# AC 2008-2220: PROCESS AND CHALLENGES OF BUILDING A NEW CIVIL ENGINEERING CURRICULUM AT A REGIONAL CAMPUS

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# Process and Challenges of Building a New Civil Engineering Curriculum at a Regional Campus

### Abstract

Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) is a regional campus of Indiana University and Purdue University and administratively managed by Purdue University. IPFW is the largest public university in northeastern Indiana, serving more than 12,000 students. The civil engineering program is the most recent addition to the Department of Engineering, which offers B.S. degrees in civil, computer, electrical, and mechanical engineering.

The paper presents the process and challenges of establishing a new Civil Engineering curriculum and layout the techniques used in addressing these challenges. The paper addresses three issues: developing a curriculum that meets the regional needs; the Purdue University requirements, and 2007 ABET criteria. The challenge is to achieve these goals under several constraints including limited resources; accepting students to new program with different background such as transfer students from other institutions and students for technology programs, and the process of offering new core courses for advanced students in the program.

The curriculum was based on evaluating all CE programs in the state of Indiana and close by programs from neighboring Michigan and Ohio states. The paper will present the methodology used in comparing all programs curricula and the process of selecting the curriculum of the new program.

### Introduction

Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) is a regional campus of Indiana University and Purdue University and is the largest public university in northeastern Indiana, serving more than 12,000 students. The civil engineering program is the most recent addition to the Department of Engineering, which offers B.S. degrees in civil, computer, electrical, and mechanical engineering.

The campus is a commuter campus and most of the students are working either full time or part time. A recent survey of freshmen students at the Engineering College found that about 86% of the students were full time students and about 14% were part time students. Most of the students (70%) were employed as follows: 16% working full time, 30% working part time with 20 or more hours per week, and 18% were working part time with less than 20 hours per week<sup>1</sup>.

The development the Civil Engineering program at IPFW University followed a typical procedure of creating a new program at any US higher education institution. The procedure includes preparing and submitting a proposal for approval by the university administration and then state agencies, several revisions of the proposal were conducted to comply with comments and recommendations at each level of the approval chain; securing the final approval of the program, and implementation. The key component of the process is to develop the curriculum to the program while achieving harmony the civil engineering programs within the department.<sup>2, 3</sup>

The implementation component usually include integrating the new program in the university system such as entering the new courses with their description in the Banner System and in University Bulletin; recruiting new faculty and students for the program, developing laboratory facilities which involve securing space and equipment, develop and start implementing an assessment plan in preparation for the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accreditation, and start offering courses<sup>4</sup>.

## Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to modify the proposed curriculum of the new Civil Engineering (CE) program developed by mechanical engineering faculty at the Engineering department. The goal of the proposed modification is to make the program comparable to curricula offered at CE programs in the US in general and the State of Indiana and nearby schools in Michigan and Ohio in particular. Moreover, the program should serve the needs of Indiana as presented in the survey of 27 civil engineering firms in the State. The proposed modification would fortify the program with the same resources listed in the original proposal.

## Methodology

The civil engineering program proposed curriculum was compared to 12 other Civil Engineering programs. Half of these programs are from schools in the State of Indiana that offer similar CE program and the other half from nearby schools in Michigan and Ohio. The modifications to the current curriculum are proposed based on the comparison with other schools; results of a survey of 27 local companies presented in the original proposal; and 2007 ABET criteria.

The following are the list of the Civil Engineering Programs used in the comparison:

Indiana:

- 1) University of Notre Dame, 129 credit hours.
- 2) Valparaiso University, 132 credit hours.
- 3) Purdue University, West Lafayette, 133 credit hours.
- 4) Tri-State University, 132 credit hours.
- 5) University of Evansville, 128-135 credit hours.
- 6) Rose Hulman Technical Institute, 194 term credit hours (129 semester credit hours).

## <u>Michigan</u>

- 7) Western Michigan University, (127+University requirements) credit hours.
- 8) University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 128 credit hours.
- 9) Michigan State University, 128 credit hours.

## <u>Ohio</u>

- 10) University of Cincinnati, 192-197 term credit hours (128-131 semester credit hours).
- 11) University of Toledo, 128 credit hours.
- 12) Ohio State University, 200 term credit hours (133 semester credit hours).

In summary, the number of credit hours to earn a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering ranges from 128 to 133 credit hours. The Department of Engineering at IPFW has currently four programs with total credit hours ranges from 126-128 hours<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, it has been decided to set the requirement for the new civil engineering program to128 credit hours to meet the state minimum, be similar to neighboring universities, and to meet the maximum possible hours set by the Engineering Department at IPFW.

The author was the first civil engineering faculty hired by the department. The first task for him was to evaluate the current curriculum presented as presented in the program proposal. In order to evaluate the current proposed curriculum, a comprehensive comparison between IPFW civil engineering curriculum and other universities was conducted. The goal of this comparison was to check on the current courses offered in the original proposed curriculum and compared it to other schools. A summary of the key findings is presented in Figure 1. As shown in the figure, there are courses in the original proposed curriculum that are not part of degree plan of any other school offer it in their curriculum. In addition, there are other courses such as "Statistics and Probability for Engineers" and "Construction Management" that are offered by many other schools and are not part of the current curriculum.

Part of developing the proposal for the program, a survey was conducted in the state to assess the needs for civil engineers and the demand in each specialty. Table 1 presents the number of engineers currently employed with companies surveyed based on their discipline in the Civil Engineering area. Table 1 shows that 30% of civil engineers employed practice "general" civil work. The hiring in the areas of structural and construction management were 18% followed by

14% in the areas of transportation and environmental engineering. Finally, the demand for geotechnical engineers was about 7%.

# of Schools	Courses	Tiala						Scho	ool <sup>(1)</sup>					
Offering the	Course	line			Ind	iana			Mi	chig	an		Ohio	)
Course			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3	MA 351	Elementary Linear Algebra	3.5		3								3	
2	ME 293	Measurements and Instrumentation						4	2					
10	ME 318	Fluid Mechanics	3	4		3		4	3	4	4	3	3	4
2	ME 303	Material Science and Engineering			6		3							
0	CE 303	Route and Construction Surveying												
3	ENGR 411	Capstone Design Project II					4	4				3		
0	CE 392	Stochastics												
11		Statistics & Probability <sup>(2)</sup>	3	3	3	3		4	3	5	3	3	3	5
9		Civil Engineering Materials <sup>(2)</sup>	4	3				4	3	4	4	5	3	4
8		Construction Management <sup>(2)</sup>		3	3		3	2	4	3		6		1
4		Computaional Methods	3							4	3	3		
7		Steel Design	4	3		3	3	3					3	4
	Total Ho	ours Required for Graduation	129	132	133	132	128+	129	127+	128	128	128	128	133
(1) List of Scl	hools							,						
Inc	liana		Mich	nigan										
1)	University	of Notre Dame	7) Western Michigan University											
2)	Valparaiso	University Valparaiso	8) University of Michigan											
3)	Purdue Uni	iversity	9)	Mich	nigan	State	Unive	ersity						
4)	Tri-State U	niversity	Ohio	)										
5)	University	of Evansville	10)	Univ	rsity	of C	incinn	ati*						
6)	Rose Hulm	an Technical Institute*	11)	Univ	rsity	of T	oledo							
			12)	Ohio	State	e Univ	versity	/*						
(2) These cou	rses are lis	ted under this name or similar names in ot	her scl	hools										
	1) Statistics	s for Engineers												
	2) Statistics	s & Probibility applications for Engineers												
	3) Statistics	s & Probibility for Civil Engineers												
	4) Statistica	al Applications in Civil Engineering												
	5) Enginee	ring Materials												
	6) Project a	and Construction Management												
*: using quart	er system. T	The semester credit hour is assumed to be equ	al to 2/	'3 of c	quarte	r hou	r.							
~ ~ .	•	Figure 1: Summary of c	urric	ula	com	npar	ison							

Table 1: Demand for Civil Engineers by Specialty in the Northeast Indiana

Decipline	Number	%
Civil (general)	17	30%
Structural	10	18%
Construction	10	18%
Transportation	8	14%
Environmental	8	14%
Geotech	4	7%

Recommendations for Curriculum Modifications:

The following are proposed recommendations to the Civil Engineering curriculum:

- I) Courses recommended for removal from the curriculum:
  - <u>Route and Construction Surveying (3)</u>: this course is not taught at any other institution as a core course. Most programs are offering only one course of surveying. In addition, many institutions are either moving away from surveying or modifying the course to include emerging technologies such as GPS and GIS in a new course called Geomatics. These changes will be adapted to the current surveying course listed in the program. This course, however, will be moved to be an elective course.
  - 2) <u>Stochastic (3)</u>: this course does not exist in any other school and it is considered to be an advanced course for CE students. However, there is an urgent need for an introductory course in statistical application in civil engineering. This course will be presented later in this paper.
  - 3) <u>Measurements and Instrumentations (2)</u>: very few schools are offering this course as part of their curriculum (i.e., 2 out of 12).

Total credit hours suggested for removal is (8) credit hours.

- II) Courses recommended for addition to the curriculum:
  - Fluid Mechanics (3+1): this course is necessary for CE students to understand the concept of fluid mechanics. It is taught by most of other institution (i.e., 10 out of 12) as a core course. The lab in this course will replace the Hydraulics lab (-1) that currently exists in the curriculum.
  - 2) <u>Statistical Applications in Civil Engineering (3)</u>: this course covers the applications of statistics and probability in all areas of Civil Engineering. Most of the universities (11 out of 12) have this course or similar courses.
  - 3) <u>Construction Management (3)</u>: this course is important for CE students to have knowledge in construction engineering and management. There are eight schools offering this course in their core curriculum as shown in Figure 1. In addition, the industry survey conducted with 27 companies in Indiana showed construction engineers as the second highest hires when compared to other disciplines in Civil Engineering.
  - 4) <u>Soil Mechanics Lab (1)</u>: The Soil Mechanics course does not have a corresponding lab. It is recommended to add an hour of lab for the course.
  - 5) <u>Environmental Lab (1)</u>. The Environmental Engineering course does not have a corresponding lab. It is recommended to add an hour of lab for the course.

Total credit hours suggested for addition is (11) credit hours.

- III) Courses recommended for replacement:
  - 1) <u>Civil Engineering Materials (3+1)</u>: most of the schools (i.e., 9 out of 12) in the survey are teaching this course. This course is proposed to replace Material Science and Engineering

(ME303) including the lab (ME304) and Reinforced Concrete Lab courses. This course and the corresponding lab will cover materials related to Civil Engineering.

Total credit hours suggested for addition/removal is (0) credit hours.

- IV) Courses recommended for Modification:
  - 1) <u>Capstone Design Project I & II (1+3)</u>: in the area of Civil Engineering there are very few schools are offering this course with (6) credit hours as part of their curriculum. As shown in the survey only one school (i.e., University of Evansville) is offering two sequential courses. The other two schools listed in the table, Rose Hulman and Ohio States are using quarter system and they need two terms for the course. The total of 6 quarter hours is equivalent to 4 semester hours. However, one semester provide very short time for students to pick-up a project, full understand what to do, collect the information needed and design the project. It is very important for student to spend some time to digest the concept of this course, select their project, and be totally prepared for the design part. Thus, it is recommended to reduce the credit hours for Project I to only one hour and keep the second part 3 hours.
  - 2) Modifying Course Title:
    - a. Change <u>Structural Analysis I</u> to <u>Structural Analysis</u>.
    - b. Change <u>Geotechnical Engineering I</u> to <u>Soil Mechanics</u>.
    - c. Change Theory of Reinforced Concrete to Design of Concrete Structures

Total credit hours suggested for removal is (2) credit hours.

The bingo sheet for the program for the old program and new modified program are shown in Figures 2 and 3, respectively.

V) Elective Courses Modification:

In order to fortify the student knowledge in civil engineering and give them more depth in one or more of their favorite areas, Figure 4 presents the proposed technical elective courses for civil engineering program. In order to meet new ABET criteria for the fourth area in science, the program offers a flexible way to meet this requirement while giving students a choice of selecting a course in their area of interest. As shown in Figure 4, at least one technical elective course shall be taken from the science group. In order to fortify the students' technical background in the area of civil engineering, a maximum of two elective courses can be taken from non-civil engineering courses.

# Figure 2: Original BSCE degree in Civil Engineering

## BSCE Degree Department of Engineering

Proposed Date: Fall 2006

All engineering & technical elective courses must have a combined minimum GPA of 2.0. Course sequencing follows the academic year, and assumes beginning the program in the Fall Semester. P = Pre-requisite, C = Co-Requisite or Pre-requisite

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1st Semester 16 credits	MA 165 (4) P: MA 154 or MA 159 (C or better), or placement	CHM 115 (4) P: CHM 111 or 1 yr. H.S. C: MA 153 or MA 151	ENGR 101 (1)	ENGR 120 (2) P: MA 153 Area V	ENGR 121 (2) P: MA 154 or MA159 (C or better), or placement C: ENGR 120	ENGR W131 (3) P: ENG W130 (C or better), or placement
2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester 18 credits	MA 166 (4) P: MA 165 (C or better)	<b>PHYS 152 (5)</b> C: MA 166	ENGR 199 (3) P: ENGR 101, C: ENGR 121, PHYS 152	<b>COM 114 (3)</b> (C or better)	General Education (3) Area III	
3rd Semester 17 credits	MA 261 (4) P: MA 166 (C or better)	MA 351 (3) P: MA 166 (C or better)	PHYS 251 (5) P: PHYS 152 C: MA 261	ME 250 (3) P: PHYS 152 C: MA 261	ENGR 221 (2) P: ENGR 101, ENGR121	
4 <sup>th</sup> Semester 16 credits	MA 363 (3) P: MA 351	ME 251 (3) P: ME 250 C: MA 363	ME 200 (3) C: MA 261	ME 252 (3) P: ME 250 C: MA 363	CE 203 (4) P: MA165, ENGR 120 Surveying	
5 <sup>th</sup> Semester 16 credits	<b>CE 340 (3)</b> P: ME 251 Hydraulics	CE 371 (3) P: ME 252 Structural Analysis	ME 303 (2) P: CHM 115, PHYS 251) C: ME252	ME 293 (2) P:COM114, ENG W131	CE 303 (3) P: CE 200) Route and Construction Surveying	ECON E 201 (3) Area III
S <sup>th</sup> Semester	<b>CE 343 (1)</b> C: CE 340 Hydraulics Lab	CE 473 (3) P: CE 371 Theory of Reinforced Concrete	ME 304 (1) P: ME 282, ME 303	CE 392 (3) P: MA 261 Stochastics	CE 383 (3) P: ME 252, C: ME 303 Geotechnical Engineering	General Education (3) Area IV
7 <sup>th</sup> Semester 6 16 credits	CE 350 (3) Environmental Engineering	CE 474 (1) C: CE 473 Theory of Reinforced Concrete Lab	CE 487 (3) or ENGR 410 (3) P: CE 473 Civil Engineering Design I	Tech. Elec. (3)	CE 361 (3) Transportation Engineering	Tech. Elec. (3)
8 <sup>th</sup> Semester 15 credits	Tech. Elec. (3)	Tech. Elec. (3)	CE 488 (3) or ENGR 411 (3) P: CE 487 or ENGR 410 Civil Engineering Design II	General Education (3) Area IV	General Education (3) Area VI	

Total credit hours: 128

# Figure 3: Modified BSCE degree in Civil Engineering

#### BSCE Degree Department of Engineering

Proposed Date: Fall 2007

All engineering & technical elective courses must have a combined minimum GPA of 2.0. Course sequencing follows the academic year, and assumes beginning the program in the Fall Semester. P = Pre-requisite, C = Co-Requisite or Pre-requisite



For more information visit http://www.engr.ipfw.edu

emester redits	MA 165 (4) P: MA 154 or MA 159 (C+), or placement	CHM 115 (4) P: CHM 111 or 1 yr. H.S. C: MA 153 or MA 151	ENGR 101 (1)	ENGR 120 (2) P: MA 153 Area V	ENGR 121 (2) P: MA 154 or MA159 (C+), or placement C: ENGR 120	ENG W131 (3) P: ENG W130 (C+), or placement
1st S 16 cı	Calculus I	General Chemistry	Introduction to Engineering	Graphical Communication	Computer Tools	Elementary Composition
Semester credits	MA 166 (4) P: MA 165 (C+)	PHYS 152 (5) C: MA 166	ENGR 199 (3) P: ENGR 101 C: ENGR 121, PHYS 152	<b>COM 114 (3)</b> (C +)		
2 <sup>nd</sup> 15 4	Calculus II	Mechanics	Intro to Engineering Design	Fund of Speech Communication		
semester redits	MA 261 (4) P: MA 166 (C+)	MA 351 (3) P: MA 166 (C+)	PHYS 251 (5) P: PHYS 152 C: MA 261	CE 250 (3) P: PHYS 152	ENGR 221 (2) P: ENGR 101, ENGR121	
3rd 5 17 c	Multivariate Calculus	Elementary Linear Algebra	Heat Electricity and Optics	Statics	C and C++ Programming	
nester dits	MA 363 (3) P: MA 261 MA 351	CE 251 (3) P: CE 250 C: MA 363	ME 200 (3) C: MA 261	<b>CE 252 (3)</b> P: CE 250	CE 210 (3) P: MA 165 ENGR 120	General Education Elective (3)
4 <sup>th</sup> Ser 18 cret	Differential Equations	Dynamics	Thermodynamics I	Strength of Materials	Introduction to Geomatics	Area III
oth Semester 8 credits	CE 318 (3) P: ME 200, CE 251, and MA 363	CE 375 (3) P: CE 252, MA 363 Structural Analysis	CE 315 (3) P: CE 252 CE Materials	CE 345 (3) C: CE 210	STAT 511 (3) P: MA 166 Statistical Methods	ECON E 201 (3) Area III Intro to Microeconomics
6 <sup>th</sup> Semester 5 14 credits 1	CE 319 (1) P: CE 318	CE 365 (3) P: CHM 115 C: CE 318 Environmental Engineering	CE 316 (1) P: CE 315 CE Materials Lab	CE 380 (3) P: CE 252 CE 318	CE 376 (3) P: CE 375	CE 330 (3) C: STAT 511 Construction Management
th Semester 5 credits	<b>CE 418 (3)</b> P: CE 318 C: CE 319	CE 366(1) P: CE 365	CE 487 (1) P: CE 376	CE 381(1) P: CE 380	1 <sup>st</sup> Tech. Elec. (3) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tech. Elec. (3)	General Education Elective (3) Area IV
Semester 7 <sup>1</sup> credits 15	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tech. Elec. (3)	4 <sup>th</sup> Tech. Elec. (3)	Project I <b>CE 488 (3)</b> P: CE 487	General Education Elective (3) Area IV	General Education Elective (3) Area VI	
8 <sup>#</sup> 15 (			Civil Engineering Design Project II		Total c	redit hours: 128

Math & Science Freshmen Engineering Civil Engineering Mechanical Engineering General Education	rey					
		Math & Science	Freshmen Engineering	Civil Engineering	Mechanical Engineering	General Education

### Figure 4: Elective Courses for the Civil Engineering Program Technical Electives

#### Civil Engineering Program

#### Structural Area Courses

Course #	Title	Credit	Department
CE 379	Numerical Methods in Engineering	3	Engineering
CE 468	Experimental Stress Analysis	3	Engineering
CE 475	Design of Steel Structures	3	Engineering
CE 480	Finite Element Analysis	3	Engineering
C E 570	Advanced Structural Mechanics	3	Engineering
MA 510	Vector Calculus (‡)	3	Mathematics

#### Geoenvironmental Area Courses

Course #	Title	Credit	Department
CE 420	Water Resources	3	Engineering
CE 465	Water and Wastewater Engineering	3	Engineering
CE 478	Foundation Analysis and Design	3	Engineering
GEOL G451	Principles of Hydrogeology (†)	3	Geology
GEOL G406	Introduction to Geochemistry (†)	3	Geology
BIOL 349	Environmental Science (†)	3	Biology

#### Construction Management Area Courses

Course #	Title	Credit	Department
CE 410	Route and Construction Surveying	3	Engineering
CE 431	Construction Contracting and Specifications	3	Engineering
CE 432	Construction Planning and Scheduling	3	Engineering
SE 520	Engineering Economics	3	Engineering
BUS Z 302	Management of Organizations and People (‡)	3	Business

#### Transportation Area Courses

Course #	Title	Credit	Department
CE 448	Transportation Planning	3	Engineering
CE 450	Roadway and Pavement Design	3	Engineering
CE 455	Traffic Engineering	3	Engineering
MA 575	Graph Theory (‡)	3	Mathematics

#### Special Topics

Course #	Title	Credit	Department
CE 412	Geographic Information Systems in Engineering	3	Engineering
CE 435	Introduction to Engineering Systems Design	3	Engineering
CE 490	Selected Topics in Civil Engineering	3	Engineering
STAT 512	Applied Regression Analysis (‡)	3	Mathematics

(†) At least one technical elective course <u>shall be taken</u> from this group.

(‡) Only one technical elective course <u>may be taken</u> from this group.

A maximum of two elective courses can be taken from non-civil engineering courses.

### VI) Recommendations for current or future implementations

- 1) <u>Engineering Economy or systems:</u> it is recommended to adapt Engineering Economy or Systems Engineering course that include engineering economy material to replace Introduction to Microeconomics class.
- 2) <u>Computational Methods:</u> several schools have listed computational or numerical method in their core curriculum. It is recommended to add an introduction to numerical methods for engineers in one of the freshmen courses. This course is proposed to be an elective course at this time.
- 3) <u>Computer Tools for Engineers:</u> although none of the schools listed in the survey offer this course in their curricula, however, most of the materials covered in this course is covered in one or several courses in the other schools. It is recommended to keep this course with possible modified in the future to include basic simulations and optimization using computers.

### Summary and Conclusions

The total credit hours for the program are 128. This total is within the range of programs in the Department of Engineering (i.e., 126-128) and is the same as the minimum of hours offered by other program. The following table summarizes the proposed changes, degree plan, and the bingo sheet:

Remove		Add			
	Re	placing Courses			
Course	CH	Course	СН		
Route and Construction Surveying	3	Fluid Mechanics	4		
Stochastics	3	Statistical Applications in Civil Engineering	3		
Measurements and Instrumentation	2	Construction Management	3		
	Chang	ing Exiting Courses			
Material Science and Engineering Mechanics and Materials Lab Reinforced Concrete Lab	4	Civil Engineering Materials (3) and Materials lab (1)	4		
Capstone Design Project I	3	Capstone Design Project I	1		
	Addii	ng/Removing Labs			
Hydrulics Lab	1	Environmental lab *	1		
		Soil Mechanics lab *	1		
	Μ	odifying Names			
Structural Analysis I	3	Structural Analysis	3		
Geotechnical Engineering I	3	Soil Mechanics	3		
Theory of Reinforced Concrete	3	Design of Concrete Structures	3		
Total	25		26		

### 1) Proposed Changes:

\*: new course or part of the original course.

The current modification to the proposed CE curriculum will help the program to be comparable to the CE programs in the state of Indiana and the neighboring region. In addition, it meets the new ABET criteria and give flexibility to students to choose the new science course of their choice. Moreover, the curriculum will not only meets the ABET requirements, but also the knowledge needed for the graduating civil engineers in the region.

Updating and modifying curriculum is continues process. Therefore, the current curriculum should be reviewed and updated continuously to me the need of the region and the new ABET criteria of 2009 and the new resources available at IPFW. It is highly recommend comparing the new modified curriculum to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Body of Knowledge (BOK) and come up with recommendations to meet both ABET 2009 criteria and BOK.

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