and its officers, to whom he or she will report.

A full description of the Executive Director's responsibilities and characteristics is available at www.abet.org/edsearch.shtml.

The Executive Director Search Committee welcomes qualified individuals to submit application materials, which must include a résumé and a cover letter that includes a statement addressing his or her abilities to

— continued on page 2

VolunteerSpotlight

Mike Gwyn

There are many ways for practicing professionals to become involved in ABET other than serving as the program evaluators and team chairs who visit college campuses each fall. One such activity is by serving on ABET's Industry Advisory Council (IAC). This body, composed of approximately 15 industry and government leaders, offers ABET access to industrial viewpoints on issues of accreditation, concerns about technical education, and matters affecting relevant professions.

Michael B. Gwyn, P.E., joined the IAC in 2002 and has served as its chair since 2006. Mike, who has 27 years of experience in the construction industry, is a Vice President in the DesignBuild group of Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) and the Managing Director for its Atlantic regional office based in Charlotte, NC. As a practicing member of industry, he wanted to become involved with ABET for several reasons.

"First, we need to make the technical professions more attractive as a career path and remove any barriers into them that may exist, either real or perceived," Mike said. "ABET's

role in helping to assure consistency in the quality of applied science, computing, engineering, and technology graduates is critical to this effort. Also, it is paramount for those of us in industry to give back to our profession by actively participating in organizations that promote these areas from a quality standpoint and as a preferred career path."

Recently, the IAC has advised ABET about improving the articulation of students from community colleges into four-year programs that ABET accredits. In addition, IAC member companies have provided ABET with information about prospective countries as the organization plans accreditation visits to more programs outside of the United States.

The members of the IAC provide invaluable insights from one of ABET's major constituencies, and they generously give of their time and expertise. "These individuals are industry leaders who quite simply have deep commitments to promoting education and our respective professions as a whole," Mike said. "I am very proud to serve with such an outstanding group, and we are proud of and serious about the work that we do to help ABET."



LookAhead

- Jan. 5-9 — Institute for the Development of Excellence in Assessment Leadership (IDEAL), Savannah, GA
- Jan. 16-18 — Commission Executive Committee Meetings, Baltimore, MD
- Jan. 22 — "Preparing the Self-Study, 2009-2010" Webinar
- Jan. 28 — "How to Develop a Survey" Webinar
- Jan. 31 — Requests for Evaluation (RFEs) due to ABET Headquarters
- Feb. 3 — Reduced registration fee deadline for Feb. 7 Faculty Workshop on Assessing Program Outcomes, Atlanta, GA

InsideABET

— continued from page 1

meet the qualifications. The names and contact information for three references are also required, but these individuals will be contacted only if an applicant is selected as a finalist and only after the candidate has been notified.

Additionally, nominations of qualified individuals for the Executive Director position are welcome.

All materials should be sent by mail or (preferably) electronically to the following addresses:

Dr. Joe R. Fowler
Chair, Executive Director Search Committee
111 Market Place, Suite 1050
Baltimore, MD 21202-4012
joe.fowler@abet.org

Candidates will be notified when ABET has received the application, and all submittals will be handled in strict confidence. Any inquiries related to the job search should be directed to joe.fowler@abet.org.

ABET Webinar Series Returns This Month With Tips to Help Prepare the Self-Study and More

ABET's webinar series returns for its second year of providing academic programs and their faculty with convenient and flexible means of learning about assessment and accreditation processes. Webinars are interactive, Internet-based seminars that include on-screen presentations and multiple opportunities for participants to pose questions to the presenters. ABET's new series will enable an unlimited number of faculty members at a single location to learn about program assessment basics, accreditation visit preparations, and other topics of interest without incurring travel expenses.

This year's webinars include the following:

- ▶ **Preparing the Self-Study, 2009-2010**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Stu Zweben, Ph.D., 2008-2009 Computing Accreditation Commission Past Chair
 - ▶ Thursday, January 22, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **How to Develop a Survey**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Gloria Rogers, Ph.D., ABET Managing Director for Professional Services
 - ▶ Wednesday, January 28, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Preparing for the Site Visit 2009-2010 for Computing Programs**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Gayle Yaverbaum, 2008-2009 Computing Accreditation Commission Chair
 - ▶ Monday, February 9, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Choosing Assessment Methods**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Gloria Rogers, Ph.D., ABET Managing Director for Professional Services
 - ▶ Wednesday, February 11, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Preparing for the Site Visit 2009-2010 for Technology Programs**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Kevin Taylor, 2008-2009 Technology Accreditation Commission Chair-Elect
 - ▶ Friday, February 13, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Preparing for the Site Visit 2009-2010 for Engineering Programs**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Mary Leigh Wolfe, Ph.D., 2008-2009 Engineering Accreditation Commission Past Chair
 - ▶ Tuesday, February 17, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Preparing for the Site Visit 2009-2010 for Applied Science Programs**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Charles McGlothlin, Ph.D., 2008-2009 Applied Science Accreditation Commission Chair-Elect
 - ▶ Thursday, February 19, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **What the Accreditation Criteria Don't Tell You**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Dave Hornbeck, Ph.D., ABET Adjunct Accreditation Director for Technology
 - ▶ Tuesday, March 3, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Defining Program Outcomes**
 - ▶ *Presenters:* Gloria Rogers, Ph.D., ABET Managing Director for Professional Services
 - ▶ Wednesday, March 4, 2-3:30 p.m. EST
- ▶ **Developing Rubrics**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Gloria Rogers, Ph.D., ABET Managing Director for Professional Services
 - ▶ Wednesday, March 18, 2-3:30 p.m. EDT
- ▶ **Completing the Institutional Appendix**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Dayne Aldridge, Ph.D., ABET Adjunct Accreditation Director for Engineering
 - ▶ Thursday, March 19, 2-3:30 p.m. EDT
- ▶ **Developing and Assessing Program Educational Objectives**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Neal Armstrong, Ph.D., former Engineering Accreditation Commission member
 - ▶ Thursday, March 26, 2-3:30 p.m. EDT
- ▶ **Accreditation Visit from the Program Evaluator Perspective**
 - ▶ *Presenter:* Susan Schall, Ph.D., ABET Adjunct Training Director
 - ▶ Wednesday, April 22, 2-3:30 p.m. EDT

Each of these webinars will run for approximately 90 minutes. For those who cannot participate at the scheduled date and time, the CD recording can be purchased separately and run for any audience at any time.

More information is available at www.abet.org/webinar.shtml.

ABETOnline

- ▶ Download the 2009-2010 accreditation criteria and *Policy and Procedure Manual* at www.abet.org/forms.shtml.
- ▶ Register for one of the ABET webinars at www.abet.org/webinar.shtml.
- ▶ Get answers to your frequently asked questions: www.abet.org/faqs.shtml.

CommunityMatters™

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Assessment101

Assessment Tips with Gloria Rogers, Ph.D.

New Year's Resolutions for Assessment

This is around the time when we take inventory of the past year and

make resolutions for the upcoming one.

These resolutions are generally in the form of such things as losing weight, improving relationships, and paying off credit cards. We make these resolutions because we believe that achieving them will lead to significant improvements in the quality of our lives.

Your institution and/or program(s) may wish to make some resolutions in the area of program assessment for the year 2009. Resolutions such as these may help to improve program effectiveness as well as lives of your faculty and students:

- 1) **Resolve that we will review how constituents are defined and the level of their involvement in the continuous improvement process.** Many programs have active advisory boards and have developed strong ties with their constituents. This is a good time to review the list of constituents to be sure that they represent groups that can provide meaningful information about the characteristics they are looking for in technical graduates. This could be a good time to invite new people into the process to bring a fresh perspective to the program.
- 2) **Resolve that we will review the performance criteria that we are using to define the program (student) outcomes.** Now that you have defined your program (student) outcomes into a few measurable performance criteria, this is a good time to review them to be sure that they best represent your program. Because you are not going to measure everything, the quality of the few performance criteria that you do choose to assess becomes very important. Questions you may want to consider are:
 - a) Do they represent the most important aspects of the program outcome?
 - b) Are they at the appropriate cognitive level for a graduate of your program?
 - c) Are they written in a way that they are measurable?
 - d) Have they been appropriately communicated to both faculty and students?

- 3) **Resolve that we will reexamine the way the curriculum provides support for students to learn, practice, develop, and get feedback on the performance criteria.** Reviewing the curriculum to identify how it supports instruction related to the performance criteria will enable the program to focus data collection. Although it is helpful to understand how the curriculum supports the outcomes (i.e., ABET General Criteria program outcomes a-k or a-i) in a broad way, the mapping of the curriculum should also highlight the performance criteria. This is an important way to ensure meaningful data collection.

- 4) **Resolve that we will evaluate our data collection methods to be sure that they provide valid and meaningful data.**

There are multiple ways to collect data on student learning at the program level. Review your data collection processes to be sure that they yield valid data.

- a) Do the processes that you use provide relevant data? That is, do they measure the performance criteria as directly as possible?
- b) Do they represent the direct observation or examination of student performance against measurable criteria?
- c) Does the assessment method yield results with clear implications for program evaluation and improvement?

- 5) **Resolve that we will streamline our assessment process in ways that honors faculty time and the quality of the data used to make program improvements.** Faculty time is your most valuable resource. Review your cycles of data collection and related processes to be sure that they are focused and intentional. This way, you can maximize the validity of your processes while, at the same time, create processes that are manageable.

Correction: In the December 2008 issue of *CommunityMatters*, it was erroneously reported that the revised definitions in the ABET General Criteria would be implemented beginning with the 2009-2010 program evaluations. This was incorrect. The definitions will not be a part of the General Criteria until the 2010-2011 visit cycle.

YourCorner

Board of Directors

The next few Board events are right around the corner, so start marking your calendars! The next ABET Board of Directors Meeting will take place in Baltimore on Saturday, March 28, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Be sure to begin making your travel arrangements soon!

Commissioners

The 2009-2010 accreditation criteria have now been posted at www.abet.org/forms.shtml. Also, a separate link will open each criteria document to the "proposed changes" section.

Institutions

Requests for Evaluation (RFE) are due to ABET headquarters by January 31. The RFE form for new institutions requesting a visit for the 2009-2010 accreditation cycle is available at www.abet.org/request.shtml. The fee schedule for the 2009-2010 accreditation cycle will be set by the ABET Board of Directors in March 2009.

Member Societies

The new society website is scheduled to launch this month. Also, the new program evaluator candidate training website, which will be linked into each society website, will be available in February 2009. The training site will be used for candidates' training assignments and submissions in April and May.

Now that your commission nominations have been submitted, they will be reviewed by each commission and submitted for final approval to the ABET Board at their meeting in March. The new or returning commission members' terms are for the 2009-2010 accreditation cycle, which begins after the Summer Commission Meeting in July 2009.

The 2009 Society Summit will be Friday, September 11, in Baltimore, so make sure to mark your calendars now!

Program Evaluators

Do you have a colleague who you think would make a great program evaluator? There's a wealth of information on the ABET website for potential volunteers, so be sure to pass the information at www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml on to your colleagues.

Member Societies

ABET is a federation of 29 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.	International Council on Systems Engineering
American Institute of Chemical Engineers	International Society of Automation
American Nuclear Society	Materials Research Society
American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers	National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying
American Society of Civil Engineers	National Institute of Ceramic Engineers
American Society for Engineering Education	National Society of Professional Engineers
American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Inc.	SAE International
American Society of Safety Engineers	Society of Manufacturing Engineers
ASME	Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc.
Biomedical Engineering Society	Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers
CSAB, Inc.	Society of Petroleum Engineers
	The Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society



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