

Title: Student Outcomes Assessment: What Is It? How Do You Make It Work For You?

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Abstract

Outcomes-based assessment is a process all computer science programs must address. In this workshop the entire assessment cycle—developing goals (program outcomes) and measurable student learning objectives, choosing methods to measure the objectives, developing rubrics and benchmarks, analyzing the data, synthesizing the results and deciding what to do with them (feedback loop)—will be presented. Participants, working in groups, will get practice in developing selected aspects of an assessment plan. There will also be a discussion of the implications of ABET's new standards/requirements. The emphasis will be on practical suggestions and the message will be: Keep it simple and manageable.

Presenters' Background/Biography

Frances Bailie: Associate Professor of Computer Science at Iona College. Iona College is a suburban liberal arts college outside New York City whose BS Program in Computer Science is accredited by ABET. Her experience with assessment includes chairing a school-wide Assessment Committee that investigated assessment in the School of Arts and Science and made recommendations for improved assessment procedures and assessment tools. She also chairs the Assessment Committee of the Computer Science Department and in that capacity did extensive work in developing an assessment plan to prepare for ABET accreditation. Dr. Bailie also serves on a college-wide Assessment Advisory Committee that makes recommendations to the Provost on matters of institutional assessment. In addition, she has led an assessment workshop, participated in panel discussions, and recently co-authored a paper on assessment and accreditation.

Adel Abunawass: Professor and Chair of Computer Science at the University of West Georgia. The Department of Computer offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Computer Science (CS) and a Master of Science in Applied Computer Science

programs. The BS in CS program received its initial accreditation by ABET in 2002. Dr. Abunawass has led the department through the program's initial accreditation in 2002, and reaccreditation in 2008. He has been instrumental in leading the assessment efforts in the department as well as in designing the COMPASS assessment system. COMPASS uses open-source software tools to support the development and analysis of course portfolios. Dr. Abunawass has published papers on accreditation and assessment. He also serves as a program evaluator for ABET.

Deborah Whitfield: Professor of Computer Science at Slippery Rock University. The Computer Science department is home to the ABET accredited undergraduate degree in Computer Science and five undergraduate tracks in Information Systems. Dr. Whitfield has been involved in assessment since 1996. She has served on assessment committees at the department, college and university levels. In the area of assessment, she has published three papers, participated on four panels, delivered one workshop, and been a consultant. As a faculty member, she has assisted the department with creating and revising student learning outcomes, developing and revising assessment methods, analyzing data, and implementing a feedback loop that includes constituent feedback. As a result of assessment, the department has made numerous changes to the degree program including increasing the credit hours of CS1, modifying languages taught in the degree, moving topics from courses, adding ethics discussion to courses, and increasing credit hours for the major. All department faculty are now engaged in assessment discussion with their students, department colleagues, and college colleagues.

Intended Audience: Department Chairs, Department Assessment Coordinators, and other faculty who are responsible for implementing their Department's Assessment Program.

Materials Provided: Paper and electronic copies of slides used by the presenters, electronic copies of materials developed by the participants, and examples of the assessment programs at the presenters' home institutions.

Audio/Visual and Computer Requirements: Overhead and digital projectors, capability for presenters and participants to use laptops and connect to the internet, and a printer.