

Department Council Meeting Minutes

A meeting was held on Friday, February 27, 2004 at noon in the fourth floor conference room. The single agenda topic was the possible reorganization of the High School Programming Contest for 2005. At the request of the Department Chair, Dianne O'Leary had provided ideas on different types of activities that might be incorporated into the contest. The rationale for a change is to hold a CS sponsored activity that will attract more women and minorities and support a broader range of students than in the past. It is also possible that the current contest needs rejuvenation with fresh ideas and broader participatory activities. Attached is a copy of this information.

There was general discussion regarding specific ideas listed. Opinion was expressed that the activities might appeal to a different group of students and teachers than those in the past. One suggestion, web page design, would require that students perform the work off-site and submit the design for judging. There was a question raised as to whether students would participate by performing work in advance. There was also consideration of a type of CS science fair for students to bring projects on which they have worked and CS faculty would evaluate these projects and give them ideas for improvement.

Practical issues such as the cost of the function, the time commitment that faculty and staff can devote to the one-day activity, and the need for additional computers to support this activity was mentioned. If an off-site project becomes part of the event, then the Department should purchase a "hosting account" for some defined period of time so that participants can submit their project in advance. The issue of plagiarism was also raised and someone would need to determine how other similar contests handle this matter. It was mentioned that Bobby and Chaw have been involved in the Westinghouse competition and they may have further information on this subject or contacts that CS faculty can approach with questions.

It was agreed that Ben Bederson who will be addressing the coaches at this year's contest would discuss some of these topics so that a decision can be made this spring regarding next year's event. An announcement should be made by early September regarding the activity's structure. It is felt that the Department will only be able to implement one or two of the ideas given the level of support available.