

# Developing program-specific criteria for accreditation

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# Accreditation for Engineering Technology

- Accreditation is more important than ever for engineering and engineering technology programs.
- Accreditation has generally changed from a process orientation to an outcomes-based approach.
- Under the old process philosophy, criteria focused on norms and prescribed criteria including square footage of laboratory space, number of faculty, and funding of endowments.

# Outcomes-based assessment

- Engineering and technology programs have benefited from a shift to outcomes assessment.
- Through this process programs are empowered to:
  - recognize what they are and how they are performing,
  - determine the critical objectives and outcomes that define their identity

# Outcomes-based assessment

The following steps identify the outcomes approach for ABET

- Plan it
- Do it
- Check it
- Revise it
- Repeat it

# Criteria for TAC Accreditation

- Technology Accreditation Commission (TAC) of ABET accredits engineering technology programs under general criteria and, where applicable, specific criteria.
- General criteria (7): program educational objectives, program outcomes, assessment and evaluation, program characteristics, faculty, facilities, institutional and external support.

# General criteria

Of these seven criteria, the first two are most definitive.

- 1) Program educational objectives are broad statements that describe career readiness for graduates.
- 2) Program outcomes (the 'a – k' criteria, as they are referred to in ABET) define the knowledge and skills students must have in order to achieve the educational objectives.

# Program criteria

Program (specific) criteria exist for many areas of study. For programs desiring to be accredited under the applicable title, rather than under simply the general criteria.

- Format for specific criteria:
  - Program applicability
  - Objective of the program
  - Outcomes

# Program Criteria

- Program criteria expand on the general criteria and provide more detailed information
- May include outcomes for both associate and baccalaureate degree programs.
- Generally very concise, a page or less in length



# Development of program criteria

Who are the stakeholders in development of program criteria where they do not already exist?

- Stakeholders include:
  - Students
  - Industry
  - Academia
  - Accrediting body

# Academia as a stakeholder in development of program criteria

At what point is an academic program supportive of development of new program criteria?

- When programs have reached some level of maturity
  - Curriculum includes identifiable knowledge, skills, abilities for that unique career path.
  - Curriculum is distinguishable from others with established program criteria.
- Leadership in development has benefits.



# The process of development

What is the sequence of events in the development of program criteria?

- A need for and in interest in such development is noted by the accrediting body and / or the lead society.
- Generally, the lead society for the discipline under consideration is charged with development.
- The product of that effort goes forward to the accrediting body for consideration, required change, and eventual adoption. Includes opportunity for public comment.

