

ASCE Global Center of Excellence in Computing and IT

Minutes of the Business Meeting, Thursday July 14, 2005

Salon A, JW Marriott,  
Cancun, Mexico.

**Attendance:**

Tomasz Arciszewski  
Tenzing Barshee  
Renate Fruchter  
Raymond Issa  
Hani Melhem  
John Miles  
JP Mohsen  
Yaqub Rafiq  
Ian Smith.

The meeting started shortly after 5:00 pm in Salon A of the JW Marriott hotel. This was the venue of the ASCE 2005 International Conference on Computing in Civil Engineering. At the conference, the meeting was preceded by an open session on Tuesday July 12, 2005 (2:30 pm - 5:30 pm), also in Salon A, which was open to all conference attendees. In that session, the three officers each made a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Global Center: Arciszewski's presentation was mainly general information on the center organization, summary of past activities, update of the current status, and future plans. Melhem's presentation was on contact attempts made with various international organizations. Smith's presentation focused on educating the civil engineering community about computing and IT. The presentations were followed by a general discussion and a questions/answers period. The open session was well attended (17 participants).

**Minutes of the Meeting:**

Following a brief introduction, Tomasz presented a diagram that depicts the new organizational structure of the Center. The Center has been endorsed

by the ASCE Technical Activities Committee during its April 2005 meeting, pending the final approval during its upcoming meeting on July 24, 2005 (Done!!!). The organizational structure was followed by a serious discussion regarding the Center's mission and related organization. JP suggested that the name of the Education Division be changed to Teaching Workgroup to avoid potential conflict with the TCCIT Education Committee. It was noted by Ian and others that while the Education Committee focuses on the implementation of IT in the Civil Engineering curriculum in academia, and tracking the use of IT by University graduates in industry and practice, the Global Center group on Teaching/Education will focus on offering courses on computing and IT and will develop a certificate approved by the ASCE.

It has been agreed that the current emphasis will be on the courses offerings and the related teaching materials. Many practitioners are interested in courses and seminars because of the continuing education requirements to maintain the professional registration (PE license). Tomasz suggested having a meeting at ASCE headquarters in late November by which time drafts of teaching modules on a number of key topics would be collected and will then be presented to ASCE. The teaching modules and courses will be finalized by May 2006. Ian Smith indicated that he would need a relatively small amount of financial support (in the order of \$3K) for student assistance to help conform (translate/modify) existing teaching modules to ASCE/Global Center's needs and format.

A discussion then followed on a variety of issues including International Projects, the Certificate in Computing and IT, planning of future activities (Activities Planning), and a timetable for upcoming milestones. Tomasz shared a report/handout received from O. O. Ugwu at the University of Hong Kong. O.O. Ugwu has done a lot of work on the organization of our African network of users with four participating universities in Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa, and Ghana. Tomasz reported that he had sent formal letters to all these universities providing information about the Center and inviting them to join the Center as part of our Users Ring. Also, the issue of transition from the User to Contributor status within the Center was discussed and decided that an appropriate strategy will be developed.

### European (2<sup>nd</sup>) Network:

Tomasz announced that Zenon Waszczyszyn is retiring and is unable to continue cooperation with us. During his recent visit to Poland, Tomasz found a good replacement for him: Włodzimierz Sosnowski, who was highly recommended by Adam Borkowski and others. The nomination was approved by Ian Smith and Hani Melhem prior to the meeting. Dr. Sosnowski is a professor in the Polish Academy of Sciences and has many professional contacts in various East and Central European countries. A similar action is anticipated concerning the German connection.

### Middle-Eastern (3<sup>rd</sup>) Network:

Tomasz shared with the group the messages and proposals for collaboration that he received from Tarkan Barin. They revolve around the activities in Turkey (his country of origin), which are supported by the Turkish government and sponsored by the World Bank. Tarkan is currently finishing his PhD. Degree under Martina's supervision in Germany.

### Officers Election:

JP coordinated the nomination and election of officers. Three positions were opened: A chair and two vice chairs. Ray nominated Tomasz for the chair position, Ian for vice chair for Teaching Activities, and Hani for vice chair for International Organization. As no further nominations were made, the floor was then closed for nominations and the officers were approved unanimously. JP suggested that it would be appropriate for the officers to develop some organizational bylaws and rules concerning terms of officers, duties, future elections, etc.

### Advisory Board:

The concept of an Advisory Board to the Center was discussed. It was found advantageous to include prominent researchers, administrators, and directors to serve as advisors to the center. Some of the names suggested are: Pat Natale, Bill Henry, Michael G. Goode, Martina Schnellenbach-Held, and a few others. Tomasz will contact them and inquire about their interest in serving on the Advisory Board.

*Respectfully submitted by: Hani Melhem*

ATTACHMENT  
Meeting Agenda

## ATTACHMENT

ASCE Global Center of Excellence in Computing and IT  
Cancun, Mexico, July 14, 2005  
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Venue to be announced on Tuesday, July 12, 2005

1. Progress report
  - 1.1. General Issues - Tomasz Arciszewski
  - 1.2. Education – Ian Smith
  - 1.3. Cooperation with international organizations – Hani Melhem
2. Transition from the Task Group to the Center
  - 2.1. Technical Council on Computing and IT and the Center – J.P. Mohsen
  - 2.2. Center Organization - Tomasz Arciszewski
  - 2.3. Election of new officers – J.P. Mohsen
3. Computing Education – Ian Smith
  - 3.1. Objectives
  - 3.2. Teaching modules
  - 3.3. Volunteers
4. International Research - Tomasz Arciszewski
  - 4.1. Objectives
  - 4.2. Discussion
  - 4.3. Projects
5. ASCE Certificate in Computing and IT in Civil Engineering – Ian Smith and Tomasz Arciszewski
  - 5.1. Objectives
  - 5.2. Volunteers
  - 5.3. Plan of action
6. Activities Planning - Tomasz Arciszewski
7. General Discussion