Chapter II

A Framework for the Development of an Accredited Web-Based Computer Information Systems Degree

Kathy S. Lassila
Colorado State University–Pueblo, USA

Kris Howell
Colorado State University–Pueblo, USA

ABSTRACT

The Web-based delivery of online IS baccalaureate programs is a recent innovation. While IS researchers have identified a number of key factors related to the effective online delivery of individual courses, little empirical evidence exists to suggest “best practices” in the development and delivery of a complete four-year IS online degree program. This chapter examines and synthesizes IS education criteria from two sources: the Computer Sciences Accreditation Commission, which recently established criteria for accrediting programs in information systems, and the Regional Accrediting Commissions, which issued guidelines for the evaluation of electronically offered degree and certificate programs. The result is a set of guidelines that act as a framework for the development of online baccalaureate programs in computer information systems that addresses both IS and online accreditation requirements.
INTRODUCTION

The current and projected nationwide shortage of information systems (IS) professionals is driving a renewed interest in IS education, as companies strive to hire new IS graduates and retrain existing employees. One solution to the growing demand for IS education is the use of the World Wide Web as an educational delivery mode. The proliferation of commercially available Web-based training products is evidence of the potential of this educational delivery mode to address the needs of industry and the economy. In addition, Web-based educational delivery has been widely accepted as an effective learning platform by students, teachers and academic administrators (Tillett, 2000). Colleges and universities are entering the online education arena in increasing numbers. While much is known about how to effectively deliver individual courses online, what do we know about how to effectively deliver the entire IS degree online? What do we need to know to provide a quality IS educational experience via the Internet?

This chapter addresses the questions posed above by presenting a framework for the development of the online IS baccalaureate degree expressed as a set of quality guidelines. The guidelines are developed through a synthesis of drafts from two relevant authorities on IS and online education: the Computer Sciences Accreditation Board (CSAB) of the Accrediting Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), and the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC), comprising eight United States regional accrediting bodies.

The next section discusses the background and development of draft guidelines by both the CSAB and C-RAC and their current status. The synthesis of the draft guidelines from both accrediting entities creates the basis for a set of guidelines to direct the development of online baccalaureate programs in IS which are presented in the following section. The model is then discussed, along with its implications for effective Web-based IS degree delivery. Future directions for research and practice are then presented, followed by key conclusions.

BACKGROUND

Web-based education has been touted as the new teaching paradigm for over six years. In the IS field, most faculty use the Web to facilitate and enhance existing courses, while few use it as a replacement for traditional teaching approaches. Darbyshire and Burgess (2002) report that educators have found the Web useful for supporting teaching in a variety of ways. These include: assignment distribution, collection and grading (Boysen & Van Gorp, 1997); grade/performance distribution and reporting; and informing students of important notices (Landon, 1998). Some of the key advantages of Web-based teaching assistance include: support for interactivity between students and educators, ease of course information dissemination, use as
Related Content

The eLogBook Framework: Sustaining Interaction, Collaboration, and Learning in Laboratory-oriented CoPs
[www.igi-global.com/article/elogbook-framework-sustaining-interaction-collaboration/2988?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/elogbook-framework-sustaining-interaction-collaboration/2988?camid=4v1a)

Addressing Accessibility of MOOCs for Blind Users: Hearing Aid for Screen Orientation
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/addressing-accessibility-of-moocs-for-blind-users/143439?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/addressing-accessibility-of-moocs-for-blind-users/143439?camid=4v1a)

The Effects of Combined Training of Web-Based Problem-Based Learning and Self-Regulated Learning
Chia-Wen Tsai, Pei-Di Shen and Tsang-Hsiung Lee (2011). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies* (pp. 40-50).
[www.igi-global.com/article/effects-combined-training-web-based/60170?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/effects-combined-training-web-based/60170?camid=4v1a)
A Schematic Description of the Nature of Video-Conferencing and Internet Exchange: Enhancing Global Understanding
www.igi-global.com/article/a-schematic-description-of-the-nature-of-video-conferencing-and-internet-exchange/109543?camid=4v1a