

HFES Educational Resource Project

The mission of the Educational Resource Project (ERP) is to provide HFES members with resources that they can use to educate and train themselves and others in the field of HF/E.

Context

In 2003, the Education and Training Committee conducted a survey to assess the education and training needs of HFES members. The results indicated that it is important for HFES members to advance their education and training in particular content and skill areas and that it is essential to attract undergraduates to the field of HF/E. Survey respondents identified websites as a needed forum for education. The ERP is designed to address these needs.

A second member educational needs survey was conducted in 2009 to follow up the 2003 survey to determine if activities initiated by the committee and the Society as a whole had addressed any of the needs expressed by the 2003 respondents. The results of that survey are available to members upon request.

To help HFES stay current with our members' needs, a third education and training needs survey was conducted in 2013.

Specific Aims

The two primary aims of the ERP are to provide HFES members with resources that they can access freely and easily in order to (a) introduce undergraduates to the area of HF/E so students will have sufficient time to decide whether they would like to pursue graduate degrees in HF/E, and (b) further members' education and training in specific topics within HF/E. More generally, the ERP helps achieve several of the goals and objectives of the HFES Strategic Plan, specifically the *Education and Training Goal: Promote the teaching of HF/E science, philosophy, and practice*.

Process

The committee identified critical categories within each of the two primary aims, and discussed a possible structure for the visual layout of the resource materials. The committee also developed a vetting procedure for selecting resources and a timeline for achieving milestones, including a schedule for implementing the ERP and for updating it during the year. Candidate materials were solicited in the HFES *Bulletin*, from the National Ergonomics Month website, from HFES student chapters, and from HFES Technical Group members.

Content

The Committee conceptualizes the development of content in two main phases:

- **Phase 1 - Introduce undergraduates to the area of HF/E:**

Materials in the first phase of development include a list of definitions of human factors/ergonomics, links to HF/E course syllabi, textbooks that are used in classroom teaching, courses offered across psychology and engineering programs, helpful information about working in the field and making the most of internships, and links to the HFES Directory of Human Factors/Ergonomics Graduate Programs and the list of undergraduate HF/E programs.

- **Phase 2 - Further members' education and training in specific topics within HF/E:**

The planned categories in this phase include online courses on general topics, continuing education opportunities, online materials on specific training topics, textbooks on specific topics, journals and other published materials, research resource websites (e.g., statistics), standards, and publishing issues such as copyright and plagiarism.

Benefits

It is the committee's hope that members will find the ERP resources useful, for example, to introduce students to HF/E, guide individuals who wish to pursue a career in HF/E, develop curricula, find useful reference materials, and enhance knowledge and skills in specific areas. For example, university instructors who teach undergraduate courses in psychology and engineering can use these resources to introduce HF/E to students. This will help in recruiting undergraduates to the field – a need that was identified in the 2003 Education and Training survey.

ERP would provide tools that HFES members can use to further their education and training in HF/E in the content and skill areas identified as top needs in the Education and Training survey. Providing the materials through the Internet would satisfy another top need of providing online forums for education and training.

The materials provided in the ERP website are freely available to appropriate parties for public education and outreach.