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SIGCSE News in Brief

We had a great time at the 2011 SIGCSE Symposium in Dallas. Co-chairs Tom Cortina and Ellen Walker give us a recap. Thanks to them and all who worked to make the Symposium a great experience. ITiCSE and ICER are coming up. See our conference update for details. Hope to see you there!

Chris Stephenson gives us the latest on the CSTA/SIGCSE Advocacy Program and progress made at the recent SIGCSE Symposium BOF.

We heard you! Based on member feedback, the SIGCSE Board has revised its policy on distribution of conference proceedings via CD. Renée McCauley, the SIGCSE Board Chair, explains the new policy.

Starting with the next issue, the SIGCSE Bulletin will start publishing members’ news announcements. See how you can get your news out to SIGCSE members.

Henry Walker reports on the Computer Science Education Research Conference, a new conference held in-cooperation with SIGCSE.

The Digital Library has had a makeover. Barbara Boucher Owens describes the new interface and asks that you help make sure the information presented is complete and correct.

And finally, Henry Walker takes a look at SIGCSE and ITiCSE acceptance rates by continent in SIGCSE by the Numbers.
SIGCSE 2011 was held in Dallas, Texas from March 9-12, 2011 with 1,184 attendees. The symposium included 107 papers, 22 panels and special sessions, 48 posters, 36 BOFs, 30 workshops and a full slate of Wednesday pre-conference events.

Our theme of *Reaching Out* was reflected in Matthias Felleisen's talk, “Teach Scheme!” (reaching out to pre-college students), Susan Landau’s talk, “A Computer Scientist Goes to Washington: How to be Effective in a World Where Facts Are Only 10% of the Equation,” and Luis von Ahn’s talk, “Three Human Computation Projects,” which received a rare standing ovation.

In honor of our Texas location, we added the “Robot Hoedown and Rodeo” with “trail bosses” Jennie Kay and Tom Lauwers, featuring a grand finale of 40 line-dancing robots!

We appreciate all the effort put in by authors and reviewers to make the symposium a success. Special thanks to everyone on our committee: our exhibit managers, Dorothea Heck and Angelina Palmieri; our generous supporters, including Microsoft, Google, Intel, IBM and Amazon; and the conference staff at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel for their efforts in making SIGCSE 2011 the excellent symposium that it was.
SIGCSE Conference Update

The 16th Annual Conference on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE) will be held June 27-29, 2011 in Darmstadt, Germany. Registration is open!

The IST Seventh Annual International Computing Education Conference (ICER) will be held in Providence, RI on Aug. 8-9, 2011. Registration is open!

The 43rd ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education will be held February 29-March 3, 2012 in Raleigh, NC.

The call for papers can be found at http://www.sigcse.org/sigcse2012/authors/index.php.

CSTA and SIGCE Launch Advocacy Project by Chris Stephenson

After several years of growth, CSTA continues to partner with SIGCSE on building bridges across education levels.

Since it began in 2004, CSTA has grown into a membership organization of more than 8200 practitioners, and while our focus is on improving computer science education in K–12, many of these improvements depend upon key partnerships with post-secondary faculty and researchers.

The most recent undertaking involves a project with the SIGCSE executive focusing on building advocacy partnerships between members of the CSTA Leadership Cohort and SIGCE members interested in changing state-level educational policy.

The CSTA Leadership Cohort is made up of hand-picked K–12 computer science teacher leaders in 37 states. Each of these leaders participates in advocacy and leadership development training. And many of these teacher leaders were on hand at a recent SIGCSE Birds of a Feather session.

At this session, representatives from CSTA and SIGCSE talked about the importance of working across educational levels to understand and impact educational policy and made a commitment to helping interested faculty members connect with CSTA Leadership Cohort members and chapter leaders in their states. In return, several faculty members offered to help support these teacher leaders and to work with them to achieve common policy goals.

If you are interested in building a local policy network with CSTA advocacy leaders in your state, please contact Chris Stephenson at cstephenson@csta.acm.org.
SIGCSE Membership Benefit Update
by Renée McCauley, SIGCSE Chair

In the December 2010 issue of this newsletter, I reported on the plans of the SIGCSE Board to discontinue production and mailing of CDs containing conference proceedings. Since the proceedings are available via the SIGCSE portal to the ACM Digital (DL) library, which all members have access to, we thought it a reasonable way to keep our organizational costs low and maintain our membership fee (which has been $25 for more than a decade now).

However, a few of our members asked us to reconsider this decision, noting the following:
- CDs allow one to build a personal library
- Once members retire, they may no longer be able to afford to maintain their SIGCSE or ACM memberships or may no longer have DL access (losing access to the proceedings)
- There are places in the world where good Internet connections are not consistently dependable, thus some people don’t have access to the proceedings via DL

In response to these member requests, the SIGCSE Board, at its Spring 2011 meeting, reversed its earlier decision and voted to publish a single CD (as opposed to 3) each year that will contain the proceedings from the SIGCSE symposium, ITiCSE and ICER, as well as ITiCSE working group reports and the four issues of the electronic newsletter, the SIGCSE Bulletin. This will save the organization money and still provide members with copies of the proceeding. Each December, beginning in 2011, we’ll mail a CD that provides a complete record for that calendar year.

SIGCSE Bulletin News Announcements

The SIGCSE Bulletin was re-established as a traditional newsletter in 2010. Our goal is to publish articles about SIGCSE-related activities but our specific policies are still evolving. In our next issue we will begin publishing announcements that may be of interest to our members subject to these guidelines:
- Potential announcements should be sent to the editors of the SIGCSE Bulletin at walker@cs.grinnell.edu at least 6 weeks before an issue is scheduled to appear.
- Due to space constraints, each announcement will contain a title, a URL, and an abstract up to 1000 characters.
- Inclusion of an announcement will NOT imply either SIGCSE review or endorsement.
- Referenced items must have clear potential to be of interest to the SIGCSE community, as determined by the SIGCSE Bulletin editors.
- Some possible activities might include workshops, seminars, and volunteer opportunities (if those activities have a clear connection with computing education)
- Job notices will not be included (the demand likely would be high, timing would likely be awkward due to publication dates, both ACM and CRA maintains extensive job lists, and announcements can be sent to the SIGCSE-MEMBERS listserv.)
- The SIGCSE Bulletin Newsletter editors have final authority to decide suitability of announcements for inclusion and selection of announcements to fit within available space.

A full description of our current policies can be found at:
A new conference, CSERC '11, was held on 7-8 April 2011 in Heerlen, the Netherlands, in cooperation with SIGCSE. Conference information is available from Open Universiteit, the host institution: http://www.ou.nl/cserc.

Background: For some time, the Dutch have organized a national computing education conference, attended by educators at all levels, including secondary schools, colleges and universities, technical schools, and industry training schools. The conference, Nederlands Informatica OnderwijsCongres (NIOC), has meet about every two years and attracts roughly 250-300 people. As a complement, several faculty created an upgraded academic-oriented Computer Science Education Research Conference, CSERC '11, in cooperation with SIGCSE. Paper submissions follow a blind-review process; accepted papers appear both in a printed proceedings and in the ACM Digital Library. All sessions at CSERC '11 were in English to encourage international participation.

The Program: Following the founders’ vision, the first CSERC conference included a wonderfully diverse program. Sally Fincher (U. of Kent, UK) outlined the state of computing education research in her opening keynote, and Bernard Cornu (CNED, France) placed computing education within the context of today's "knowledge society" in a closing keynote. In between, papers covered a wide range of topics, with two from South Africa, three from the Netherlands, one from the United States, and two from collaborative efforts between Germany and the Netherlands. The conference Web site includes abstracts and links to slides for all presentations.

Additional activities included luncheons, a reception, and a conference dinner.

Conclusions: CSERC '11 provided a warm and successful first conference to complement the ongoing NIOC Dutch conferences. Special thanks to conference chairs: Gerrit van der Veer (also SIGCHI Chair), Peter Sloep, Marko van Eekelen; and to organizers: Evert van der Vrie and Mieke Haemers. Thanks also are due to the hosting institutions, the Open Universiteit and Hogeschool Zuyd, and to the city of Heerlen for their support and hospitality.
The NEW ACM Digital Library Interface
by Barbara Boucher Owens

I was privy to a wonderful demo of the new Digital Library Interface by Wayne Graves, the head IT honcho at ACM. He showed off all the cool features that are now available.

You can check it out at http://acm.org/dl. Select “Special Interest Groups” then “SIGCSE” to reach the SIGCSE page.

From there you can find all kinds of useful information like the most downloaded articles, the most prolific authors, the ACM award winners who have at least a tangential connection to SIGCSE, and how many folks actually cite YOUR work!

If you click on the “Authors” tab you will be able to search for yourself. Every author has his or her own personal page. For example, the page for David Ginat, who is our most prolific author, is shown below.

His page is disappointing. No picture, no info. Why? It is the author’s job to supply that info to the DL. (Prof. Ginat has promised he will do so.)

In short, there is no such thing as a free lunch, nor a free upgrade either. There is lots of work to be done on this site. Not only is information missing, there are errors as well. What is wrong with the following page?

The first one I saw was for ACE '09; the word entertainment was misspelled. But that wasn’t the biggie – ACE ‘09 had nothing to do with entertainment – it was the Australasian Computing Education Conference!

Someone I know had 43 SIGCSE papers listed in his author’s profile, but he actually only had 3 in his career! The system confused him with someone who had a similar name. (I wish there were another more prolific Barbara Owens out there so I could boost my numbers!)

So, loyal SIGCSE members, I beseech you to check out the new DL. Update your author profile, your institution’s profile, report any errors you find, and give constructive feedback to the team at ACM by using the feedback link on the DL site.
SIGCSE by the Numbers
by Henry M. Walker, Grinnell College

At the 2011 SIGCSE Symposium business meeting, someone asked whether the SIGCSE Symposia or ITiCSE conferences have a bias towards papers from a geographical region. We analyzed the number of submissions and acceptances for SIGCSE 2011 and ITiCSE 2011, according to the continent(s) of the author(s). We use the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author categories</th>
<th>Submissions</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Acceptance Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>35.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>34.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Since the number of submissions from these regions is fairly small, we combine their counts to preserve author anonymity.

For example, a paper is in category 4, if one or more of its authors live in North America AND one or more of its authors live in Europe, BUT none of its authors live in Africa, Asia, or South America.

The following tables provide submissions, acceptances, and acceptance rates by category for SIGCSE 2011 and ITiCSE 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIGCSE 2011 Statistics</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Submissions</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Acceptance Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>35.86</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>100.00</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>34.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With these data, SIGCSE 2011 Program Co-Chair Dave Musicant ran chi-squared tests to compare two groups at a time. A p-value less than 0.1 indicates 90% significance and less than 0.05 indicates 95% significance. For both SIGCSE and ITiCSE, the low numbers in categories 4, 5, 6, and 7 preclude conclusions of statistical significance. The other comparisons are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIGCSE 2011</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>.063*</td>
<td>possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITiCSE 2011</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p=.046 with Fisher exact text

Overall, Dave Musicant concluded that for ITiCSE 2011, the difference in acceptance rates for North America and other regions (especially Europe) is statistically significant. For SIGCSE 2011, the difference in acceptance rates between Africa/Asia/S America (Group 3) and North America is statistically significant, and between Group 3 and Europe is possibly significant. Differences between North America and Europe are not statistically significant.

Of course, if these statistical differences in acceptance rates are in fact real, this analysis alone does not indicate the underlying causes for the differences.