Preparing a Successful SSR

Understanding What, Why and How

Association of Thai Professionals in America and Canada

Three Key Steps to Prepare for ABET

1. Make sure that Curriculum is in compliance with ABET Criterion 5

2. **Prepare Self-Study Report and all supporting documents** NEXT

3. Prepare for and Host the actual site visit by ABET PEVs

What is SSR?

A Self-Study Report (SSR) is a detailed documentation of:

1. the process and the conclusions of a self-assessment and evaluation performed by the program faculty to convincingly demonstrate that the degree program/curriculum **complies** with all eight General Criteria and Program Criteria (if any) set forth by ABET and the respective professional organizations.

2. Actions taken (along with their impacts, if available) to continuously improve the curriculum and/or to achieve or strengthen compliance of any criteria found to be non-compliance or to have weak compliance.

Why SSR?

- Essentially, the Program Evaluator (PEV) assigned to your degree program is the primary person who will determine whether or not your degree program is in compliance with ABET criteria (8 general criteria + program criteria).

- The PEV will rely solely on two major sources of information: **the SSR** and information collected during **the site visit**.

- The SSR will be the **major source of information** that the PEV will rely on. Information collected during the site visit will be either those that **cannot be found in the SSR** or those that are used to **corroborate** some SSR information

This is why preparing the SSR is the most important task to be performed by the program faculty.

The Vital Phase
Preparation of the SSR

Before embarking on this defining phase, here are some useful tips to keep in mind:

1. **Know your audience and his/her goal**:
   The SSR is prepared for essentially ONE audience: **the PEV**

2. **Aim Compliance**--Compliance is the **ONLY GOAL:**
   Remember that the goal of the SSR is to convincingly demonstrate to the PEV that your degree program is in compliance with all ABET criteria and Program Criteria

3. **Understand Compliance**:
   To achieve compliance, you must understand what "compliance" means. This means you must fully understand all 8 general criteria and program criteria (if any) and what the ABET/PEV considers as compliance for each criterion. Then focus on providing well-thought out and well-justified arguments drawn from your well-conducted self assessment and evaluation of your degree program to address compliance metrics that the ABET/PEV is looking for.

To comply with ABET Criteria

- Understand what the PEV will be looking for in the SSR before, during and after the ABET visit (see the PEV Worksheet--Form E341)

- PEV uses this form to check off whether there are any shortcomings in the program, based on each of the eight ABET criteria plus Program Criteria.

- The GOAL is to receive no shortcoming (C, W, or D) at the exit interview. This will result in an NGR (Next General Review) grade--Re-accreditation for 6 more years. The PEV begins making this "first impression" assessment after reading the SSR before the site visit, which could bias the final impression, at the exit interview. Thus, preparing the best possible SSR is a prudent strategy.

Writing a Successful SSR

A shortcoming can be either

Deficiency (D): *Program does NOT satisfy* criterion, policy, or procedure.

Weakness (W): *Program lacks strength of compliance* with a criterion, policy, or procedure to ensure that the quality of the program will not be compromised. Therefore, remedial action is required to strengthen compliance prior to the next evaluation

Concern (C) : *Program satisfies* the criterion, policy, or procedure; however, the *potential exists for the situation to change* such that the criterion, policy, or procedure may not be satisfied. Concern is not a milder form of Weakness!

Recalling
The Underlying Premise:

A good undergraduate engineering degree program must

- produce graduates who are well-equipped and ready to enter the job market in their chosen fields and who will continue to grow and be successful in their life-long careers.

- Continually assess student outcomes (knowledge and skills students have acquired at the time of graduation) and use the results to continually make improvement on the structure, content, and delivery of the curriculum

- Have program educational objectives that are consistent with the institution and serve the needs of constituencies.

- Have curriculum that include (1) **minimum requirements on basic sciences and math (30 credits),** and (2) **major design experience**

Source: ABET

Recalling
Key Features of ABET system

- **Outcome-based** (goal-driven not input-driven)

- **Emphasis on the establishment, maintenance and documentation of well-defined processes** (including procedures, steps, and timing) to

  - Develop PEOs and SOs
  - Periodically Review and Update PEOs
  - Assess and Evaluate SOs
  - Use SOs evaluation results (and periodic review of PEOs) to do CQI

- Curriculum requirements that include **(1) minimum requirements on basic sciences and math (30 credits),** and (2) **major design experience**

What does it take to get an ABET Accreditation?

> To demonstrate COMPLIANCE with the following criteria

General Criteria

Criterion 1: STUDENTS
Criterion 2: PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES
Criterion 3: STUDENT OUTCOMES
Criterion 4: CONTINUOUS (QUALITY) IMPROVEMENT
Criterion 5: CURRICULUM
Criterion 6: FACULTY
Criterion 7: FACILITIES
Criterion 8: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Program Criteria

- Developed specifically for individual programs by their respective professional associations/societies
- Some programs do not have any

Sections in Self-Study Report (SSR)

Background Information

General Criteria

    Criterion 1: STUDENTS
    Criterion 2: PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES
    Criterion 3: STUDENT OUTCOMES
    Criterion 4: CONTINUOUS (QUALITY) IMPROVEMENT
    Criterion 5: CURRICULUM
    Criterion 6: FACULTY
    Criterion 7: FACILITIES
    Criterion 8: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Program Criteria

Appendix A-Course Syllabi
Appendix B-Faculty Vitae
Appendix C-Equipment
Appendix D-Institutional Summary

Cornerstone of the ABET system:
Criteria 2, 3 and 4

- Emphasis on Outcome Assessment and Evaluation and use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Emphasis on establishment, maintenance and documentation of well-defined processes (including procedures, steps, and timing) to

  - Establish PEOs and SOs
  - Periodically Review and Update PEOs
  - Assess and Evaluate SOs
  - Use SOs evaluation results (and periodic review of PEOs) to do CQI

Goals of the Workshop

- To provide an overview of the ABET Accreditation system and process to set in motion the preparation for a successful ABET Accreditation endeavor

- To help initiate the preparation of the Self Study Report (SSR) by focusing on
  1. The development of Program Educational Objectives (PEOs) along with the plan and process for periodic review of PEOs
  2. Selection of instruments for assessing Student Outcomes (SOs) along with the development of data collection plan

- To demonstrate how to perform an actual assessment and evaluation of SOs using data collected

- To use results of SOs assessment/evaluation to develop an action plan for Continuous Improvement

- To learn how to prepare the remaining parts of SSR: Criterion 1 Students; Criterion 5 Curriculum; Criterion 6 Faculty; Criterion 7 Facilities; Criterion 8 Institutional Support; and Program Criteria (if any)

- To learn how to prepare for the actual site visit by the ABET PEV team

Best Practice to Prepare SSR

1. Developing the processes for
   - Establishing, reviewing and updating Program Educational Objectives (PEOs)
   - Establishing, assessing and evaluating Student Outcomes (SOs)
   - Using evaluation results of SOs to perform CQI

2. Use SSR Template provided by ABET (attached)

   To write a self-study report (SSR) to convincingly demonstrate **compliance to all eight ABET criteria and program criteria (if any).**

   So we will now concentrate on the following on Criterion 2 PEOs, and Criteria 3 and 4: SOs and CQI next