

# Kent Academic Repository

## Full text document (pdf)

### Citation for published version

Roberts, Eric and Bruce, Kim and Cutler, Rob and James H., Cross II and Grissom, Scott and Klee, Karl and Rodger, Susan and Trees, Fran and Utting, Ian and Yellin, Frank (2005) The ACM java task force: status report. In: SIGCSE '05: Proceedings of the 36th SIGCSE technical symposium on Computer science education. ACM Press, New York, NY, USA pp. 46-47. ISBN 1-58113-997-7.

### DOI

### Link to record in KAR

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/14353/>

### Document Version

UNSPECIFIED

#### Copyright & reuse

Content in the Kent Academic Repository is made available for research purposes. Unless otherwise stated all content is protected by copyright and in the absence of an open licence (eg Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher, author or other copyright holder.

#### Versions of research

The version in the Kent Academic Repository may differ from the final published version.

Users are advised to check <http://kar.kent.ac.uk> for the status of the paper. **Users should always cite the published version of record.**

#### Enquiries

For any further enquiries regarding the licence status of this document, please contact:

[researchsupport@kent.ac.uk](mailto:researchsupport@kent.ac.uk)

If you believe this document infringes copyright then please contact the KAR admin team with the take-down information provided at <http://kar.kent.ac.uk/contact.html>

# Special Session Proposal

## The ACM Java Task Force: Status Report

Eric Roberts (chair)  
Stanford University  
eroberts@cs.stanford.edu

Kim Bruce  
Williams College  
kim@cs.williams.edu

Rob Cutler  
The Harker School  
robrc@harker.org

James H. Cross II  
Auburn University  
cross@eng.auburn.edu

Scott Grissom  
Grand Valley State University  
grissom@gvsu.edu

Karl Klee  
Alfred State College  
kleekj@alfredstate.edu

Susan Rodger  
Duke University  
rodger@cs.duke.edu

Fran Trees  
Drew University  
fran@ftrees.com

Ian Utting  
University of Kent  
i.a.utting@kent.ac.uk

Frank Yellin  
Sun Microsystems  
frank.yellin@sun.com

### SUMMARY

SIGCSE 2004 marked the official announcement of the ACM Java Task Force, which is working to develop a stable collection of pedagogical resources that will make it easier to teach Java to first-year computing students. The Java Task Force has received funding from the ACM Education Board, the SIGCSE Special Projects Fund, and the National Science Foundation (NSF Award DUE-0411905). This session offers an update on the work of the Java Task Force over the past year and provides an opportunity for community feedback prior to the publication of the final report in June 2005.

To review the Java language, APIs, and tools from the perspective of introductory computing education and to develop a stable collection of pedagogical resources that will make it easier to teach Java to first-year computing students without having those students overwhelmed by its complexity.

The Java Task Force was announced at SIGCSE 2004 and has been meeting throughout the past year. A paper outlining the rationale behind the task force [2] and a summary of the goals and timetable [3] appeared in the SIGCSE 2004 proceedings.

### Categories and Subject Descriptors

K.3.2 [Computer and Information Science Education]: computer science education, curriculum.

At this year's special session, we will give a brief presentation covering of the highlights of the preliminary Java Task Force report. The presentation will be followed by an extensive feedback session in which we will listen to comments from the SIGCSE community. The preliminary report will be out at the end of December 2004, which means that the audience at the special session will have had two months to read and reflect on the proposed design. The feedback that we get at the meeting will provide useful guidance for the task force as we prepare to publish our final report in June 2005.

### General Terms

design

The Java Task Force reports and associated materials are available from the following URL:

### Keywords

Computer science education, CS1, teaching libraries, Java.

<http://www.acm.org/education/jtf/>

## 1. SPECIAL SESSION DESCRIPTION

Since its introduction in 1995, the use of Java as an instructional language has shown a steady increase. At the same time, those who have tried to teach Java have identified a number of problems in the language in terms of its suitability for students, particularly at the introductory level [1]. Concern about these problems prompted the ACM Education Board to create the ACM Java Task Force with the following charter:

## 2. EXPECTATIONS

The intended audience for the special session consists of computer science teachers who use—or are planning to use—Java in first-year computer science courses. Although most SIGCSE attendees teach at colleges and universities, we believe that this special session will have particular relevance to high-school teachers.

The feedback that we get at SIGCSE is essential to producing a report that has the support of the community. In part, we expect the comments, questions, and concerns that come up at the

meeting will help us refine our proposals so that they better serve the needs of people who are, if you will, in the trenches teaching Java to novices. At the same time, having an open process and providing opportunities for feedback are essential to developing the community support that is essential to the success of the project.

## **REFERENCES**

1. ACM Java Task Force. Taxonomy of problems in teaching Java, February 2004.
2. Eric Roberts. The dream of a common language: The search for simplicity and stability in computer science education. Proceedings of the 35th SIGCSE Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education, Norfolk, VA, March 2004.
3. Eric Roberts. Resources to support the use of Java in introductory computer science. Proceedings of the 35th SIGCSE Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education, Norfolk, VA, March 2004.