



## College of Technology and Computer Science

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GREENVILLE (9/2/2009) - East Carolina University's Bachelor of Science in engineering program has been accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), the recognized accreditor of college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology. ABET accreditation demonstrates a program's commitment to providing its students with a quality education.

ECU accepted its first freshman class in engineering in 2004 and had its first graduates in May 2008. The program has more than 300 students and offers concentrations in biomedical engineering, bioprocess engineering, industrial and systems engineering, and mechanical engineering. Mechanical engineering is a new concentration that started in the fall 2009 semester to meet the growing economic and industry demands in the region.

"This is a tremendous benchmark for ECU and the Department of Engineering," said Chancellor Steve Ballard. "Our faculty and staff strive to provide our engineering graduates with educational and professional development, as well as the necessary leadership skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century marketplace. The most important implications of accreditation will unfold in the coming years as ECU plays an increasingly critical role in regional and state economic development."

Accreditation is a voluntary, peer-review process that requires programs to undergo comprehensive, periodic evaluations. The evaluations, conducted by teams of volunteer professionals working in industry, government, academe, and private practice within the ABET disciplines, focus on program curricula, faculty, facilities, institutional support, and other important areas.

One of the key elements of ABET accreditation is the requirement that programs continuously improve the quality of education provided. As part of this requirement, programs set specific, measurable goals for their students and graduates, assess their success at reaching those goals, and improve their programs based on the results of their assessment.

"The commitment of the university leadership, including the chancellor and the provost, has been particularly critical," said Dr. Paul Kauffmann, Department of Engineering chair. "Most important will be the impact of the program graduates who will work as engineers and contribute to the competitiveness of our state. Engineering accreditation marks a significant milestone in the quality and range of degree options ECU offers to students."

In addition to providing colleges and universities a structured mechanism to assess, evaluate, and improve their programs, accreditation helps students and their parents choose quality college programs, enables employers and graduate schools to recruit graduates they know are well-prepared, and is used by registration, licensure, and certification boards to screen applicants.

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