

IS Studies Accreditation Problems and Challenges

ECIS 2010

June 8, 2010

Chair: Marco De Marco

Panelist: Joey F. George, AIS President-Elect

Overview

- CSAB (Computer Sciences Accreditation Board)
- ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering & Technology)
- AIS Council & accreditation
- Some numbers
- Some questions
- Conclusion

AIS withdraws from CSAB

Baltimore, MD — Effective September 2009, the Association for Information Systems (AIS) has withdrawn its membership in CSAB, Inc., the lead society within ABET, Inc., for accreditation of programs in computer science, information systems, software engineering, and information technology. The withdrawal will have no effect on information systems (IS) programs accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET nor on IS programs seeking accreditation or reaccreditation in the future. The withdrawal will also have no effect on current IS program evaluators or visit team chairs. AIS became an associate member of CSAB in 2002.

“CSAB led IS accreditation before AIS was a member society, and CSAB will continue to be the lead ABET member society for IS programs,” says CSAB President Patrick J. Walsh, Ph.D. “In this capacity, CSAB has responsibility for the development of IS accreditation criteria, the selection and training of IS program evaluators, and the nomination of IS members to the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET. AIS’s withdrawal will have no effect on CSAB’s status or role within ABET and the ABET accreditation process.”

CSAB’s founding member societies, the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the IEEE Computer Society (IEEE-CS), remain active participants in and dedicated supporters of CSAB. Both societies have IS expertise within their membership, including special interest groups, and both have committed to assist in leveraging this expertise for CSAB.

CSAB, Inc., serves as a participating body of ABET, Inc., with three members on the ABET Board of Directors. CSAB is the lead society within ABET for accreditation of programs in computer science, information systems, software engineering, and information technology, and is a cooperating society for accreditation of computer engineering, biological engineering, and information engineering technology. In this capacity, CSAB has responsibility for the development of accreditation criteria and for the selection and training of program evaluators.

Source: <http://www.csab.org/2009Docs/AISRelease.pdf>

CSAB

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What is ABET?

ABET Leadership and Quality Assurance in Applied Science, Computing, Engineering, and Technology Education

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ABET, Inc., the recognized accreditor for college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology, is a federation of 30 professional and technical societies representing these fields. Among the most respected accreditation organizations in the U.S., ABET has provided leadership and quality assurance in higher education for over 75 years.

ABET currently accredits some 2,900 programs at more than 600 colleges and universities nationwide. Over 1,500 dedicated volunteers participate annually in ABET activities.

ABET also provides leadership internationally through workshops, consultancies, memoranda of understanding, and mutual recognition agreements, such as the Washington Accord.

ABET is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

*A note for Internet Explorer 8.0 users

Events

- Program Evaluator Training May 22-23
- ABET Headquarters Closed for Memorial Day May 31
- Faculty Workshop on Sustainable Assessment Processes June 19

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Latest News

- Gloria Rogers Launches New Program Assessment Blog
- Report from Spring 2010 ABET Board Meeting Now Online
- ABET Board Elects 2010-11 Leadership
- Apply for August 2010 Session of IDEAL

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Some history

- 2001: AIS joined ABET
- 2004: AIS created VP of Accreditation
 - 1st VP: John Gorgone
 - Current VP: Roy Johnson
- 2006: Council approved continued membership in CSAB until end of 2008
- 2006: Council approved \$50,000 USD for continued R&D of accreditation of IS/IT master's programs
- 2007: Council put a hold on “aggressive pursuit” of accreditation
- 2008: Council asked for no spending on accreditation
- 2009: Council approved creation of SIG Accreditation

Some numbers

- Search of ABET website shows 31 IS programs, all in the US, are accredited
- By contract, the AACSB website shows 593 accredited business programs in 38 countries

Some questions for AIS

- Why should AIS be in the accreditation business?
- What does it gain AIS?
- What does it gain programs and/or courses that are accredited by AIS?
- Who in AIS does it?
- What is the process by which AIS does it?
- What does it cost the accreditation seeker?
- What does it cost the accreditation provider, i.e., AIS?

Questions for the seeker

- What does it mean to you to be able to say that AIS has accredited your systems analysis and design course? Your IS program?
- If you sought such accreditation and were turned down, would you take the necessary actions to gain accreditation?
- What would you pay to AIS to have your course(s) and program(s) accredited?

Questions for the evaluator

- How much time are you willing to donate to AIS to evaluate courses and/or programs?
- What do you expect to get out of it?

Conclusion

- Personally:
 - I don't see the need
 - I don't think AIS should be in the accreditation business
 - I don't see how AIS can spare the resources to design, manage, and control this such that a high quality, meaningful accreditation designation is created and sustained