ABET Presentation to University Materials Council

30 November 2009
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Executive Director

Leadership and Quality Assurance in Applied Science, Computing, Engineering, and Technology Education
Outline

• Introduction and Activities as ED
• ABET Accreditation Activities
• International Engagement
• ABET Governance
• Value of ABET Membership
• Society - Institution - ABET Partnership
ED Activities

• Executive Director, 1 June 2009
  – Background

• Focus Areas
  – Strengthen Relationships and Communications
    • Member Societies: Executive Directors, BODs
      » Created new ABET staff position: Member Relations Coordinator – Ms Elayna Lambert
    • Volunteers: Commissioners, Program Evaluators
    • Industry: Advisory Council, Partnerships
    • Institutions: Deans, Dept Heads, Advisory Council
ED Activities

• Focus Areas (continued)
  – Strategic Planning
    • Value of Accreditation
      – Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
    • Relevancy: institutions, public, industry, govn’t
    • Improve ABET processes
  – Operational plan: support international activities
    – Scientific, Tech, Engineering, Math (STEM)
      • JETS, NSF
      • Pipeline to 2 and 4 year degrees
ABET Accreditation Activity
Program Level

Notes: Variations due to normal cyclic nature of accreditation visits as well as growth of new programs
All international (non-domestic) activity is included in new growth
ABET Accreditation Activity
Criteria Harmonization

• Goal: common criteria where possible
  – Across 4 commissions (EAC, TAC, CAC, ASAC)
  – Wording and interpretation, where intended meaning is the same
  – Does NOT force commonality where differences are necessary and intentional

• Why Harmonize?
  – To help institutions, ABET volunteers, ABET staff

• Status
  – Activities ongoing, target 2011-12 cycle
ABET International Activities

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ABET International Activities

• Letter of Intent
  – Initial step towards full MOU

• Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
  – Promotes cooperation
  – Collaborate in the professional development of evaluators and faculty
  – Exchange information about best practices in promoting quality assurance
  – Explore feasibility of mutual recognition
ABET International Activities
Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)

• *Accreditation systems* substantially equivalent
  – Comparable criteria, policies, procedures
  – Comparable educational experiences
  – Graduates have similar competencies

• Accreditation decisions rendered by one signatory are acceptable by all signatories

• Mobility
  – Graduates of accredited programs accorded same recognition to practice profession at the entry level
Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)

1: Washington Accord (Engineering)  
2: Dublin Accord (Technicians)  
3: Sydney Accord (Technologists)  
4: Seoul Accord (Computing)  

* Provisional
ABET International Activities
Substantial Equivalency

• Programs
  – Comparable in educational outcomes, but may differ in format or method of delivery

• Substantial equivalency is not accreditation
  – Not binding on colleges, universities, employers, or licensing agencies

• No longer offered
  – Last evaluation in 2006
  – NGRs expire in 2012
ABET International Activities
Direct Accreditation

• Accreditation outside the US
  – Approved unanimously by ABET Board of Directors during Fall 2005 BOD meeting
  – Honor existing MOUs, MRAs
  – Phase out substantial equivalency

• Programs visited outside US
  – 2007-08: 25
  – 2008-09: 47
  – 2009-10: 105
ABET Accredited Programs

Bahrain
Jordan
Qatar
Chile
Kuwait
Saudi Arabia
Egypt
Mexico
South Africa
Germany
Oman
Turkey
India
UAE
USA

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ABET Governance

How is ABET Structured?

• ABET is a **federation** of 30 professional engineering & technical societies
• Neither institutions nor individuals are members of ABET
• ABET relies on the services of 1500+ volunteers and 31 full-time, 5 part-time staff
ABET Governance

ABET Headquarters
111 Market Place, Ste. 1050
Baltimore, MD 21202-4012

31 Full time staff / 5 Part-time staff

Michael K J Milligan
Executive Director

Accreditation

Strategic Development & Marketing

Finance & Operations

Professional Services

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ABET Governance

ABET Board

Counsels

Applied Science Accreditation Commission
- 66 accredited programs at 52 institutions

Computing Accreditation Commission
- 324 accredited programs at 264 institutions

Engineering Accreditation Commission
- 1934 accredited programs at 397 institutions

Technology Accreditation Commission
- 653 accredited programs at 225 institutions

Committees

ABET Executive Committee

ABET Headquarters Operations
ABET Governance
Board of Directors

• 48 Total Members
• 5 Officers
  – President, President-Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer
  – One-year terms, except for Treasurer: 2 years
• 37 Directors
  – 1 to 3 Directors per member society
    • Based on number of programs
  – 3-year term, renewable for additional term
ABET Governance
Board of Directors

• 5 Public Directors
  – Right to vote
  – No affiliation with member societies or their disciplines
  – 3-year term, renewable for additional term

• 1 Associate Member Representative
  – Privilege of the floor, but no vote
ABET Governance
Thoughts on Current Board Structure

• “Small societies don’t have a voice”

• Fact: the largest 6 societies have approximately 35% of the total vote, but they represent over 63% of programs

• Number of “small societies” is a majority of overall membership
ABET Governance
Board Identified Strategic Issues

- The viability of ABET’s governing structure and revenue assumptions are challenged by Member Societies who are finding it more difficult to justify the value they receive from ABET relative to the cost of participation.
ABET Governance
Board Identified Strategic Issues

• A governing structure based on discipline-specific societies may become less viable as:
  – Growing bodies of knowledge generate an expanding number of disciplines with increasingly blurred distinctions (overlapping content)
  – A growing number of graduates find work in areas not addressed by the societies
  – Membership in historic technical societies decreases
Value of ABET Membership

• Provides internationally recognized process for verifying quality of education programs
  – Verifies educational experience
  – Verifies standards (program criteria) are met
  – Establishes a baseline for program quality
  – Ensures Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes are integrated into academic programs
Value of ABET Membership

• Criteria developed by profession
  – Outcomes-based criteria help ensure graduates have specific types of skills, knowledge

• Dual-level Accreditation (BS and MS)
  – Verifies quality of programs at multiple levels
Value of ABET Membership

• International Accreditation
  – Increases global presence, influence of societies
    • Recognition of international leadership in profession
    • Set expectations for characteristics of graduates entering profession
  – Supports growth of global industry
Society - Institution - ABET Partnership

• We share common goals
  – Ensure qualified individuals enter the profession
  – Ensure academic programs incorporate quality
    • Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
    • Accreditation = Verification

• Societies provide ABET leadership
  – ABET Board of Directors
  – Accreditation Commissions, Program Evaluators
    • Many from academe
Society - Institution - ABET Partnership

• Encourage ABET participation
  – Program evaluators, commissioners
  – Appreciate value of CQI and assessment tools

• Academic Advisory Council
  – Provide voice and advise ABET directly

• Grow interest in technical education
  – Increase awareness, relevancy of profession

• Grow global opportunities

• Grow participation and support from industry
Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns:

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