Memorandum of Understanding

BS in Mechanical Engineering
College of Engineering
February 2015

This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the consensus reached by the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, the College of Engineering, and the Division of Academic Affairs, based on the recently conducted program review. It describes the goals to be achieved, and the actions to be undertaken by all parties to this MOU to achieve these goals, during the next program review cycle. Progress toward goals is to be addressed in the biennial report.

The BS in Mechanical Engineering received reaffirmation of accreditation from ABET's Engineering Accreditation Commission in August, 2013. The period of accreditation is six years, until September 30, 2019. Documents from the accreditation process formed the basis of the periodic program review. The ABET review identified no deficiencies.

Strengths of the program include: strong demand by potential students and expansion to an off-site offering that responds to industry, military, and community needs in the Antelope Valley. The program's leadership and faculty have responded to a growth in enrollment and demand by offering Saturday and hybrid classes. Faculty in the BSME program are commended for their productivity and research and for their efforts to support students (for example by involving them in local industry partnerships).

Since the previous ABET visit in 2007, the department has engaged in curriculum improvements and has implemented student outcomes assessments to address program weaknesses identified by that review. The reviewers were positively impressed with the assessment plan developed and implemented by the program, with the university program review committee (UPRC) report stating "The program is to be commended for its outstanding and focused improvement of learning assessment practices."

The UPRC team concluded that while the program has participated in detailed assessment and improvement of its curriculum, it has not consistently reported on its findings to the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs as required by the program review process.

In addition, the UPRC noted that while the program’s stated student learning outcomes are the same as those that ABET specifies as program requirements, these outcomes are not stated in measurable terms. Outcomes stated in concrete, measurable terms makes it easier to assess them and are more accessible to students.

The UPRC noted a concern expressed in the ABET report about the program’s capacity to sustain adequate levels of courses and labs given that enrollments have risen substantially at a time when the number of full-time faculty has decreased.
It is therefore agreed that:

1. The department will continue its student learning outcomes assessment and report its findings and actions to the Director of Program Review and Assessment and to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs according to the university assessment schedule.

2. The department will consider re-framing its student learning outcomes in terms of what students will be able to accomplish through their studies.

3. The program will utilize the results of its assessments to assist in identifying areas of need for future faculty positions.

4. The program will provide a biennial update on progress made towards the actions agreed to in this MOU, to be submitted in conjunction with its biennial assessment report.

This MOU has been read and approved by:

Department Chair: [Signature] Date: 5-29-2015

College Dean: [Signature] Date: 6/1/15

Vice Provost: [Signature] Date: 6-1-15