Information for Paper Reviewers for 2011 Midwest Conference

What is expected in a draft paper?
Each paper should address one or more of the objectives of the Midwest ASEE Conference and should include the following information:

- Background and motivation
- Methods (What was done and why)
- Results (include data and analysis; what was found)
- Discussion (interpretation of what the data are telling)
- Conclusions and significance (including wider application)

Although papers should be free of grammatical and spelling errors, these issues would warrant guidance for revisions rather than outright rejection. Evaluation should be based more on technical merit than on writing style, provided that the review criteria are met.

What are the objectives of ASEE?
Quoting from the ASEE website:

“ASEE is a non-profit organization which brings together engineering educators from all of the engineering and engineering technology fields to collaborate on solutions to promote excellence in instruction, research, public service, and practice.”

Thus, papers submitted to the conference should address the broad area of promoting excellence in engineering instruction, research, or public service among students. While the conference has a list of “suggested” topics, a paper should not be rejected solely due to not fitting one of these topic areas.

What are the review criteria?
The conference will use an evaluation rubric when reviewing abstracts and papers. The questions included in the evaluation are:

Does/is the paper -

- Report on a well-designed study?
- Involve the reporting and meaningful analysis of data / evidence?
- Of interest to ASEE members?
- Meaningful addition to the body of knowledge?
- Well written and easy to read?

Reviewers are asked to assign a score from 1-10 (1- Unacceptable, 10- Exemplary) for how well a paper meets each of the above criteria.

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1 Liberally copied and modified from 2011 ASEE Conference instructions to reviewers.
2 See keywords listed on the conference web page
What is meant by a well-designed study?

A well designed study is one that intentionally collects data, either quantitative or qualitative, to answer a research question, test a hypothesis, or assess a participant outcome. It should include an evaluation and relevance of the current study to prior work or accepted knowledge or norms.

What if the paper presents something unique and exciting, but does not seem to meet the "well designed study" criterion?

The conference encourages the submission of highly innovative programs or strategies with appropriate evaluation or assessment. Although the authors are encouraged to employ a well design study and provide a robust statistical analysis of their data, it is not required for publication at the regional level. Preliminary results and analysis should be encouraged with recommendation for enhancement.

As an abstract reviewer, you have several options:

- Recommend acceptance with minimal comments
- Recommend acceptance with comments noting that the paper is descriptive in nature and may not be suitable, as written, for submission to the ASEE national meeting.
- Recommend rejection, stating the short-comings of the paper so that the authors are well-informed for a future re-submission

If the paper is relating a curriculum change or demonstration:

Many papers of this type may have, at best, preliminary assessment data. These type papers, often describe a new, exciting, or successfully implemented activity that does not have the assessment typically needed for a formal paper and the author just wants to share the activity. These type papers should consist of:

- The lesson or activity plans,
- Suggested implementation tips and strategies,
- Suggestions for assessment if that is available, and
- A description of the context in which it has been tested.

A paper of this caliber would be appropriate for acceptance at the regional level; however, it would not be recommended for the national level without significant enhancements.