

UMBC UGC Program Changes & Other Request: B.S. Mechanical Engineering

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Proposed Effective Date: Fall 2021 (retroactive)

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Specifics (see instructions):

See attached Side-by-Side comparison of the current and proposed Four-Year Plans.

Rationale (see instructions):

We propose that Philosophy 251 (3 Credits), a required course for the ME program, should be removed from mechanical engineering BSME curriculum.

This course was instituted as a response to a comment by program evaluators from ABET (Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology) (2005 visit) that all UMBC Engineering curricula should incorporate “Ethics.” Ethics indeed is required by ABET 2000 criteria, but it does not necessarily have to be taught in a stand-alone course. Many ME programs nation-wide have ethics taught throughout the curriculum. At UMBC, other engineering programs had since adopted the approach of incorporating it into other courses. The discussion during ME’s August 27, 2018, retreat suggests that ethics can be taught using a computer-training module like those taken by faculty and staff annually. Students are required to participate in the ethics training at the beginning of each laboratory course and design course, and participation can be electronically documented for accreditation purposes. Students will need to go through the module and pass the training assessment at the end.

Removing Philosophy 251 do not affect the current four-year graduation plan and keeps intact the 127-credit-hour requirement for BSME. Students will still need to take one GEP to fulfill the AH GEP requirements.

Benefits – ME is paying Philosophy Department to teach it twice a year. By removing it as a requirement, it relieves ME of the financial burden of hiring an instructor outside the department. Requiring students to go through the training module and a sequence of laboratory classes with an ethics component makes the ethics training more pervasive throughout the curriculum and over a period of two years.

Action – Remove Philosophy 251 as a requirement for BSME.

ME faculty votes – 12 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain.