Example 1a. Draft Statement

ABET
Computing Accreditation Commission

DRAFT STATEMENT
FOR
REVIEW AND COMMENT

ANYVILLE UNIVERSITY
Anywhere, OK

Dates of Visit October 7-9, 2008
Team Chair Susan S. Smith
Exalted University
Wherever, CA

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I. INTRODUCTION

Anyville University is a comprehensive, private, urban, and suburban Oklahoma institution of higher education that offers a wide range of academic and professional programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels on four separate campuses. The undergraduate programs are located on the Lower Anywhere campus and on the Central Anywhere campus. There are approximately 9000 undergraduate and 5200 graduate and professional students, and approximately 500 full-time and 750 part-time faculty members.

The following programs at Anyville University were evaluated during the 2008-09 cycle for possible accreditation under the CAC/ABET “Criteria for Accrediting Computing Programs” (Criteria) dated November 3, 2007:

- BS Degree in Computer Science, evaluated under the Computer Science Program Criteria (previously evaluated in the 2002-03 cycle and accredited at that time);
- BS Degree in Information Management Systems, evaluated under the Information Systems Program Criteria (not previously accredited).

II. REPORT OF FINDINGS

The Criteria is composed of the General Criteria and Program Criteria. Each criterion provides the underlying principles that each program must meet. A program must meet both the General Criteria and all applicable Program Criteria to be accredited.

This section contains the report of the findings at the time of the visit. CAC considers the following comments to relate directly to its accreditation actions. This draft statement reflects any corrections of factual errors provided by Anyville University within seven days of the visit. Information on corrective actions submitted after the visit will be considered during the evaluation of the institution’s due process response to this draft statement, even if this information was submitted within seven days of the visit.

A program’s accreditation action will be based upon the findings summarized in this statement. These findings will be updated as appropriate during the evaluation of the institution’s due process response. Actions will depend on the program’s range of
compliance or non-compliance with the criteria. This can be determined from the following terminology:

- **Deficiency**: A deficiency indicates that a criterion, policy, or procedure is not satisfied. Therefore, the program is not in compliance with the criteria.

- **Weakness**: A weakness indicates that a program lacks the strength of compliance with a criterion, policy, or procedure to ensure that the quality of the program will not be compromised. Therefore, remedial action is required to strengthen compliance with the criterion, policy, or procedure prior to the next evaluation.

- **Concern**: A concern indicates that a program currently satisfies a criterion, policy, or procedure; however, the potential exists for the situation to change such that the criterion, policy, or procedure may not be satisfied.

- **Observation**: An observation is a comment or suggestion that does not relate directly to the accreditation action but is offered to assist the institution in its continuing efforts to improve its programs.
Computer Science Program

The BS program in Computer Science is offered at both the Lower Anywhere and Central Anywhere campuses. The program falls within the Division of Computing, which is headed by a Director who reports directly to the Provost. Each of the two campuses has a Chair of Computer Science who reports to the Director. For administrative and advising support, there also is an Associate Director and a professional advisor at each of the two campuses with a division, rather than program, perspective. There are eighteen full-time and one part-time (emeritus) Computer Science faculty members who teach in the BS-CS program (eleven in Lower Anywhere and eight in Central Anywhere). There are approximately 95 undergraduate majors in the program with a few more in Lower Anywhere than in Central Anywhere. There are sixteen programs offered by the Division of Computing at both graduate and undergraduate (bachelor and associate) levels. The distinct programs are properly differentiated within university publications, including proper identification of the accredited program.

Program Strengths

1. There is a high level of collegiality and interaction among the faculties of the various computing programs. This facilitates cooperative efforts among the different faculties, which in turn facilitates the elimination of duplication and overlap in courses and fosters interdisciplinary scholarly and educational activities.

2. The internship program that has been developed with local computing companies offers excellent opportunities for the students in the program. The internship experiences offer students the ability to obtain work experience that will provide an advantage in competing for job opportunities.

Status of Shortcomings from the Previous Review

1. (Standard IV-17) It remains to be observed whether the addition of topics in the social and ethical implications of computing to CS 371 is effective in providing good coverage of these topics in the curriculum.

Status: This is no longer a concern.

2. (Standard VI-7) Because there is no regular budget for laboratory equipment upgrades and maintenance, there is a concern as to whether the laboratory facilities will remain adequate to support the needs of the program.

Status: This is no longer a concern.

Summary of Shortcomings from the Current Review

The program satisfies the General Criteria and the Computer Science Program Criteria with no shortcomings except as follows:
Program Weaknesses

1. **Criterion 3. Program Outcomes**

The Program Outcomes criterion requires that the program enable achievement of the capabilities and knowledge listed in the criterion. The absence of a good documented assessment process using effective measures to assess the extent of achievement for outcomes (see the Criterion 4 weakness), along with the incomplete course materials that did not allow complete analysis of the curriculum (see the Criterion 5 weakness), makes it unclear whether the program enables achievement of these capabilities and knowledge.

2. **Criterion 4. Continuous Improvement.** The following factors contribute to this weakness:
   a. The Continuous Improvement Criterion requires that the program use relevant data to regularly assess its outcomes and the extent to which they are being met. The extent to which program outcomes are achieved is regularly assessed through student surveys and an Exit Assessment Exam. However, the decisions as to whether achievement levels are satisfactory is done on an ad hoc basis, with no *a priori* establishment of targets for achievement levels, which means that decisions as to whether the desired achievement level (extent) is reached can be inconsistent from one assessment cycle to the next.
   b. This criterion requires that the assessment results are used to effect continuous improvement of the program. However, some results on the Exit Assessment Exam were so low that they would be considered areas for improvement in a good assessment process, but there was no evidence that the low results were analyzed or considered in any way. Further contributing to the weakness, there is no documentation of the consideration of assessment results or any changes that have been made as a result of the assessment process. Program improvements have been made, but there is no evidence that these are related to the assessment of program educational objectives or outcomes.

3. **Criterion 5. Curriculum.** The following factors contribute to this weakness:
   a. The Curriculum Criterion requires that the program’s requirements be designed in such a way that the program outcomes can be achieved. A mapping between program outcomes and courses was provided, but because the course display materials were incomplete, it was not possible to adequately verify that courses were designed to achieve the intended outcomes.
   b. Some significant differences in course offerings between the two campuses were found, but there were insufficient sample course offerings from each campus to determine the aggregate effect of these differences on delivery of the program.
Additionally, the overall incompleteness in the display materials made it impossible for the team to confirm that the technical and professional requirements of the program met all of the elements required in the criterion.


The Computer Science Program Criterion 9.3 requires that the program enable achievement of two abilities listed in the criterion. The absence of a good documented assessment process using effective measures to assess the extent of achievement for outcomes (see the Criterion 4 weakness), along with the incomplete course materials that did not allow complete analysis of the curriculum (see the Criterion 5 weakness), makes it unclear whether the program enables achievement of these abilities.

Program Concern

Criterion 4. Continuous Improvement. The following factors contribute to this concern:

a. The Continuous Improvement Criterion requires that the program use relevant data to assess its program educational objectives. In the Anyville program, educational objectives are assessed through surveys of graduates. However the survey questions do not clearly relate to the objectives, and there is no clear procedure for relating the survey answers to specific objectives.

b. The Exit Assessment Exam appears to provide uneven coverage of the outcomes, and the results on the exam imply that it is too long. These factors mitigate the ability of the assessment process to provide meaningful data about program outcomes and the extent to which they are met.

Program Observation

The team was very impressed with a software engineering course offered by the Lower Anywhere computer science faculty. The Lower Anywhere students, together with students from Cambodia and India, designed and created a real-world application. In addition to the computing experiences, these opportunities provided the students with a unique and valuable cultural and global professional experience.
Information Management Systems Program

The BS degree in Information Management Systems (IMS) is offered at both the Lower Anywhere and Central Anywhere campuses. The program falls within the Division of Computing, which is headed by a Director who reports directly to the Provost. Each of the two campuses has a Chair of Information Management Systems who reports to the Director. For administrative and advising support, there is also an Associate Director and a professional advisor at each of the two campuses with a division, rather than program, perspective. There are fourteen full-time Information Management Systems faculty who teach in the BS-IMS program (nine in Lower Anywhere and five in Central Anywhere). There are 105 undergraduate majors in the program with a few more in Lower Anywhere than in Central Anywhere. There are sixteen programs offered by the Division of Computing at both graduate and undergraduate (bachelor and associate) levels. The distinct programs are properly differentiated within university publications.

Program Strengths

1. There is substantial professional experience among the program faculty. This contributes to the relevance of the educational experiences that are designed for the students.

2. The strong and active support of the program by business leaders through their participation on the program’s Advisory Board provides a basis for maintaining relevance for the program and beneficial contacts for the placement of graduates.

Summary of Shortcomings from Current Review

The program satisfies the General Criteria and the Information Systems Program Criteria with no shortcomings except as follows:

Program Deficiency

Criterion 9 Program Criteria

The program criteria for Information Systems programs require one-half year of course work in processes that support the delivery and management of information systems (the Information Systems Environment requirement). The Anyville program does require 15 semester hours of such courses, but the courses can be freely chosen from multiple areas rather than providing options that focus on a specific area for the delivery and management of information systems. Thus, students may choose basic courses in multiple areas and not receive substantial work in any one application area, which is not the intent of the Information Systems Environment requirement. This is a deficiency in Criterion 9.

Program Weaknesses
1. **Criterion 3. Program Outcomes**

The Program Outcomes criterion requires that the program enable achievement of the capabilities and knowledge listed in the criterion. The absence of a good documented assessment process using effective measures to assess the extent of achievement for outcomes (see the Criterion 4 weakness) makes it unclear whether the program enables achievement of these capabilities and knowledge.

2. **Criterion 4 Continuous Improvement.** The following factors contribute to this weakness:
   
   a. The Continuous Improvement Criterion requires that the program use relevant data to regularly assess its outcomes and the extent to which they are being met. The extent to which program outcomes are achieved is regularly assessed through student surveys and an Exit Assessment Exam. However, the decisions as to whether achievement levels are satisfactory is done on an ad hoc basis, with no a priori establishment of targets for achievement levels, which means that decisions as to whether the desired achievement level (extent) is reached can be inconsistent from one assessment cycle to the next.

   b. This criterion requires that the assessment results are used to effect continuous improvement of the program. However, some results on the Exit Assessment Exam were so low that they would be considered areas for improvement in a good assessment process, but there was no evidence that the low results were analyzed or considered in any way. This also contributes to the weakness relative to the criterion. Program improvements have been made, but there is no evidence that these are related to the assessment of objectives or outcomes.

3. **Criterion 9. Program Criteria**

The Information Systems Program Criterion 9.3 requires that the program enable achievement of an understanding of processes that support the delivery and management of information systems within a specific application environment. The absence of a good documented assessment process using effective measures to assess the extent of achievement for outcomes (see the Criterion 4 weakness) makes it unclear whether the program enables achievement of this understanding.

**Program Observation**

The team was very impressed with the course entitled IS International Perspectives, which utilized visits to India and England to study and evaluate IS outsourcing operations. In addition to the computing experiences, these opportunities provided the students with a unique and valuable cultural and global professional experience.

**Potential Accreditation Action**
At the time of the visit, the program did not meet the Program Criterion. A program that does not meet all of the criteria may not receive accreditation.
III. SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the evaluation for Anyville University during the 2008-09 cycle:

Computer Science Program

Weaknesses:

- **Criterion 3 Program Outcomes**
  There is inadequate evidence that the program enables the achievement of the capabilities and knowledge specified in Criterion 3.

- **Criterion 4 Continuous Improvement**
  a. Decisions on the extent to which outcomes are achieved are made on an *ad hoc* basis without *a priori* guidelines.
  
  b. The link between assessment evaluation and program improvement is weak. There is no evidence that low results on the outcomes assessment examination led to consideration of a possible need for program modification, nor is there documentation of the assessment results or documentation of the analysis of possible need for program modification.

- **Criterion 5 Curriculum**
  a. It is not clear that all of the courses are designed to achieve the intended contribution to program outcomes.
  
  b. Significant differences in course offerings between the two campuses were found, and there were insufficient sample course offerings from each campus to determine the aggregate effect of these differences on delivery of the program. Coupled with the overall incompleteness in the display materials, it was not possible for the team to confirm that the technical and professional requirements of the program met all of the elements required in the criterion.

- **Criterion 9 Program Criteria**
  There is inadequate evidence that the program enables the achievement of the abilities specified in the Computer Science Program Criteria.

Concern:

- **Criterion 4 Continuous Improvement**
  a. The assessment surveys for program educational objectives do not clearly address the objectives.
  
  b. There is no direct or other effective assessment for every program outcome, and the assessment exam appears to need balancing and appears to be too long. This mitigates the ability of the assessment process to provide
meaningful data about program outcomes and the extent to which they are met.

Information Management Systems Program

Deficiency:
Criterion 9 Program Criteria. The curriculum does not require a coherent collection of courses adequate to satisfy the Information Systems Environment requirement.

Weaknesses:
• Criterion 3 Program Outcomes
  There is inadequate evidence that the program enables the achievement of the capabilities and knowledge specified in Criterion 3.

• Criterion 4 Continuous Improvement
  a. Decisions on the extent to which outcomes are achieved are made on an ad hoc basis without a priori guidelines.
  b. The link between assessment evaluation and program improvement is weak. There is no evidence that low results on the outcomes assessment examination led to consideration of a possible need for program modification, nor is there documentation of the assessment results or documentation of the analysis of possible need for program modification.

• Criterion 9 Program Criteria
  There is inadequate evidence that the program enables the achievement of the understanding specified in the Information Systems Program Criteria.