



APRIL 6, 2017 NSF ATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CALL

April 10, 2017

At 1:30 EST on April 6, 2017, the Information Institute held an Advisory Committee conference call to discuss the progress made on the NSF ATE project. The advisory committee members had positive things to say about the NSF ATE Draft Annual Report for 2017 and complimented what was presented by the research team.

The call lasted approximately 35 minutes and covered the following:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Preliminary findings and issues
 - Importance of soft skills and how to improve them
 - Employers are looking for students with technical and soft skills but also with envision and creative solution skills.
 - Soft skills and creative solution skills may influence the curriculum of IT differently.
 - Some gap exists between students, employers, and institutes regarding knowledge, education, hands-on experience and skills based on their own perspective.
 - Students are not eager to move to the big city for a job; they want to build up their communities for economic development and IT development.
 - Certification is for hiring decision functions such as categorization scheme for initial screening purpose for the interview among stakeholders.
- 2017 4th NSF ATE Final report
 - Questions/Comments
 - Some leadership courses are trying to fill the gap for soft skills but many HR interviews are behaviors or team-based interviews, which focus on team building, culture, collaboration, leadership style, and vision not like skills like coding. If employees do not have coding skills, or certifications, employers can easily train new employees in these skills once they get hired.
 - Missing from a lot of research is that employers' expectations are more about your ability to learn as individual soft driven and motivated soft skills not necessarily about the actual skills up front.

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- Additional year grant may be submitted on how exactly college is being taught for soft skills and to deliver those skills to students.
- Get some insight and share experiences and curriculum on how to develop and deliver soft skills.
- Current community colleges are not ready to deliver these soft skills to employers. They are more focused on technical skills, knowledge, and certification.
- Education system may need to address employers' needs and expectations such as developing not only technical skills but also soft skills.
- Next Steps
 - Alumni tracking
 - Backtracking students experience
 - Theory and testing planning during the no cost extension
 - Papers that have been submitted for publication and other dissemination
- Evaluation Activities
- Questions or Comments
 - How the school delivers soft skills to students?
 - How to develop and train for soft skills?
- Thanks to Everyone!
- Adjourn

Committee members seemed especially interested in the alumni tracking agenda which provide great feedback for the school curriculum and suggestions for developing necessary skills not only technical ones, but also soft skills which many employers mentioned during the employee interview. PIs request any comments or necessary change on the NSF ATE Draft Annual Report by next week because the final report must be submitted by the end of April to finalize and ready for submitting the 4th Annual NSF ATE Report.