STATEMENT STYLE GUIDE

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DOCUMENT TITLES

Titles of published documents:

- Formal titles are italicized, but dates or other adjectives preceding or following the official titles are not italicized. For example:
  - The 2023-2024 *Criteria for Accrediting Engineering Technology Programs*
  - The 2023-2024 *Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual*
- Italics are not used for emphasis.

CAPITALIZATION

1. Categories of ABET findings:
   - While the AMS may not capitalize, these words, "Deficiency", "Weakness", "Concern", and "Observation" are to be capitalized when referring to ABET findings in the narrative so the terminology can be distinguished from the generic use of the terms. For example:
     - "ETAC is concerned about continued financial support …," but "The finding of Concern for Criterion 3 …."
     - "The program's advisory committee determined that there were weaknesses in the ability of graduates to …", but "the program addressed all Weaknesses cited in the previous ETAC review …."

2. Draft Statement, Final Statement, Self-Study Questionnaire, Self-Study Report, and Interim Report:
   These are capitalized when referring to a particular ABET-related document. For example:
   - "The Draft Statement was amended to include the program response …", but "a written statement provided by the Office of the Dean indicated that …."
   - "The 2020-2021 Interim Report provided evidence that this finding had …," but "The program has made progress in addressing this finding …"
   - "The August 2023 Final Statement included three institutional findings …."

3. Program names and degree titles: Capitalize only when referring to the full formal and official name or title. Capitalize program names as follows – "Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering Technology."
   - "The Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering Technology is awarded to …", but "The baccalaureate degree in civil engineering technology has been …."
   - "The chemical engineering technology program has four full-time faculty members …," but "The Bachelor of Science in Geomechanics Engineering Technology offers two options …."
   - "The Department of Engineering Technology offers programs in electrical engineering technology and manufacturing engineering technology…."

4. Administrative units of an institution: Use capitalization only when referring to the full formal name of the unit.
   - "The engineering technology department has a small budget that…" (note that this is not the full formal name)
   - "The Department of Civil Engineering Technology has a small budget that…" (official formal name is "Department of Civil Engineering Technology")

5. Course names and disciplines of study:
    - Do not capitalize when referring to the generic name of a discipline of study such as: electrical engineering technology, computer science, mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, statistics, etc.
- The names of specific languages are capitalized:
    - "Students are introduced to report writing in the first English composition course …."
        - "Students in this program are encouraged to take at least an introductory course in conversational Arabic …."
- Capitalize official course titles, but do not capitalize references to the discipline of study:
    - "The last course in the sequence is MAT 312, Matrix Methods …," but "Students are introduced to matrix methods in the …."
    - "Although the subject matter is covered in Electrical Circuits I …," but "Students are introduced to electrical circuits in the second semester …."

6. Program educational objectives and student outcomes:
    - In general, do not capitalize when referring to program educational objectives or student outcomes.
    - "The program provided evidence that all student outcomes were …."
    - Capitalize when they are part of a criterion's name.
    - "Criterion 4, Continuous Improvement, continues to …."

TERMINOLOGY

1. "Credit hours": Use the terms "semester hours" or "quarter hours," rather than the ambiguous term, "credit hours," unless the context of the sentence provides that information:

- "The typical faculty teaching load is 12 semester credit hours," or
- "Each faculty member teaches 12 credit hours per semester."

2. "Faculty":

- The word "faculty" is an ambiguous term, since it can be singular or plural, referring to an individual or a large group, or take on a new visit in an international visit. When used, every attempt should be made to add specificity to how it is being used. For example, in the case of a plural reference, "Program faculty are responsible for laboratory equipment maintenance …". In the case of a singular reference or even plural, adding the word "member" might be sufficient to clarify how it is being used. For example, "A faculty member reported …" in the case of singular, or "Six of the 12 faculty members are tenured", when used to describe a group.

3. "Data" and "datum":
    - "Data" is an adjective or a plural noun, the singular form of which is "datum."
        - Noun: "Data are routinely collected to measure progress on …."
        - Adjective: The data collection system does not include …."

4. "Criteria" and "criterion":
    - "Criterion" is singular, and "criteria" is its plural form.
    - "The term "criterion" is capitalized when referring to a specific section of ETAC criteria, when used with the full title of that section; any subsequent uses when not specifically referring to the criteria by its full title, should be lowercase

- "Criterion 2, Program Educational Objectives" and "The criterion further requires …." (In both cases, the capitalized word "Criterion" and the subsequent "criterion" is referring to Criterion 2.)
- "Criterion 2 and Criterion 3 have some common elements. Both criteria require that …."

5. "Internet" and "the Web":
   - The words "Internet" or "Web" are capitalized when used as nouns but not when used as adjectives.
     - "Students have ready access to the Internet, and several courses in the program are internet-based."
     - "Students have ready access to the Web, and several courses in the program are web- based."

FINDINGS (General guidelines)

Findings in general: Findings in a Draft Statement are conclusions and recommendations to the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC) by a Team Chair (TC) and a Program Evaluator (PEV). Please refer to the T402, GR Draft and Final Statement Templates, on how to properly write a finding. What follows are general guidelines for use in the writing of a statement so that there is consistency across the commission.

1. References to individuals or groups:
   - Activities or contributions of an individual must not be used as the basis for a finding.
   - Names of individuals or titles that identify individuals must not be used in findings.
   - Findings in Draft Statements and Final Statements must not identify individuals or groups of individuals as the sources of negative information in a context that could make those individuals or groups vulnerable to retribution.
     - Poor: "According to students interviewed in the 10:00 a.m. MET 336 course …" or "according to the faculty member who uses the automation laboratory …" or "members of the advisory committee attending the Monday luncheon said that …."
     - Better: "Evidence from students indicated that …," or "Evidence indicated that the automation laboratory …," or "Anecdotal evidence from employers indicated …."

2. Attributing opinions, recommendations, conclusions
   - The content of a Draft (or Final) Statement is officially from the ETAC. Evidence and conclusions should be written to reflect that point of view. Avoid attributing opinions, conclusions, or recommendations to other individuals or groups of individuals besides the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission.
     - Poor: "The program evaluator discovered that ….", "The team noticed that ….", "The team chair discovered that …."
     - Better: "Evidence indicated that ….", "ETAC of ABET notes that …."

3. Credibility of evidence: If the sole source of evidence represents only a small fraction of the affected population, it should be treated as either "anecdotal" or "hearsay" and should

normally not form the basis for a Deficiency, Weakness or Concern. However, this type of evidence can sometimes serve as the basis for an Observation suggesting that the program (institution) investigate to determine whether the limited evidence is indicative of a larger and more significant issue.

4. Unnecessary detail or wording:
   - If wording does not add to or clarify the finding, then the unnecessary wording should be deleted.
     - Poor: "During the Monday luncheon on the first day of this visit, this program evaluator had the opportunity to engage two alumni in a conversation about the quality of the graduates of this program. Both of those graduates feel that …."
     - Better: "Anecdotal evidence indicated that some alumni feel that …."

5. Quotations:
   - The text between quotation marks must accurately reproduce the source, including capitalization and punctuation.
   - Excerpted text that is truncated should indicate missing text using an ellipsis (three periods … and a space before and after the ellipsis points). Required punctuation (such as a period) is placed after the ellipsis points. For example:
     - Criterion 3. Student Outcomes. This criterion states: "The program must have documented student outcomes that …."
   - Paraphrasing can be used alongside quoted text, but the paraphrased text must be outside the quotation marks.
     - Criterion 3. Student Outcomes, characterizes narrowly defined activities as "those that involve limited resources …."
   - When truncating quoted text, preserves all text that is relevant to the issue under discussion, and provides the context necessary to understand the quote.

6. Acronyms:
   - In general, the use of acronyms should be avoided; however, acronyms may be used when referring to:
     - The professional societies that ABET comprises: ASCE, ASME, CSAB, AIChE, ASHRAE, etc.
   - The names of the commissions of ABET: ANSAC of ABET, CAC of ABET, EAC of ABET, ETAC of ABET
   - Write out the full name of programs, departments, or institutions. Do not use acronyms
     - Correct: "The Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology Department …."
     - Correct: "The University of California at San Diego has …."
   - Acronyms are acceptable in referring to courses if those acronyms are part of the official course name:
     - Acceptable: "Students are introduced to mathematical modeling in MET 301, Finite Elements, …."
     - Poor: "The MET course in finite elements includes…."
   - The first in-text reference to an acronym should always be written out followed by the acronym written in capital letters and enclosed with parentheses.
     - Program educational objectives (PEOs)
     - Student outcomes (SOs)
   - Be aware that an increasing number of organizations have adopted their former acronym as the official name such as IEEE and ABET. It is often necessary to check the organization's web site to determine the official name. Avoid guessing.

7. Abbreviations

In general, avoid using abbreviations in accreditation statements. For example, "lab(s)" should be written out as "laboratory" or "laboratories" unless it is used as the formal name of a course such as "Circuits Lab".

8. NUMERICAL VALUES (Applies to cardinal and ordinal numbers)

1. *General Rule:*

- For numbers greater than or equal to 10, use numerals. For example, "There were 37 graduates of this program in …."

- For numbers less than 10, spell out the numerical value. "For 2014-15, there were seven full- time faculty positions …."

2. *Consistency:* When, in the same context, both forms in the general rule above would be required use only one form. Either "The program had 26 students enrolled and 7 graduates in the previous academic year" or "The program had twenty-six students enrolled and seven graduates in the previous academic year."

3. *If a number is the first word in a sentence*, always spell it out. "Thirty-seven students graduated from this program …." If the construction becomes awkward, recast the sentence. The example could be rewritten as "The program had 37 graduates." This rule does not apply to years. "2020 was a difficult year for the program."

4. *Citing from outlines and enumerated lists.* When citing elements from an ***outline or enumerated*** list, use the numeral associated with that element. The following short list will be used for example.

   <u>Student Outcomes</u>
   1. Lions
   2. Tigers
   3. Bears
   4. Oh, my

- When referring to one of these student outcomes, the correct entry would be, "The team found that the program had failed to assess student outcome 3 during the past six years. [Note: this example does not violate consistency because "3" and "six" are not in the same context.]

- When referring to one of the required elements for student outcomes found in Criterion 3, use the number with parentheses. For example, "The program was unable to map any of its student outcomes to Criterion 3B element (5)"

- If referring to an element in an ***unnumbered*** list, the general rule 1 applies.

9. HYPHENATION

Use <u>hyphenation</u> to clarify certain phrases that use multiple adjectives for a single noun:

o upper-level courses, lower-division courses
o tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track faculty

- two-year cycle
- full-time faculty, part-time faculty
- nine-hour teaching loads
- Self-Study Report, the Self-Study
- high-level connections, low-level connections
- 2023-2024 visit or 2023-2024cycle
- Web-based materials
- on-campus courses, off-campus courses
- semester-credit-hour, quarter-credit-hour
- hyphenate up-to-date only when it is used as an adjective such as “the most up-to-date news”