

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS
LEVEL II REQUEST FORM

Item No.:	138-1501-R0108	Date of Meeting:	January 10-11, 2008
Institution:	Montana Tech of The University of Montana		
Program Title:	Creation of Electrical Engineering Department		

Level II proposals require approval by the Board of Regents.

Level II action requested (check all that apply): Level II proposals entail substantive additions to, alterations in, or termination of programs, structures, or administrative or academic entities typically characterized by the (a) addition, reassignment, or elimination of personnel, facilities, or courses of instruction; (b) rearrangement of budgets, cost centers, funding sources; and (c) changes which by implication could impact other campuses within the Montana University System and community colleges. Board policy 303.1 indicates the curricular proposals in this category:

- 1. Change names of degrees (e.g. from B.A. to B.F.A.)
- 2. Implement a new minor or certificate where there is no major or no option in a major;
- 3. Establish new degrees and add majors to existing degrees;
- 4. Expand/extend approved mission; and
- 5. Any other changes in governance and organization as described in Board of Regents' Policy 218, such as formation, elimination or consolidation of a college, division, school, department, institute, bureau, center, station, laboratory, or similar unit.

Specify Request:

Montana Tech of The University of Montana requests permission to create an Electrical Engineering Department. This department will provide oversight and support to the faculty and students of the recently approved Electrical Engineering Degrees (Bachelor & Masters) at Montana Tech.

1. Overview

At their June 2006 meeting, the Board of Regents (BOR) authorized Montana Tech of The University of Montana to offer a Bachelor of Science degree (BS) and a Master of Science degree (MS) in Electrical Engineering (ITEM 130-1503-R0306). Since then, Montana Tech has initiated these two programs. Currently, the programs are housed in the General Engineering Department. Montana Tech requests permission to create an Electrical Engineering Department to house the programs.

2. Need

The Electrical Engineering program is currently housed in the General Engineering Department. Formation of an Electrical Engineering Department will provide a management structure consistent with Montana Tech's campus-wide program-management structure and enable a sustainable environment for the programs.

Since the BS in Electrical Engineering (BSEE) and MS in Electrical Engineering (MSEE) programs were approved by the BOR, the two programs have witnessed healthy enrollments. The BSEE program currently has 43 students, including 19 freshmen. The MSEE graduate program has 6 students. Also, the Electrical Engineering faculty has very healthy funded research programs (four externally-funded current projects at over \$2 million with more proposals pending).

Formation of an Electrical Engineering Department would provide the structure to grow the programs to healthy and sustainable levels. The Electrical Engineering faculty and department head could make curriculum, fiscal, recruiting, foundation, and management decisions that focus upon the benefits of the Electrical Engineering program/students. Currently, Electrical Engineering management decisions must fit within the General Engineering Department priorities. These priorities are not always consistent with the Electrical Engineering's priorities.

3. Institutional and System Fit

All engineering programs in the School of Mines and Engineering at Montana Tech are housed within a discipline-dedicated department except for Electrical Engineering. Housing the Electrical Engineering programs within their own department would be consistent with Montana Tech's current program-management structure.

4. Program Details

The faculty of the proposed Electrical Engineering department are:
Dr. Dan Trudnowski (Department Head);
Dr. John Morrison;
Dr. Dale Harrell;
Ms. Debbie Harvey.

The Electrical Engineering Department will be housed in the School of Mines and Engineering.

5. Resources

The only additional resource required is a department-head stipend. Remaining resources will be reallocated from the current General Engineering Department budget.

6. Assessment

The four faculty of the proposed Electrical Engineering Department assessed and discussed the creation of the department over the course of the past year. The faculty are all supportive of the creation of the department and feel it is best for the Electrical Engineering programs. This management structure (stand alone Electrical Engineering Department) also is in-line with current practices required by Montana Tech's regional accrediting body (Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities) as well as the discipline-specific accrediting bodies within the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET.

The Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET sent an evaluation team to Montana Tech in September 2007 for an initial evaluation of the new Electrical Engineering programs. The visit went very well with no concerns identified by the visitation team. Montana Tech has yet to receive the official evaluation report from ABET, but we anticipate that the Electrical Engineering program will be accredited for the three year period prior to the next scheduled full-visit by ABET in 2010.

7. Process Leading to Submission

The four faculty of the proposed Electrical Engineering Department submitted a request to the Dean of The School of Mines and Engineering to create the department. The proposal was presented to the faculty of the General Engineering Department in August, 2007. The proposal was then presented to and approved by the faculty of The School of Mines and Engineering in September, 2007. The proposal will be submitted to the entire faculty at the next scheduled faculty meeting in December, 2007.