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To: Phyllis Wise, Provost
        Ana Mari Cauce, Executive Vice Provost
        Office of the Provost, Box 351237

From: Suzanne Ortega, Vice Provost and Dean
        Melissa Austin, Associate Dean for Academic Programs

RE: Review of the Information School

At its meeting of January 11, 2007, the Graduate School Council met with members of the team that reviewed the Information School (Frederic M. Wolf, Professor and Chair, Department of Medical Education and Biomedical Informatics (Committee Chair, by phone), Beth E. Kolko, Associate Professor, Department of Technical Communication, Craig Zumbrunnen, Professor, Department of Geography), and with Harry Bruce, Professor and Dean, Information School, and Joseph Janes, Associate Dean for Academics, Information School.

Currently, the Information School offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Informatics, Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS), Master of Science in Information Management (MSIM), and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Information Science. The MLIS has been continuously accredited since 1926, and was last reviewed in 1988. The BS and PhD degrees were initiated in the Fall of 2000, and the MSIM was launched in the Fall of 2001. The degree programs were granted provisional status with subsequent 5-year reviews. In 2001, the "iSchool" also became a separately organized School at the University of Washington. Thus, the BS, MSIM, and PhD degree, and the new iSchool, had not been previously reviewed. The review committee, including its external members (Steven B. Sawyer, Associate Professor, School of Information Sciences and Technology, The Pennsylvania State University, and Linda C. Smith, Professor and Associate Dean, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) held its formal on-site review on February 27 and 28, 2006.

The review committee emphasized that the Information School has done a remarkable job in a short period of time and should be proud of the national peer recognition for its programs. The Committee observed enthusiasm for the program throughout the unit's faculty, students, and staff. Committee recommended continuing status for the degree programs offered in the Information School, with the next full review in ten years. Because there have been so few

graduates of the PhD program they also recommended that an interim report be submitted to the Graduate School in five years. The review committee emphasized that this interim report is not intended to be punitive, but rather a tool for the program to assess if they are satisfied with the direction the program is headed. The Committee noted that the School continues work on a strategic plan as it transitions from a startup entity to full sustainability.

In their written report, the Review Committee made a large number of recommendations to the School, several of which are highlighted below (please see the Review Committee written report for all recommendations).
- Preserve the spirit of the School as a "school of one" and continue the current organizational structure; while maintaining flexibility to make appropriate changes as the School continues to move from its start-up to sustainability phase.
- Delegate some decision-making to faculty committees and develop policies and procedures for additional shared governance, including clearly defining the role and expectations of the elected faculty council.
- Grow staff support commensurate with program growth, including expanding support for undergraduate advising and to facilitate grant submissions.
- Develop plans for budget and resources when course and/or program demand flattens out or declines, especially for the self-sustaining, fee-based programs.
- Develop uniform teaching expectations and assignments for faculty in similar ranks and reduce service obligations of the faculty.
- Ensure that faculty have adequate support for online delivery of a course or program.
- Continue development and local community partnerships, including engaging with private industry.
- Within the UW, continue successful partnering in pursuing funding opportunities; pursue other new opportunities, such as GIS, Human Computer Interaction, etc.

In addition, the review committee made a series of specific recommendations regarding each of the degree programs, and these are summarized below.
PhD Program:
- Maintain the current size of the PhD program (of 4-5 new admits per year).
- Resolve remaining gaps in communication among the PhD program committee and PhD advisors regarding the status and progress of students through the program.
- Implement a seminar or workshop series early in the program to provide more guidance to students and ensure that they can maximize the use of their practicum. Consider delaying the practicum until the third quarter of a student's first year to make use of such guidance.
- Provide effective assistance to PhD students in identifying and securing their GSR.
MLIS, dMLIS and MLIS in Law Librarianship
- Ensure adequate staff support for students and faculty.
- Examine the process of assigning MLIS students to faculty advisors.
- Ongoing review of the MLIS curriculum should address emerging roles in libraries that graduates seek to fill and how new knowledge and skills can be integrated into it.
- Review how well the pedagogical model is working for the delivery of courses online.
- Provide lecturers support for professional development.

MS in Information Management
- Allocate additional qualified faculty to supervise capstones in the Day MSIM option and monitor staffing levels required for support of internship placement.
- Continue monitoring the balance between required and elective courses in both the Executive and Day MSIM programs based on feedback from students and employers.
- To ensure continuing viability of the Executive MSIM, ongoing recruitment is needed.

BS in Informatics
- Focus on improving quality of students, and not increasing the number of students.
- Continue to expand the resources engaged in redressing diversity imbalance.
- Continue to provide tutoring to redress the differential levels of preparation for incoming students.
- Increase staff resources for student advising and marketing the program.

The representatives from the Information School emphasized that the School has gone from startup to its present success in only seven years. It now plans to focus on consolidation and maximizing the structure that has been built. The review committee report has provided the basis for the School to assess itself and many of the recommendations have been implemented. The request for an interim report on the PhD program in five years is accepted.

During the discussion, Council members asked whether more undergraduate service courses could be offered, especially to students outside of the School. The School responded that students are rarely closed out of classes and they believe that they are currently offering the right number of courses. Although the School faculty are satisfied with teaching load, they are currently reconsidering how teaching assignments are made, and how any changes might impact junior faculty. Because the School is in a transition time after huge growth, the Council emphasized that the strategic plan is tremendously important. The School representatives reported that strategic planning is in process, and the plan, *Vision Action,* will be launched in May 2007 as the culmination of many enthusiastic conversations targeting stability and sustainability. Finally, it was noted that space remains an issue. The location in Mary Gates Hall is excellent, but cannot accommodate the entire community, resulting in a satellite site in the Roosevelt Commons.

The Graduate School Council recommended reaffirming continuing status for all of the degree programs in the Information School, with the next review during the 2015-2016 academic year. In addition, a 5-year interim report on the PhD program was recommended, due in February, 2011. We concur with these recommendations.

c: Edward Taylor, Dean and Vice Provost, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
     Janice DeCosmo, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
     Harry Bruce, Professor and Dean, Information School
     Joseph Janes, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academics, Information School
     Kimberly Friese, President, Graduate and Professional Student Senate
     Information School Review Committee
     Graduate School Council
     Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School