

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

SPECIAL ONLINE CURRICULUM ISSUE

SUSAN R. FEATHER-GANNON

This Special Curriculum Issue stems from the efforts of many talented and dedicated people who were instrumental in creating and revising the OEIS Model Curriculum begun in the infancy of the Organizational Systems Research Association. It is only fitting that the lead article—written by Bridget O'Connor—set the stage by providing the reader of this issue with a historical perspective of the first two iterations of the curriculum.

As each version of the curriculum evolved in tandem with exponential technological innovation, so, too, did the process used to fine tune the model. The following is a description of how the most recent curriculum model developed. The process began in 2002 with the appointment of Task Force Committee Chair Steve Hunt of Morehead State University whose charge was to facilitate the revamping of the 1996 Model Curriculum. An invaluable member of OSRA, Steve had access to a number of collaborative tools, which did not exist in the 80s or 90s. In the first phase of the revision, he nominated a high-quality team of educators and practitioners, representative of different regions in the U.S. possessing a variety of IT specialties. The addition of a member from Australia added an international flavor to the team.

BLACKBOARD SITE

After forming the task force, Steve needed to be creative in uncovering ways for this disparate committee to collaborate with one another. At Morehead, he created a meeting site in Blackboard, where team members could use various communication tools to interact electronically. With a link to the *osra.org* Website which displays the 1996 model, a series of Discussion Board questions, including a SWOT analysis, provided the structure for individual committee members to input their ideas.

FACILITATE.COM-ASSISTED MEETING

After asynchronously “meeting” via Blackboard, the team wanted to devise a way to meet synchronously. The idea to use Morehead State University’s GroupSystems Center to expedite the meeting process and produce swift outcomes was entertained, but the costs of overnight stays and travel to the site were of great concern. The result was using Facilitate.com, a Web-based tool that promotes collaboration. With the help of a team facilitator from the vendor, based in San Francisco, Steve set a carefully crafted agenda before the scheduled meeting. Additionally, the facilitator led the meeting and was available via teleconference for technical issues, since this was a new medium for most committee members. The outcome was a draft model of the newest iteration of the curriculum and the process of writing course descriptions and developing individual courses was begun. Steve assigned courses to team members whose expertise was compatible with the content area of the course. Individuals prepared and disseminated their drafts to all committee members in preparation for the next meeting.

FACE-TO-FACE MEETING

The next collaborative effort was achieved face to face at OSRA’s annual conference in February. Team members presented the courses they had developed, including course syllabi and supporting materials. The committee then worked together to refine each course. At a later session during the conference, the Task Force presented the draft model to the membership.

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The enhanced curriculum reflects many of the latest developments in IT, such as networking, telecommunications, information security, the Internet, and collaborative technologies with the inclusion of courses in telecommunications and networking, Internetwork administration, e-business and Web technologies, collaborative technologies and knowledge management, and information systems security. Additionally, course development was effected through the lens of Bloom's taxonomy.

As this special issue will only be offered online, articles will be added as they are submitted, peer reviewed, and accepted. In fact, the development of this issue mirrors the evolution of the OEIS Model Curriculum as it is a work in progress. The following excerpts showcase the many talents of our membership, educators, and practitioners committed to providing relevant course material to future IT professionals.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, formerly known as the *Office System Research Journal*, publishes articles related to the field of organizational and end-user information systems (OEIS). Submissions may present the results of research in the discipline, deal with research methodologies and data treatment techniques, or describe research or experiences related to instruction in the discipline. For the "Making a Difference" section, manuscripts that discuss our theoretical bases or describe an innovative policy, procedure, method, technique, or practice that has potential benefit for systems professionals and/or educators and technology trainers are encouraged. We also accept reviews of current books—both academic and popular press—related to OEIS. All submissions are submitted to a blind review process.

Authors should follow the style described for manuscripts and bibliographies in the Fifth Edition (2001) of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*; however, tables should be single-spaced. Tables and figures should be attached at the end of the manuscript, one table or figure per page. Authors should not be identified anywhere in the manuscript. Submit four copies of the manuscript. On the original copy, include a cover page with author name, title, organizational affiliation, telephone number, and email address. A 100-150 word abstract of the manuscript should be included with the manuscript.

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