

COSS vs. ASSE Definition of Safety Professional

According to the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), the scope and function of the professional safety person fall into four broad areas:

1. Anticipate, identify and evaluate hazardous conditions and practices.
2. Develop hazard control designs, methods procedures and programs.
3. Implement administer and advise others on hazard controls and hazard control programs.
4. Measure, audit and evaluate the effectiveness of hazard controls and hazard control programs.

You'll notice that the common denominator here is *hazards*.

Certified Occupational Safety Specialist (COSSSM) students learn how to deal with hazards in the following ways:

- Understanding the cost of not addressing hazards that become accidents, and conversely, the value of correcting hazards in order to prevent accidents
- Understanding how to do research in order to identify the areas where potential hazards may exist
- Performing audits and inspections in order to identify hazards
- Identifying the category and degree of loss that any given hazard may potentially have
- Categorizing hazards into degrees of risk
- Knowing how to determine how any given hazard is addressed in the regulatory standards
- Determining and implementing ways to mitigate hazards
- Communicating information regarding hazards and how they should be addressed to all levels of the organization