

LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS

Division of Academic & Student Affairs

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Academic Affairs Policy 2.13

Program Accreditation

Effective October 28, 1999

Amended December 5, 2002

1. General Policy on Program Accreditation

Effective October 28, 1999, the Board of Regents recognizes accrediting agencies that it considers as mandatory, recommended, or optional for eligible programs offered by public community colleges, colleges/universities, and the Louisiana Technical College. A program that is eligible for accreditation by an agency that is considered *mandatory* must be accredited for continued program approval. If the program is not accredited, the Academic Affairs staff will recommend to the Board of Regents that the program be terminated. The Board of Regents encourages institutions to obtain accreditation of programs that are eligible for accreditation by an agency that it *recommends*, but the accreditation is not essential for continued program approval. Accrediting agencies that are not considered as mandatory or recommended by the Board of Regents are considered *optional*, and the Board of Regents encourages institutions with eligible programs to evaluate the importance of those accreditations to its students.

- **Mandatory** agencies
- **Recommended** agencies
- **Optional** agencies

2. Criteria for Mandatory Accreditation of Programs

Unless exempted by the Board of Regents, accreditation of a specific program will be deemed mandatory if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a. The program prepares students for employment in occupations or professions that Louisiana and/or a significant number of states require licensure by an examination and for which graduation from

an accredited program is one of the qualifying criteria to sit for the exam;

- b. the program prepares students for employment in occupations or professions that require graduation from an accredited program for employment and/or advancement in the occupation or profession;
 - c. accreditation of the program is deemed critical for students to be admitted to a more advanced degree program; and
 - d. accreditation is deemed mandatory by the Board of Regents because of the critical nature of the program and its importance to the state and/or because accreditation is important for national credibility and recognition.
3. Unaccredited Programs That Are Eligible for Accreditation by an Agency That Is Classified as Mandatory by the Board of Regents.
- . New Degree Programs

The Board of Regents will stipulate in its motion of approval for all new degree programs with mandatory accreditation a date certain for achieving accreditation. Typically, accreditation will be required within three to five years from the date of program implementation depending on such factors as program length and specific requirements set forth by the accrediting agency. In arriving at the required date for accreditation, the staff will consult with the affected university or college prior to action by the Board of Regents.

a. Existing Degree Programs

Existing degree programs mandated to be accredited, but not currently accredited, will be given until July 1, 2003, to obtain accreditation. If, at that time, accreditation has not been achieved, the Board of Regents will examine the respective quality and continuing need for the program.

Amended: This deadline has been extended to Fall, 2005, in order to be consistent with the new Board of Regents Master Plan.

4. Actions of Accreditation Agencies

An institution must report all disciplinary actions, such as warning, probation, or withdrawal of accredited status, and a brief explanation of the conditions and/or deficiencies that resulted in the action to the Board of Regents upon receipt of the official notification of the action by the agency. The institution must submit a copy of the institution's response to the report regarding disciplinary action of an accrediting agency, along with a copy of the original report of the agency, to the Board of Regents.

5. Exemption from Routine Program Review by the Board of Regents

A program that is accredited and is not on warning or probation by an agency that is recognized as either mandatory or recommended will ordinarily be exempt from routine Board of Regents program reviews. Special or extenuating circumstances may prompt review of a particular program in a particular institution or a statewide review of a specific program or programs.

6. Annual Reporting of the Accredited Status of Programs

Each community college, college/university, and the Louisiana Technical College shall submit an annual report on the accredited status of all degree programs offered. The report shall include documentation, if not previously submitted, of actions taken by accrediting agencies since the last annual report.

7. Removal of Mandatory Classification of an Accrediting Agency

An agency classified as a mandatory on the Board of Regents Recognized Accrediting Agencies will retain that classification unless it is removed by action of the Board on a recommendation from the Academic Affairs staff. Such a recommendation will generally result from a determination, through an appropriate review of the staff and the Council of Chief Academic Officers, that the agency's policies, practices, and/or actions are inappropriate and/or fail to meet the highest professional standards.

8. Accreditation of Programs at the Louisiana Technical College

The Louisiana Technical College will not be subject to the policies on accreditation until the year 2001. The Technical College's first annual report on the accredited status of all programs offered by each of its technical college campuses shall be submitted by July 1, 2000. A report on the Technical College programs eligible for certification and the certification status of each of those programs shall be submitted to the Board of Regents by July 1, 2000, and annually thereafter.

9. Accreditation of Engineering and Engineering Technology Programs

To promote statewide consistency in degree designations of associate degree programs in technology and engineering technology, the following principles will be used:

- . Degree Designations
 - i. Associate degree programs in CIP Codes 14 and 15 that are intended to prepare individuals for immediate job entry will

- be designated as Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees;
- ii. Associate degree programs in CIP Codes 14 and 15 that are intended to prepare students for entry into baccalaureate-level programs will be designated as Associate of Science (A.S.) degrees;
 - iii. Associate degree programs that contain the words Engineering Technology in the title will be considered as preparatory programs for baccalaureate study and will be designated as Associate of Science (A.S.) degrees; and
 - iv. For baccalaureate programs and above in CIP Code 14, the word Engineering can only be used for degree programs that are accredited by ABET.
- a. Accreditation

Accreditation of a program is generally considered mandatory for engineering and engineering-related technology programs. The following policies will be used to determine the appropriate accrediting agency for programs in CIP Codes 14 and 15 that are eligible for accreditation:

- i. All degree programs in CIP Code 14 Engineering must be accredited by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET);
- ii. All Engineering Technology Associate of Science, Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science, and Master of Science degree programs in CIP Code 15 must be accredited by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET);
- iii. All Technology Associate of Applied Science programs and non-Engineering Technology Bachelor of Science degree programs in CIP Code 15 must be accredited by the National Association for Industrial Technology (NAIT) or an equivalent appropriate accrediting agency, if available;
- iv. Baccalaureate degree programs in Engineering and Engineering Technology are exempt from mandatory ABET accreditation when the institution's masters degree program in the same discipline has already obtained ABET accreditation; and
- v. Associate degree programs in Engineering and Engineering Technology are exempt from mandatory ABET accreditation when the institution's bachelors degree program in the same discipline has already obtained ABET accreditation.