

Summary of the MARC for IB Computer Science

16 November 2004

In attendance:

Teachers and staff from Fairfax County Public Schools, Prince William County, Arlington County, Falls Church, Washington, D.C., and Maryland Counties.

These were instructors whose schools were already teaching the course, wanted to teach the course, or simply wanted to see what the program was about.

Highlights of the Meeting

- ❖ There have been major curriculum changes in the IBCS program:
 - Changes are effective starting with 2006 exams.
 - IB is switching to JAVA exclusively - IB is no longer language independent.
 - IBCS Standard Level will be more rigorous than currently.
 - IBCS Higher Level will be slightly less rigorous than currently.
 - PURE is being eliminated.
 - Dossier design and algorithms will be done in JAVA.
 - Greater emphasis will be placed on the analysis phase of the program dossier; interviews must be **documented**.
- ❖ Concerns were expressed about the program dossier:
 - There has been insufficient guidance on how to write program designs in JAVA (since PURE is eliminated and the portability requirement has been abandoned).
 - The samples given out earlier when PURE was used and portability was required are not easily adaptable to the new requirements.
 - In assisting students with their program dossier, we must take care not to overstep the permissible boundaries. Some concerns were expressed about the practice of grading a student's draft copies and returning these for revision before the final draft is submitted.
- ❖ There was an online presentation introducing **The Online Curriculum Center**:
 - This site contains resources for IB teachers all over the world.
 - Users may share experiences, find resources, view curriculum materials, keep up to date, and take part in on-line training.
 - In the past this site has hosted an online conference in real-time.

- Questions may be directed to online faculty members for IBCS who are specialists in their area.
 - The site's address is www.online.IBO.org. A user name and password must be obtained from each school's IB coordinator.
- ❖ Participants shared lesson plans, opinions about available textbooks and resources, and concerns about the direction of the subject in their individual schools.
 - ❖ Some concerns were the quality of students, the prerequisites for entering IBCS, the length of the program, and the physical environment (teaching SL and HL students in the same class).
 - ❖ Suggestions were made for increasing enrollment in both the introductory and IBCS courses.

Respectfully submitted by Ms. Kel Jakhsen, Robert E. Lee High School