

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**Academic and Student Affairs**

**AGENDA ITEM: 4 – G**

**DATE: March 30 – April 1, 2016**

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**SUBJECT: Request to Seek Accreditation – USD**

Board of Regents [Policy 1:10 Relationship of Curriculum and Instruction to Statutory Objectives](#) specifies that “Each campus must seek and receive Board approval before applying for initial accreditation or an expanded scope of accreditation for academic programs.” In accordance with Board policy, the University of South Dakota requests approval to seek accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Engineering Technology (ABET) for its B.S. in Computer Science program (Attachment I).

ABET accreditation is proof that a collegiate program has met world standards essential to producing graduates ready to enter the critical fields of applied science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology. Graduates from an ABET-accredited program have a solid educational foundation and are capable of leading the way in innovation, emerging technologies, and in anticipating the welfare and safety needs of the public.

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

I move to approve USD’s request to seek accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Engineering Technology (ABET) for its B.S. in Computer Science program.

## SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

### Request to Seek Accreditation Under BOR Policy

- 1. Institution:** The University of South Dakota
- 2. Program(s) seeking accreditation:** Computer Science
- 3. Level of program(s) involved in accreditation:**  
X Bachelor's Degree
- 4. Accrediting Agency:** Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)

**5. What are the advantages of accreditation?**

Computer science has been identified as a field with critical workforce needs nationally. In fact, the U.S. Department of Labor has predicted a critical shortage of computer scientists in the next 5-10 years. As workforce demands for computer scientists are growing especially in the areas of Software Development, Data Analysis, Computer Networks and Security, the Department of Computer Science at USD needs investments to attract, retain and graduate students for the exciting opportunities and challenges of IT today.

ABET accreditation is proof that a collegiate program has met world standards essential to producing graduates ready to enter the critical fields of applied science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology. Graduates from an ABET-accredited program have a solid educational foundation and are capable of leading the way in innovation, emerging technologies, and in anticipating the welfare and safety needs of the public. Here are the main advantages of being accredited:

1. ABET accreditation will help to attract new students to USD and ensure that the students are confident in their education because ABET accreditation is the trusted standard for employers worldwide.
2. For USD, ABET accreditation demonstrates our commitment to delivering quality education.
3. Current and future employers can trust that graduates of USD's ABET-accredited computer science program are prepared to enter the workforce.
4. In response to increasing globalization, ABET works to ensure that the graduates of ABET-accredited programs can employ their talents internationally. ABET has signed agreements with educational quality assurance organizations in other countries and jurisdictions. Not only does this allow ABET-accredited program graduates to use their skills around the world, but it also raises their value to employers. The U.S. government, for example, and many multinational corporations seek employees with degrees from ABET-accredited programs that translate globally.

**6. What are the anticipated costs involved in accreditation, including:**

**A) Costs involved in undergoing self-study and preparing the application for accreditation.**

The undergoing self-study and preparation of the application for ABET accreditation are carried out by the faculty of the Department of Computer Science under the direction of Dr. QuocNam Tran, the department chair. That said there are no costs for USD.

**B) Out-of-pocket costs related to dues or site visits.**

Readiness Reviews

Fee for each program reviewed	\$1,000
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**On-Site Reviews**

Base fee for an on-site review	\$3,200
Fee for each program evaluator (PEV)	\$3,200

**Annual Maintenance**

This fee covers the upkeep of accreditation data files, review of institutional materials, and the publication and distribution of annual lists of accredited programs.

Base fee per campus per commission	\$675
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**C) Base budget implications including incremental costs and minimum base resources required (dollars and FTE).**

**Curriculum**

The curriculum that is used for this degree meets the ABET requirements and the current IEEE/ACM 2013 Curriculum Guidelines. It is possible for a student to complete the curriculum for this program in four years. The curriculum has adequate mapping to ensure that program objectives and outcomes are met. There are ongoing improvements being made to the curriculum to enhance the program. There are no costs involved.

**Faculty**

The department needs one more qualified faculty to fulfilling ABET's requirements as we currently have to use an instructor to teach upper level and graduate courses. The College of Arts & Sciences and the University of South Dakota have added an additional line of tenure-track faculty (1 FTE) to enhance our faculty in the area of Software Engineering, Networks and Security to address this concern.

**Facilities**

There are adequate facilities to meet the needs of the program.

**TA/RA Support**

The department needs to improve and enhance the retaining rate of our computer science students by providing helpers and tutorials for undergraduate students especially for the core courses. To fulfill this requirement, the College of A&S provided two more lines of Graduate Assistantships (\$11,000 x 2 per years) on top of the three lines the department currently has.

**7. What is the source of the resources needed?**

College of A&S.

**8. What is the estimated date for submission of accreditation application?**

Spring 2016.

*James M. Abbott*

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Institutional Authorization (President)

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