

AbOut Assessment Software
Feb. 18 (Wed) 11:00-11:50am
EE Conference Room (Main 208)

Attendees:

Jeff Braun, Mitch Deplazes, Bryce Hill, Josh Lee, Celia Schahczenski, Luke Schuler, Mack Sutherland, Dan Trudnowski

11:00 Recap last meeting

Josh Lee

- Software runs on Firefox & Chrome, not IE
- EE gets assessment data from 4 sources
- Terms
- Performance criteria
- Weighting courses
It was mentioned that CS would be willing to adopt weighting outcomes. The process which EE uses to weigh courses is discussed below.
- Uploading scanned documents
- User with access to all and a read-only user
Having a read-only user to be used by the visiting accreditation committee was discussed. In this case uploading scanned documents would enable accreditors to conveniently view supporting documents.
- Uploading grades from spreadsheet
- Changing order of students
It was decided that being able to change the order of student names is not needed. Instead, the system shall order students by last name, as they appear in Banner. Difficulty of discerning some foreign last names was mentioned.
- Students don't need to be tracked
- Courses which are in multiple programs

Topics of high priority are updating terms used in the system to match those used by ABET, weighting of courses, creating Department Head users, and determining how to deal with courses which appear in multiple programs.

11:05 Business objectives

Mack Sutherland

- Describe
Business objectives are high level statements of the purpose of the software.
- Develop
Three versions of business objectives were shown:
 1. Took current objectives and expanded them for EE
 2. In addition to the above, included uploading documents into AbOut
 3. In addition to the first, included tracking students

After describing and discussing the three versions, the first version was chosen: “Simplify and standardize how faculty members in the Computer Science (CS) and Electrical Engineering (EE) Departments at Montana Tech assess their courses in relation to ABET student outcomes. Specifically, help CS and EE faculty members determine the extent to which students in their courses have met student outcomes by streamlining the repetitive tasks which the faculty members were doing by hand.”

It was decided that a future enhancement of the software could include capability for documents to be able to be scanned. Before an accreditation visit accreditors want a hard copy report sent to them. When they come on campus a room is set up for them with information including a binder for each outcome. For each outcome there is a list of all course work which was used to assess that outcome. There are also binders for each course. It would be helpful if accreditors could click a link in the software to see scanned copies of graded examples (good, average and poor) of the metric measured. However, this capability will not be included at this time.

The third version, tracking students is not needed. In fact, it was mentioned that tracking the students could run into privacy issues.

11:25 Performance criteria

Mitch Deplazes

- What is needed

In EE a committee meets every 2 years. The chair collects data from the faculty during the two previous years. Before the meeting the chair puts the data into a spread sheet (Dan will send us a copy of a spread sheet). The faculty members respond to the spreadsheet. At this time they may change the performance criteria used to measure courses and the courses, along with course weights, which are used to evaluate these performance criteria. Once the criteria, courses and weights are decided upon, they are not changed for the following two years.

It was indicated that CS may be interested in implementing a similar system. Some student outcomes measure three things, for example math, science and statistics. Currently the software is oblivious to this so items may be missed.

Performance criteria are not completely black and white. In some cases the formula is used: credits*students* arbitrary

multiplier (which is the course weight)

Changing outcomes over time will affect reports.
Possibly reports could just be for one or two academic years.

11:45 Use cases

- Describe

Use cases describe how actors accomplish tasks using the software.

Luke Schuler

- Develop “Add student score(s) to metric”

It was determined that the use case “Add Student Score(s) to Metric” is acceptable. The main alternative flow for entering student scores was pasting information from a column of an Excel spreadsheet into the software as student scores using the Windows clipboard. The group agreed that they would handle the sorting in their grade book to match AbOut’s ordering. An error message would be displayed when the number of scores being copied and the number of students in the offering, according to the software, don’t match.

11:50 Next meeting – Feb. 25th

Future meetings will be held in Main 208

Josh Lee

Due to time constraints of Bryce Hill it was decided all meetings will be held in MAIN 208 instead of alternating.