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E&E conversion rules completed, focus turns to content

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The eagerly awaited conversion rules for the new education and examination system have been published. These rules govern the application of credits earned by candidates under the old system.

Now the design team has turned its attention to refining topics and defining learning objectives. Design Team Chair Jeffrey Beckley said his group is now "in the beginning of the implementation phase, working on each of the eight courses in detail."

Beckley said work on Courses 1 and 2, which will be jointly administered with the Casualty Actuarial Society (CAS), is basically finished. By mid-1998, the goal for each course is:

- Learning objectives will be completed.
- Material will be identified for use and, where there is none available, new material will be commissioned.
- Evaluation methods (e.g., exams or graded projects) will be determined.
- A sample exam will be completed.
- A final report will be presented.

Guidelines for the ninth and last element of the system, the professional development requirement, will be developed by a group of 10-12 people soon to be appointed. Beckley said, "There is discussion about whether that group should be part of the design team or outside people who will be specifically assigned to this task."

Rules well received
So far, the conversion rules have enjoyed a positive reception. Candidates and members have expressed both praise and relief over the rules, according to both Beckley and Marta Holmberg, Ph.D., education executive of the SOA. Holmberg said that candidates were naturally anxious to find out how their credits would be transferred from one system to another. But it seems most people find the conversion rules fair and even generous.

Of course, there are still questions about the nuances of the rules. Holmberg addressed some of the more frequently asked questions.

Credits will be assigned automatically, she said. "Candidates do not have to submit a request to have them

converted." In 1999, candidates will be sent written notice of how many credits they would receive in the new system for the courses they have already passed.

Some candidates have asked how Course 2 credit will be attained. Candidates who have passed SOA 140 or 141 and also have another 20 unassigned credits will receive credit for Course 2. Candidates who passed CAS Part 4A during or before the May 1997 exams (and have the 20 additional credits) can also receive credit for Course 2, though they need to request credit for 4A from the SOA.

Candidates also have wondered when they become eligible for Associateship in the new system. The ASA designation will be awarded after successful completion of Courses 1-6.

To find all the SOA conversion rules, visit the SOA Web site at www.soa.org. They're in the Education and Examination section.

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Faculty job open at Canadian university

Position: The University of Western Ontario is inviting applications for a tenure track position in statistics or actuarial science at the assistant professor level to begin July 1, 1998. The opening is in the Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences.

Qualifications: Applicants must be Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. Requirements

include a doctorate and demonstrated excellence in teaching and research. Preference will be given to candidates with research interests in any of the following areas: actuarial science; experimental design and industrial statistics; financial modeling; statistical computing; and statistical medical imaging.

Application: Applications will be accepted until Dec. 15, 1997, or until the position is filled. A curriculum vitae and the names of three references should be directed to: Professor M.S. Haq, Acting Chair, Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences, University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada, N6A 5B7.