AT HOME WITH ENGINEERING EDUCATION

Asee’s Virtual Conference

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#ASEEVC
Evaluation: A Teacher Professional Development Program Using Wireless Communications and NGSS to Enhance STEM Teaching & Learning

P. Skrimponis†, N. Makris§, K. Cheng♢, J. Ostrometzky♢, Z. Kostic♢, G. Zussman♢, T. Korakis†, S. Borges Rajguru‡

†New York University, ♢Columbia University, ‡Rutgers University, §University of Thessaly
Introduction

• Global economy changing vis-à-vis technological advances
• *All students* should have quality access to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) precollege coursework
• Higher education is *critical* in preparing the next generation of STEM professionals
• **This work** → Develop a teacher's professional development program and an educational toolkit, using wireless communications and NGSS

*How could engineers and educators collaborate to create a wireless communications teacher PD program in order to develop NGSS lessons with STEM teachers?*
What is the Next Generation Science Standards?

- A set of goals that lay the groundwork for K–12 education
- Based on ‘A Framework For K–12 Science Education’
- Developed at the National Research Council in 2012
- Prepare all students for college, careers and life

8 Science and Engineering Practices

44 Disciplinary Core Ideas

7 Crosscutting Concepts
NGSS 3-Dimensional Learning

- NGSS define ‘Performance Expectations’ as assessable statements of what students should be able to do if they understand the content.
- Performance Expectations integrate three dimensions that focus on understanding and application:
  - **Science and Engineering Practices:** Behaviors for investigating and building models
  - **Disciplinary Core Ideas:** Key concepts specific to the course content
  - **Crosscutting Concepts:** Concepts that link various science domains
The program is divided into five conceptual phases:

**a. Lecture and lab phase:** The participants are introduced to fundamental and some advanced concepts in wireless communications and networking.

**b. Design phase:** The participants conduct research on potential educational NGSS STEM lessons with hands-on wireless labs using the ‘COSMOS Educational Toolkit’.

**Fig:** Teacher PD program phases timeline. *Phase when the ‘COSMOS Education Toolkit was created.*
c. **Development phase**: the teachers co-develop with the researchers their best ideas on how to use the wireless labs for NGSS-aligned STEM lessons

d. **Implementation phase**: teachers and students use the developed lessons in the class during the school year

e. **Feedback phase**: teachers provide feedback in order to improve the NGSS STEM lessons and develop new ones

**Fig**: Teacher PD program phases timeline. *Phase when the ‘COSMOS Education Toolkit was created.*
Lecture/Lab and Design Phase

Fig: Participants attend an instructor-led lesson using the ‘COSMOS Educational Toolkit’

Fig: Participants conduct research using sensors
Development Phase

Fig: Teachers present their developed NGSS lesson plans at Silicon Harlem
Implementation Phase

Fig: Middle school students with their Teacher using the ‘COSMOS Educational Toolkit’
Feedback Phase

Fig: Teachers present the PD Program and the developed NGSS Lesson Plans at the NE-ASTE Conference 2018

Fig: Teachers present the PD Program and the developed NGSS Lesson Plans at the ERN Conference 2020

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The COSMOS testbed is based on a multi-layered architecture which relies on commodity components, programmable hardware, and open-source software.

- An innovative learning platform for K–12 students
  - Bridge the digital divide
  - Educational benefits for the local community
- Allow any public school in NYC to remotely use the testbed for educational experiments

https://www.cosmos-lab.org/
COSMOS Educational Toolkit

- **Hardware components:**
  - **Processing Units:** Intel NUC, Raspberry PI
  - **Software Defined Radio:** ADALM Pluto SDR, RTL-SDR
  - **IoT Nodes:** Arduino/Micro:bit, XBEE/BLE, sensors

- **Software components:**
  - **Web front-end interface:** HTML, CSS and Javascript
  - **Web back-end server:** Python
  - **SDR Software:** GNU Radio
  - **IoT management:** influxdB and Chronograf

*Fig:* Hardware components of the ‘COSMOS Educational Toolkit’
Web-based interface

Fig: Examples of Math, Science and Computer Science Labs

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NGSS Lesson Development

- The modules that were created in this PD program follow the NGSS lessons standards to support teachers in their science conceptualization.
- We address the STEM K–12 digital and equity divide by using the testbed as an experimental educational platform and engaging underserved students in real-world engineering activities.

### Subject Area

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**Tab:** Summary of the developed lessons from the participants over the summers of 2018 and 2019.

https://www.cosmos-lab.org/cosmos-toolkit/
### Science: Ambient waves (NGSS-Lesson)

| Topic: Waves |
| Grade/Grade Band: 8th – 12th |
| Lesson Description: This is an introduction to waves, and their properties (i.e., amplitude, frequency, and phase). Students learn about different types of waves and explore how electromagnetic waves propagate in space. Students use technology to visualize ambient waves, listen to FM radio, AM stations, and capture aircraft messages. |
| Performance Expectations: MS-PS4-1, MS-PS4-2, MS-PS4-3, HS-PS4-1, HS-PS4-2, HS-PS4-3, HS-PS4-4, HS-PS4-5 |

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<th>Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCIs)</th>
<th>Crosscutting Concepts (CCs)</th>
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<td>PS4.A: Wave Properties</td>
<td>MS-PS4-1: Patterns</td>
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<td>MS-PS4-2: Developing and Using Models</td>
<td>PS4.B: Electromagnetic Radiation</td>
<td>MS-PS4-2: Structure and Function</td>
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<td>MS-PS4-3: Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information</td>
<td>PS4.C: Information Technologies and Instrumentation</td>
<td>MS-PS4-3: Influence of Science, Engineering, and Technology on Society and the Natural World</td>
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<td>HS-PS4-2: Asking Questions and Defining Problems</td>
<td>PS3.D: Energy in Chemical Processes</td>
<td>HS-PS4-1, HS-PS4-4 and HS-PS4-5: Cause and Effect</td>
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<td>HS-PS4-3: Science Models, Laws, Mechanisms, and Theories Explain Natural Phenomena</td>
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<td>HS-PS4-2: Stability and Change</td>
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<td>HS-PS4-5: Interdependence of Science, Engineering, and Technology</td>
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Science: Ambient waves (Lab)

Fig: Example of a science lesson web page with a detailed experiment description (top-left), the easy-to-use interface (bottom-left) with the GNU Radio visualization (right).
PD Program Evaluation

- Evaluating the impact of the COSMOS platform to their students, teachers gave high rates

- When asked what they thought their students would be most excited about, many wrote about the integration of technology with hands-on activities:
  - Doing something with technology and having a hands-on activity ... literally!
  - Working with the toolkit and conducting hands-on experiments related to technology.
  - It’s really cool to feel like you have access and knowledge about cutting-edge technology (5G)!
  - The lessons make my content come alive with a hands-on experiment

- Regarding the impact of the labs’ content, teachers highlighted the following aspects:
  - The use of sensors and the ability of analyzing the data via the ‘COSMOS Educational Toolkit’
  - Through the lesson plans students getting to know better how the Internet works
  - Students can ‘see’ waves in reality
  - Understand how the math is used behind the technology they are exposed to everyday
Conclusions

• The PD program has been implemented over the summers of 2018 and 2019, and organized virtually for 2020
• The ‘COSMOS Education Toolkit’ has been evaluated in 20 middle/high schools in NYC
• 3 Returning Teachers from 2018 program in 2019
• Outcomes of the project:
  • A hardware/software system that provides the necessary infrastructure for the lessons
  • Teachers gained in depth knowledge of wireless communications

Over 50 NGSS-aligned engineering labs!

The COSMOS Educational Toolkit nominated for the 2020 GLOMO Awards in MWC Barcelona 2020, under the YoMo STEAM Activity for Young People category.
Acknowledgements

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We thank the teachers who participated in the program during the summers of 2018 and 2019 for their contributions to the development of the COSMOS Educational Toolkit.
Thank you!

Any questions?
Panagiotis Skrimponis
Ph.D. Student at the Electrical and Computer Engineering, New York University
ps3857@nyu.edu

For more information on our K-12 Engineering Education program:

https://www.cosmos-lab.org/category/outreach/

https://youtu.be/len8RijwS54