Assessing Ourselves: The Computer Science External Program Review

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Abstract

This year, computer science is in the midst of its 7 year review process. We are seeking assessment grant funding to compensate a nationally recognized external reviewer to perform our 7 year review. We are further choosing to be reviewed under the stringent ABET accreditation criteria[4]. We believe that augmenting the seven year external review process by inviting a nationally experienced reviewer can strengthen our department's posture toward ABET accreditation, define directions for future departmental goals, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of our current assessment program against national norms. This, in turn, will help to ensure a first-class, systematic, and continuous process of improvement for our constituents. The objectives of the our external assessment are as follows:

1) Assess, critique, and re-formulate the CS assessment plan to ensure consistent, competitive, viability on a national basis. If funded, our reviewer will be asked to explicitly address this component of our program. Furthermore, this assessment will be included in a report for the assessment office at the conclusion of the process.

2) Subsequent to the reviewers visit, a departmental task-force will be established to transform the recommendations for assessment into action, and to establish procedures to monitor that activity. A review of the task-force activities will be included with the report at the conclusion of this grant.

3) One year after the assessment visit the department will convene a meeting to review progress toward these objectives. To help ensure objectivity, the department will request that UCET appoint a member external to the department to attend the meeting, review the assessment procedures, and to provide their observations. These observations will be forwarded to the assessment office.

We believe that meeting these objectives will help to ensure a consistent, high-quality, and sustainable assessment program within the department as well as posturing the department toward its accreditation aspirations and supporting the university in the assessment portion of its accreditation cycle.