

# New Directions in Engineering Accreditation

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Recent decades have seen internationalization of the engineering practices thus making engineering education an international enterprise. Graduates from a certain engineering program may have to work not only in a different state (in case of USA) or a different country. The graduate may also be working in a multinational company. This situation further increases the interest among the institutes to get their program accredited. An accredited degree program is the one that has gone through a rigorous quality control system and has been approved by a national or international accrediting agency or organization. The importance of graduating from such programs is growing with the increasing demand of global engineers.

Engineering educators need to focus on several key areas, among which are development of curricula, graduate studies, research, development and promoting university-industry ties, and accreditation. Accreditation provides an educational institution or a program with a credential. The credential is most often a public statement that the academic unit satisfies a set of quality criteria established by the accrediting body. Through the accreditation process, the faculty, the facilities, the student body, budgets, recruiting practices, admissions procedures, course content, and other pertinent issues come under thorough review. The accreditation process may operate at a broad or narrow scope. A panel discussion is organized to discuss new directions in engineering accreditation. EDUCON-2010 panel session will provide a unique opportunity to educators, researchers and technologists who are willing to discuss how they are integrating digital technologies, instruction, and

changes to university facilities in their programs seeking accreditation or how they think it should be done. It will also provide a forum for discussing and debating new directions and approaches relevant to accreditation with the engineering and academic audiences. Following are some of the relevant questions that we would like to address during this panel session;

- Does accreditation help to maintain quality of education?
- What is the impact of accreditation on traditional learning environment?
- Are traditional approaches to accreditation meeting today's need?
- What are some of the problems with accreditation?
- How can accreditation be reformed?
- What are the new trends in accreditation?
- What are the important issues specific to engineering accreditation?
- What incentives do faculty members need in order to commit to accreditation activities?
- What are the alternatives to accreditation, if any?

All these questions are the subject of ongoing attention and discussion by academicians, ABET and in various ways by other ABET member societies.

