

## FGCU

### FGCU's Engineering Baccalaureate Programs Receive Accreditation from The Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, Inc.

Florida Gulf Coast University's U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering announced that its baccalaureate degree programs in bioengineering, civil engineering, and environmental engineering were recently accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc. (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.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ron Toll said, "Since its inception in fall 2005, these three programs have contributed to the high level of quality for which the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering is more widely becoming recognized."

"On behalf of the University community, I wish to express our most sincere congratulations to the dean of the Lutgert College of Business Richard Pegnetter, and the founding director of the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering Susan Blanchard for their exceptional leadership as well as all of our distinguished engineering faculty and staff for contributing to this significant achievement."

The accreditation extends retroactively so that all of FGCU's engineering graduates now have ABET-accredited degrees. The next general review will occur in 2015.

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.

The dedication, hard work, and perseverance over the last four years of the wonderful faculty and staff in the School of Engineering have made all the difference in helping us achieve this testament to our vision of excellence in engineering education," said Blanchard. "We would not have achieved our accreditation goals if the students in our pioneering classes of 2009 and 2010, and their parents had not been willing to take a chance on FGCU's new, unaccredited, but very promising, programs."

One of the key elements of ABET accreditation is the requirement that programs continuously improve the quality of education provided. As part of this continuous improvement 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.

In addition to providing colleges and universities a structured mechanism to assess, evaluate, and improve their programs, accreditation also 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.

ABET is a not-for-profit organization, owned and operated by its more than 25 professional and technical member societies. An internationally respected organization with some 1,500 volunteers, ABET has set the higher-educational standards in its fields for nearly 75 years. More information about ABET, its member societies, and the evaluation criteria used to accredit programs can be found at [www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org).

For more information about U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering bachelor's degree programs in engineering, visit the website at <http://www.fgcu.edu/Eng/>.

For further information, contact Blanchard at (239) 590-7399.