

Engineering Technology Forum
September 25-26, 2008
Seminole Community College

General Summary

The 21st Engineering Technology Forum was hosted by Seminole Community College at the Heathrow Center for Economic Development in Heathrow. Representatives from twelve community colleges, one school district, the DOE, and two state universities attended this year's fall Forum. Mike Staley, Dean, SCC Heathrow, welcomed the members to the college with Lenny Portelli and Brad Jenkins providing the overview and agenda of the Forum.

With the theme of this Forum, Advancing Technology Changes, one of the main concerns for the Engineering Technology community are the changes taking place in the State Course Numbering System (SCNS).

The Thursday morning session opened with a review by Brad Jenkins of the SCNS) summer Electrical-Electronic Technology (EET) discipline committee meetings. The objectives of this discipline committee included reviewing the discipline area descriptions and definitions, updating, reviewing and consolidating redundant courses, and reorganizing the engineering technology structure. Those meetings also provided the opportunity to review the EET and Computer Engineering Technology (CET) taxonomy as well as examine the common computer hardware and software courses within the EET/CET and computer science discipline areas.

With this background Brad Jenkins proposed to the Forum participants, one main heading named Engineering Technology with all the prefixes coming under this heading. In this configuration all prefixes used in the engineering technology programs would be in this one discipline area. This configuration would be similar to the revamped Computer Science/Computer Technology taxonomy. Matthew Keelean, Assistant Administrator, Statewide Course Numbering System provided an overview and explained the issues of the course numbering system and the issues concerning the EET/CET numbers, and what discipline might have ownership of those courses.

The definition for each prefix was also discussed and those prefixes need to be defined and brought up to date with what those prefixes actually mean with the courses offered. Additional discussion also included defining computer science courses and how those courses would be different from the computer courses that have the CET prefix. Other factors included providing for additional decades related to the newer courses now developed in the energy and biomedical technologies.

A new definition for Engineering Technology was proposed by the Forum participants: "Courses associated with applied engineering focused on the practical aspects of the specific technical disciplines preparing students to do one or more of the following: analyze, assemble, design, fabricate, install, operate, troubleshoot, maintain, and manage engineering and related systems." This draft of the definition will be sent out along with the different associated prefixes and definitions to the members of the ET Forum for additional input and discussion.

After lunch, a tour of the Heathrow Center SCC's facilities and labs, including the other economic center's areas, was conducted by Marsha Sjoberg of SCC.

The afternoon session included discussions concerning enrollment, recruitment techniques, and high school initiatives. New curriculum included the new energy related programs, in response to the building of the nuclear power plants, that have been developed or in the development phase from IRCC, CFCC, and PJC. Another program, a new four year BAS degree in Networking is starting at FCCJ.

Eric Owens, the state of Florida Supervisor of Industrial Education provided information on a number of state projects including the 3 year initiative related to a model for skilled workers that will identify occupations, the current programs available, and new program development to meet these needs. Another important update included the DOE's Workforce Education Division review of the contents of the curriculum frameworks in all 16 career clusters to make sure that they are up to date, meet industry needs, align with the certifications that are available, and also to make sure they are housed in appropriate clusters. In order to better define the manufacturing cluster, the working group in this area is developing a new secondary curriculum framework for manufacturing and production that will align with the new Engineering Technology Degree.

The university articulations include a presentation from Jo Anne Larson, USF Polytechnic in Lakeland, who provided information on the new BSAS degree with the concentration in Industrial Operations that will be an on-line program in the future. Bahman Motlagh, University of Central Florida, updated the Forum on two new degree programs; M.S. in Digital Forensics and the M.S. in Technology that will be available to holders of the BSET degrees. Lenny Portelli also mentioned that SCC has been funded for a Banner Center in Digital Media. Eric Roe provided additional information on the other state Banner Centers.

The Friday morning session included a discussion from Randy Berridge, President, Florida High Tech Corridor Council, who explained the major goals of the council and an update on the council's activities. Tom Muller, President of Vitaquest International and representing the Manufacturers Association of Central Florida (MACF), gave an update of the workforce needs for the central Florida region.

Marilyn Barger, Executive Director of FLATE, updated the forum on the marketing of the new A.S. degree in Engineering Technology and also provided information on the professional development opportunities for faculty. She announced the award winners for the 2008 FLATE Manufacturing Awards that will be presented at the Manufacturing Summit in Jacksonville November 4-5.

FANUC Robotics America Workshop Demonstration, sponsored by FLATE, concluded the Forum. Peter Varbedian and Gary Kowalski provided an excellent presentation related to manufacturing and the industrial use of the FANUC robots. The demonstration provided the participants an opportunity to program the robot as well as observe the many features associated with robotics.

The next Forum has been scheduled for April 9-10, 2009 at St. Petersburg College.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Jenkins
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Co-Chairman ET Forum