# January 4th, 2025 Meeting Minutes

# CCSC: Central Plains Conference

# 11:00 AM (online-only)

**Attendance: Eric Manley, Tim Urness, Andrei Migunov, Joan Gladbach, Scott Sigman, Brian Hare, Ajay Bandi, Wen Hsin, Joseph Kendall-Morwick, Ron McCleary, Kevin Brunner, Bill Siever**

1. Welcome and Introductions – Eric
2. Approval of Minutes from August Meeting – **Scott motioned to approve; Ron seconded. Minutes passed.**
3. Regional Board/National Board Report –

Judy is overseas and unable to attend. She asked if I could share the following report:

* + Receipts for conference reimbursement must be returned in within 60 days from end of conference. Any receipts submitted after 60 days will not be accepted for reimbursement.
  + The Board requests that all awards be paid by gift card. The treasurer does not want to send checks for student awards. The issue is that checks sent to students are not always cashed, and it is time-consuming to issue checks.
  + All spring conference budgets are now due June 30. The budget for our 2026 conference is due June 30,2025.
  + Authors may submit papers using the Word template, but if accepted, regional editors are asked to put papers in LaTeX format. **– Joan is our regional editor. She was expecting to do this. Scott – These are national guidelines and believes there is a filter that will convert Word to LaTeX. Believes it is the authors responsibility to do that. Ron – in the past the regional editors have done this in the past. Bill – If we accept a paper in Word format, to tell the authors they need to convert it, but give them a contact to assist them. Eric – We should plead with authors to put in LaTeX format and then help them. Ron – in past experience had a lot of push back from authors, so be lenient on it. Ron – Conftool does send instructions. These are then sent to regional editor. Joan will provide Ron with what instructions she wants in the email that is sent. Scott shared the CCSC Publication Guidelines to assist Joan.**
  + We have two new National Partners: CodeGrade and CodeZinger. GitHub has also rejoined. The National Partners chair thanks everyone for being flexible when National Partners contact us close to the date of the conference and expect accommodation (i.e., tables, time for a presentation, etc.). Program chairs are encouraged to contact National Partners early (suggest 2 months in advance) to see if they want to be part of the program. The list of all National Partners is always current on the CCSC website. **– Eric will reach out to partners about their participation in February.**
  + Cathy Bareiss, the membership chair, will be polling the membership about timing for a virtual summer conference. Please respond when you get her email. **– Watch for this**
  + There is a concern about regions staying within their budgets (CP has, with few exceptions, always come in under or at budget). The conference chair should check our income in ConfTool 2 weeks before the conference and see if income will cover expenses. If not, need to adjust the budget and submit an updated budget to George Dimitoglou (the Comptroller) two weeks prior to conference. We are encouraged to build a contingency amount into the budget; if we come in under budget, that money will available for the following year. **– We have been okay in years past**
  + Cathy Bareiss (membership) wants regions to submit a membership report after the conference (conference attendance). Ron did this last year, so it would be the same kind of report. Thanks, Ron. **– THANK YOU RON**

1. Positions up for re-election at the conference meeting
   * Secretary (Diana will run again)
   * Web master (Deepika not running) **– Eric has indicated he would be willing to run**
2. Committee Reports
   * Conference Chair – Eric
   * K-12 – **Eric – met with some local folks, some interests and ideas that might give some collaboration. What activities for teachers and students? There may not be much happening with K-12 outreach unless we have something we think will be useful to high school teachers to increase participation. Not a whole lot of interest there.**
   * Two-year college outreach - Mahmoud
   * Student Posters and Papers – Scott, Joseph, Eric

* Papers deadline: 3/14/2025 (full paper due at this time?)
* Draft of paper submission form: <https://forms.gle/1p7EV1Ysbmk9oidZ8>
* Posters deadline: 3/21/2025
* Draft of poster submission form: <https://forms.gle/RpGVsWqYni998FgV9>
* Note: we need to update the webpage here with the new link: <https://www.ccsc.org/centralplains/poster-contest/>
  + - **Joseph - Second submission for pdf – yes**
    - **Eric – have an archive of some previous posters, one of the issues with website is too many files. Maybe a shared Google folder? Joseph will look into this.**
    - **Scott – have had pdf’s disappear of the papers as well, would like to have papers on the website.**
    - **Eric – whoever is the next webmaster will need to figure out a way to present these on the website.**
    - **Scott has learned a lot from working with the server and is happy to share what he has learned with the webmaster outside of the meeting.**
    - **If anyone has any ideas and wants to run as webmaster, Eric is happy to help.**
  + Hack-a-thon – Scott
    - Registration deadline: 2/7/2025 **– Scott – everything should be set. Webpage is updated with all instructions.**
  + Programming Contest – Chuck, Eric
    - * **Eric – Drake’s IT is not very helpful therefore looking at new tools.**
      * **Ron – If going to do something different highly suggest a trial run soon. Too many times we have run into issues in the past. Brian reiterated the importance of this. Make sure all problems have been tested and have solutions. This needs to be done well in advance.**
      * **Eric – was hoping to do this on the honor system with the personal laptops. If anyone is interested in helping, please let Eric know.** 
        1. Tentative plan: Use DOMJudge for submissions
        2. Teams each bring a laptop which they are responsible for pre-configuring with the correct compilers, etc. ahead of time
        3. No remote participation
        4. Proctors - any volunteers to help? **– will look for students but if anyone is around to help, please email Eric and let him know.**
        5. How do we handle registration? What is the deadline? **– Ron – every member has to register in ConfTool. When the team registers they check programming contest and then get extra questions so that we can extract out if needed. They do have to contact Chuck with information about team.**

**Kevin – need to communicate with Chuck re teams on ConfTool and who has emailed him. Has been some last-minute registrations which caused issues with setup. This causes issues with trying to throw something together. Would be willing to support the honor system. Would like to get away from PC Squared and look into a new tool. Would be happy to help Chuck get this registered.**

**Wen – cell phone usage is a problem as well as ChatGPT, maybe use a browser lockdown?**

**Scott - Hackathon replacing programming contests – some schools like this, other schools just want programming contests. Not sure we should just have the hackathon only.**

**Ajay – agree with Kevin, the resources need to be well planned and have a hard deadline for the contest.**

**Ron – need to publicize the deadline and stick to it.**

1. Registration – Ron
   * **Ron – still needs to put in remote only attendees, will get that done. Has all other categories in. Regular attendees have full and Saturday only, along with online only. Will have a check box to allow you to select online-only for anyone else that wants to go online only.** 
     + **Shared what ConfTool looks like with all the participant status/group options and then how to select online.** 
       - **Ajay – add graduate and undergraduate for contests.**
       - **Ron – could do a submission section, for contest submissions if we wanted to. Just like we do with papers/panels/tutorials. Not sure what that gains us, other then we collect them in one place? Can add things for Programming Contest.**
       - **Scott – for student papers, maybe just a topic or title is appropriate here, but not asking for a full paper because it won’t be completed at the time of registration.**
       - **Joseph – having this information is helpful, but not ready to use ConfTool for everything yet for the student contests.**
       - **Wen – would like to add lightning talks here.**
       - **Ron – needs to look at facility, to see if can add a text block.**
       - **Ajay – This is time of registration – so this would be as simple and easy for participants since papers/posters/abstracts will not be completed yet.**
       - **Ron – can generate a spreadsheet with this information and give to chair and that way they can contact them. He will also look at different levels of access for information but may be able to set up chairs to access (after peer reviews) the data in ConfTool. Won’t guarantee but will look into it.**
       - **Ron – will add - posters – add grad/undergrad title and topic, paper – title/topic, school, advisor, add lightning talks for university faculty or student.**
       - **Joseph – secondary submissions using Google forms – just set up a non-profit google account, may be a good idea to do that to help streamline managing secondary submissions and shared documents. Thought for next year.**
       - **Eric – since prizes must be gift cards, do we still have to collect all their info?**
         1. **Brian – yes, receipt from student still needs to be done at the conference when they are there. Have gift cards purchased in advance. Faculty member can sign that they received on behalf of student. Just have to have paperwork that aligns with what we said we spent on prizes.**
         2. **Ajay – physical gift cards are easiest when having to gather their information.**
       - **Ron – needs to know about meals from Eric.**
       - **Eric – would like to have numbers of how many special meals would be needed.**
         1. **Ron will add a dietary request box.**
       - **Ron – only had one request for remote presentation. Will see if it gets accepted. Does not foresee needing a lot of remote presentations.**
       - **Eric – if we have remote attendees, going to already have something set up.**
   * **Ajay – feels it is a good idea to put on the website the online-only and group registration instructions.** 
     + **Ron thinks we figured this out last year for group registrations – each student registers and picks the option to pay by check, then they let Ron know the list and puts a credit on, except for Faculty member who can then pay via credit/check, etc. Leaves comments on each account letting them know.**
2. Pre-Conference Workshop – Joan, Wen
   * Teaching with AI (GPT), Carter Zenke & Rongxin Liu (Harvard University)
     + Abstract: Teaching computer science at scale can be challenging. From our experience in CS50, Harvard University’s introductory course, we’ve seen firsthand the impactful role generative artificial intelligence (Gen-AI) can play in education. Recognizing its potential and stakes, we integrated OpenAI’s GPT into our own teaching methodology. The goal was to emulate a 1:1 teacher-to-student ratio, incorporating “pedagogical guardrails” to maintain instructional integrity. The result was a personalized, AI-powered bot in the form of a friendly yellow rubber duck aimed at delivering instructional responses and troubleshooting without giving outright solutions. We plan to share our journey and offer insights into responsibly harnessing AI in educational settings. Participants will gain hands-on experience working with GPT through OpenAI’s APIs, understanding and crafting prompts, answering questions using embedding-based search, and finally, building their own AI chatbot. Ultimately, we’ll not only share lessons learned from our own approach but also equip educators hands-on with the knowledge and tools with which they, too, can implement these technologies in their unique teaching environments.
       - **Joan – same presenters as last year. They indicated they are willing to do it remotely if people are attending remotely.**
       - **Eric – would like to just have in-person, so will plan on in-person.**
       - **Wen – Joan has applied for SIGCSE presenter for travel. $1000 has been approved. Registration fee will be waived for presenters like last year.**
       - **Ron – needs info for preconference workshop to put in Conftool.**
     + Things needed for this workshop:
       - A room with a projector, collaborative tables, and reliable Wi-Fi connection would suit the workshop best. It's ideal if participants bring laptops.
       - I would like to also request: coffee & tea and some small breakfast type snacks for the pre-conference workshop as well. I can provide this if you are not able to do so or it is not in the budget, but please let me know.
3. Keynote Speakers – Eric
   * **Drake faculty have been working on this. Do not have names just yet but would like to invite a Drake faculty member to be the opening speaker - no objections.** 
     + **Meredith Moore will be opening speaker – faculty at Drake.**
     + **Joan - Keynote speaker needs to provide abstract - Eric will work on getting this.**
4. Lunch – Break
5. Select Conference Presentations
   * Papers - Ron, Chuck
     + **19 submissions – 11 accepted**
   * Panels/Tutorials/Workshops - Mahmoud, Biran, Aziz
     + **3 submissions - 3 accepted**
   * Nifty Assignments - Brian, Bill, Ron
     + **5 submissions – 5 accepted**
6. Program Construction
   * **Eric – will put something together and will send it out for review**.
     + **Wen – make sure space for Lightning Talk**
     + **Ron – National Partners may want to do a presentation – put in a third track if needed. Sometimes University has put on a Career Track – Eric – said his Career Services said no, didn’t match timeline.**
     + **Joseph – Student Posters and Papers – if possible, not up against a paper track. Also, last year combined student stuff with lightning talks, this is variable due to submissions.**
     + **Eric – will leave some flexibility in the program for those things.**
     + **Ron – need a nicely located place for check-in. Need 2 computers and a printer there if possible. Student help would be great to relieve anyone working the check-in.**
     + **Brian – offering a small amount of extra credit helps get students there.**
     + **Kevin/Eric – already planning on recruiting some students.**
     + **Eric – ICTM is open to participating but would need student focused activities to make it attractive to them.**
     + **Brian – Be aware that catering expenses have been where other conferences have gotten into trouble with budget.**
     + **Eric – Banquets and lunches should be okay. Not sure on snack break food yet, still working that out.**
     + **Ron – End of early registration will be fairly close to overall numbers; two weeks before should have a firm count.**
     + **Kevin – last year had a large group of students walk-in Saturday morning and therefore did not have enough lunches. Students typically do not stay for lunch.**
     + **Ron – don’t forget pizza for programming contest.**
7. 2026 Conference Chair – Tiffany Ford, Ozarks Technical Community College
8. As May arise
9. Adjourned 3:50pm