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April 20, 2009

To: Phyllis Wise, Provost
        Douglas J. Wadden, Executive Vice Provost

From: Gerald Baldasty, Vice Provost and Dean
        James S. Antony, Associate Vice Provost and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

RE: Review of the UW Bothell Computing & Software Systems Program

This memo outlines the Graduate School's recommendations on the UW Bothell Computing &
Software Systems (CSS) program review. More detailed comments on the program can be
found in the documents referred to below. The CSS review included the following milestones
and documentation:

- UW Bothell CSS Self-Study (March 2008)
- Charge meeting between review committee and administrators (April 23, 2008)
- Site visit (May 22-23, 2008)
- Review committee report (June 29, 2008)
- UWB CSS response to the report (October 31, 2008)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (March 5, 2009)

The review committee consisted of:

> Judith A. Ramey, Professor, UW Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering
>   (Committee Chair)
> Steven John Hanks, Professor, UW Tacoma Computing & Software Systems
> Alan T. Wood, Professor, UW Bothell Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences
> Steve Cunningham, Professor Emeritus, Department of Computer Science, California
>   State University Stanislaus
> David Evans, Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science, University of
>   Virginia

A subcommittee of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the
full Council at its meeting March 5, 2009. During discussion, Council recommended continuing

status for the B.S. and B.A. programs, with the next review in the 2017-2018 academic year. The Council endorsed the review committee's recommendation that the M.S. degree not be implemented at this time.

Since the March 5 Council discussion, however, the CSS program has communicated to the Graduate School its plans to pursue the M.S. as a self-sustaining degree program with an Autumn Quarter 2009 start date. A self-sustaining M.S. program, supported by the UWB Chancellor's Office, would allow CSS to address the central concerns raised during the Council's March 5 discussion: the lack of faculty and staff resources to support a new degree program without negatively impacting the existing programs. The Council was subsequently briefed on this development and supports the pursuit of the M.S. degree as a self-sustaining program. The Council strongly encourages CSS to provide adequate student funding as it develops the budget for the new program. Before implementation, the Higher Education Coordinating Board must also re-approve the M.S. program.

Specific comments regarding the unit and its degree programs include the following:

Program Strengths
- CSS is serving the student population and community it was intended to serve.
- The B.S. program is healthy and produces about 70 graduates per year, while the new B.A. program responds to a national trend and will result in strong interaction with the campus wide initiative to establish programs in science, technology, engineering & mathematics (STEM).
- CSS has strong community interactions through a successful required internship/research program.
- The program has a dedicated and high quality faculty and staff, although they seem over-extended in certain areas (e.g., advising staff).

Challenges & Risks
- Maintaining a diverse student and faculty body is an ongoing challenge.
- Faculty challenges include: maintaining active research programs without graduate students; the burden of institution building falling on mid-career faculty; providing courses in many important areas with limited faculty numbers; and stagnation in hiring new faculty.
- The lack of an updated strategic vision may hamper the program.
- Campus wide move to a four year program strongly impacts CCS.

Areas of Concurrence
- The CSS faculty should take a central role in creating the STEM initiative, which will in turn bolster the ability of CSS to offer quality programs.
- The need exists for additional faculty and staff support, especially as CSS considers implementing a master's program.
- Improved communications between the program and admissions staff, with the goal of developing a cooperative and supportive relationship, is important.
- CSS will implement a strategic planning process that will guide faculty effort and focus requests for additional resources on high-priority goals.

- The program should dedicate additional funding to branding and marketing of CSS.

Areas of Disagreement
- The review committee recommended that the master's program should not be launched at this time, while CSS feels this recommendation is not in the best interest of CSS, local industry, and area professionals. CSS is pursuing the M.S. as a fee-based program.

Council Recommendations
- Continuance
    - o The undergraduate programs should be continued and reviewed again in 10 years.
    - o If the self-sustaining master's program is implemented, it should be reviewed after 5 years.
- CSS should continue its work to foster a better environment for female and under-represented students.
- The program should maintain an updated strategic vision statement.
- UWB and other UW campuses should strive to allow students ready access to courses at the other campuses. This should be pursued in support of both academic rigor and new program development.

We concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

cc: Douglas J. Wadden, Executive Vice Provost, Office of the Provost
       Kenyon Chan, Chancellor, UW Bothell
       Susan Jeffords, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW Bothell
       John D. Sahr, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
       Michael Stiber, Director, UW Bothell Computing & Software Systems
       Jake Faleschini, President, GPSS
       UWB CSS Review Committee
       Graduate School Council
       David Canfield-Budde, Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School