Panel Discussion: Computer Science Accreditation - Past, Present and Future

Lawrence Jones, Panel Coordinator
Software Engineering Institute
Carnegie Mellon University
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Keith Barker
Computer Science & Engineering Department
University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT 06296

Doris Lidtke
Department of Computer & Information Sciences
Towson University
Towson, MD 21252

Susan Conry
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Clarkson University
Potsdam, NY 13699

Abstract - Accreditation of undergraduate programs in computing within the United States began in 1984. A Joint Task Force of the Computer Society of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE-CS) and the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) established the Computing Sciences Accreditation Board (CSAB) to oversee these accreditation activities. The Computer Science Accreditation Commission (CSAC), currently the only commission of the CSAB, administers the accreditation process for programs in computer science.

Currently, many professional accrediting bodies, including CSAB/CSAC, are taking a fresh look at their evaluative criteria and processes for accreditation. The purpose of this panel is to present a perspective on computer science accreditation, where it has been and where it is going. A major focus of this panel is to present proposed changes to the evaluative criteria as part of a public review and comment process.

The panel will consist of a series of short presentations followed by discussion. The first presentation will give a history and current status of computer science accreditation in the United States. The second will describe the current CSAB/CSAC evaluative criteria. The third presentation will describe the current accreditation process and some changes that are being considered. The final presentation will describe proposed changes in structure and content to the CSAB/CSAC criteria for accreditation. Ample time will be provided for questions and discussion with the audience. Audience comments will be recorded for consideration by CSAB/CSAC.