

Dear Colleagues, I trust you all had a great summer. Now that we are into the new academic year, we look forward for your attending our next CTC/UWT Institute meeting, which will be held on Friday, October 30 (in just two weeks!). Because some UWT faculty teach on Friday morning, we are switching our meeting time to the afternoon: 12noon to 4pm. We will begin with lunch, and then move to the main part of the meeting.

Here is the agenda:

noon-1pm Lunch

1:00pm-1:30pm Introductions & updates from members

1:30-2:20am AP CS Principles course

2:20-2:30am break

2:30-3:20am The new TCSS 142 & implications

3:20-3:30 break

3:30am-4:00pm Topics for discussion for Winter and Spring meetings.

Some details:

1. Discussion of the AP CS Principles course. (discussion started by Alan Fowler)
 - a. What is AP CS Principles?
 - b. What has been the history/experience of the course at UWT?
 - c. What is the current status of the project nationwide?
 - d. Do any of the CTCs want to develop such a course?

The AP CS Principles course is a nationwide effort to have a standardized way of introducing computer science. The idea is that the course could be taught in high school, at a community college, or at a university. Students would get college credit for passing the AP CS Principles test (just like how they can credit for Calculus, etc. by taking the AP exam for it). This session will

discuss what the course is, how we have taught it at UW Tacoma, and whether UW Tacoma's community college partners are interested in offering such a course.

Here is a web site that describes the course and nationwide effort:

<https://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/stem/computer-science-principles>

2. Discussion of CS 1 and the new TCSS 142 (at UW Tacoma). (discussion started by David Schuessler & Monika Sobolewska)
 - a. The idea behind the new TCSS 142
 - b. Experiences with teaching the class
 - c. Experiences teaching TCSS 143 with students from different backgrounds

In academic year 2014-2015, UW Tacoma taught TCSS 142 differently than in the past. Instead of teaching programming using Java, the course uses a much less syntax-heavy language, Python. The guiding principle is that the first programming course should be primarily about programming, rather than learning a programming language. The approach has its advantages, but it also has its challenges. UW Tacoma instructors who have taught the 142 and 143 course will share their experiences from this past year. We hope that community college instructors can share their experiences with students making the transition from one programming language to another (and in particular to/from Python).

3. Discussion of topics for Winter and Spring meetings. (all)

As is a bit of a tradition, we should collectively decide what topics we wish to discuss/address in future meetings this academic year. Please think about what topics/trends/ideas would interest you.

In the past we have discussed "nuts and bolts" teaching topics, such as textbooks, object-first/early/late approaches, online/hybrid courses, nifty assignments, etc. We could also discuss strategic issues such as trends in CS curricula, advising (e.g. making the transition for students from CC to university easier), etc. We can make this meeting whatever we want it to be! (What other meetings can you say that about?)

Please RSVP to cathyab@uw.edu with sandwich choice if you are staying for lunch: turkey, ham, beef, veg. No rsvp, no sandwich :-(
Date/Time: Friday, October 30, 2015, 12noon-4pm
Location: CP 206C (the usual meeting place in Cherry Parkes)
Map/Directions: http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/campus_map/

We hope to see you then. (Remember to rsvp!)

Regards,
Donald Chinn & Alan Fowler
Institute of Technology
University of Washington Tacoma