

*Update Initial Accreditation Visit
Department of Mechanical Engineering
Monday, November 13, 2017*

In response to numerous inquiries of the outcome of our recent ABET campus visit, I drafted this follow-up note to share with each of you.

Seeking EAC-ABET accreditation is a two-year long process that we started on January 31, 2017 with the submission of our request for evaluation (RFE). On July 1, 2017, the department submitted its self-study which presented evidence supporting compliance to ABET's general and program criteria. All engineering programs must meet the general criteria while mechanical engineering or similarly named programs must meet the program criteria for mechanical engineering. A team of program evaluators and a team chair visited the department on October 29 -31, 2017 to tour labs and facilities, to meet with administrators, and to interview faculty and students. This visit team documented summary findings of the level of compliance with the above mentioned criteria which they then reported to President Cabrera and Provost Wu at the exit interview held on Tuesday October 31, 2017.

In the reading of the exit statement, the team reported that the mechanical engineering program ***did not have*** any deficiencies or weaknesses. A deficiency indicates non-compliance and a weakness indicates lack of strength of compliance with a criteria. The team reported that the mechanical engineering program has two concerns on criteria relating to faculty and institutional support with anticipated student enrollment growth. A concern indicates that while the program ***currently satisfies*** the criteria it may not in the future should conditions change. This outcome is extremely positive for us!!

A draft statement, which formally documents the team's finding, is now being written and will undergo two editing stages before being sent to us here at GMU to address its content. Unlikely as it may seem, it is important to keep in mind that the cited level of the shortcoming may change during this editing process. As currently cited, we ***fully intend*** to address these two concerns in hopes of resolving them entirely before the EAC meets in July to ***officially vote*** on our accreditation status. After voting has taken place and accreditation status determined, a final statement will be sent to us, typically in late August, ***officially*** informing us of our accreditation status, thus completing the two year process.

As department chair, I extend my sincere appreciation to our students, faculty and staff for working to provide the best program possible.

Very respectfully,

Oscar Barton, Jr.