

ACM CURRICULAR INITIATIVE

PANEL ABSTRACT

Computer Science curriculum revision in the decade of the 1980's took two twists which broke the pattern of presenting an entire curriculum model every decade which had been established by Curriculum '68 and Curriculum '78. The profession couldn't wait ten years to revise the first course, so the Koffman Committee presented mid-term recommendations. Then the accreditation movement directed focus toward the overall depth and rigor of the curriculum and sought a balance of coverage in both core and advanced components of the major. This discussion led to the Denning Committee's report on the revision of the core curriculum and, most recently, the report of the Tucker Committee on implementation strategies for the new CS core. The work of these blue-ribbon panels evidences the struggle to identify and integrate the fundamental concepts of the discipline, and thereby characterize what is to be studied in Computer Science programs. These efforts have tended to demonstrate that while there is some broad agreement as to the basic concepts or paradigms and the most fundamental topics, there continues to be extensive diversity about scope and emphasis. "How much exposure to content area _____ is minimal for the average computer science major?" is the salient question.

The panelists represent the rich diversity of programs to be found in the South Central region, and each has reviewed the Denning and Tucker recommendations. They will present their individual reactions and observations on the revision efforts and lead the audience in a discussion of their ramifications and impact.

William Mitchell, LSU Shreveport, Moderator
Steven Welsh, Southern University in New Orleans
Nell Dale, University of Texas, Austin
Michele LaRusch, Trinity University, San Antonio
Floyd Johnson, Kearney State College, Nebraska