

Academic Plan
Department of Computer Information Systems and Quantitative Methods
(CIS and QM)
Fall 2003

I. Introduction

The Department of Computer Information Systems and Quantitative Methods (CIS and QM) is presently home to approximately 360 undergraduate students majoring in CIS. Another 40 students are enrolled in the CIS certificate program. The Department also offers MBA elective courses to approximately 160 graduate students pursuing the MBA degree each year. Fifteen full-time, tenure-track faculty and two lecturers support our current course offerings. One full-time administrative assistant provides administrative support to the department.

During the 2004-2009 planning cycle, the department is considering initiating several new programs as well as expanding its course offerings at RRHEC. Academic program initiatives include a joint program with the Department of Accounting leading to Master of Science in Accounting and Information Technology, undergraduate and MBA concentrations in network and internet security, and a BBA degree with a major in CIS at RRHEC. As a consequence of the downturn in the information technology (IT) field, the enrollment in CIS has declined to its present level from a high of 770 majors in 2001. It is, however, anticipated that enrollment will increase during the next five years. In spite of thousands of IT jobs moving overseas, the Bureau of Labor Statistics still predicts that 9 of the 10 fastest growing job sectors during the 2000-2010 decade will be in information technology. According to the labor report, the greatest demand will be for jobs in business applications development and network security where an estimated 380,000 new jobs will be added during the decade. Therefore, prospects of increased enrollment as a result of our proposed new program initiatives look very promising.

In light of these initiatives and predicted increase in the demand for IT professionals, the ideal size for the department by 2009 would be a combined total enrollment of approximately 600 majors at both the main and RRHEC campuses. It is expected that undergraduates would make up 75% of the student body while graduate students would make up the other 25%. Seventeen full-time, tenure-track faculty members and three full-time lecturers would be needed to support various academic programs in the department. These faculty members would rotate between the Texas State campus and RRHEC. Support staff would include one full-time and one half-time administrative assistant, an assistant chair, one full-time computer lab/network administrator, and one full-time advisor in the College of Business Advising Center to be responsible for CIS major advising. In addition, one advisor (to be shared with the Department of Management which offers BBA in Management degree at RRHEC) would be needed at RRHEC. One full-time faculty member would receive workload reduction to supervise and direct the proposed internship and vendor certification programs as well as the Certificate in CIS program at RRHEC and Texas State.

To accomplish the unit goals pertaining to academic programs specified in this plan, the Department of CIS and QM is requesting two new faculty lines in 2004-2005 and one new faculty line in 2005-2009. Of the two 2004-2005 lines, one is for the BBA in CIS degree at the RRHEC. The funding for 2004-2005 faculty lines is estimated at \$175,000 while the 2005-2009 faculty line is estimated at \$90,000.

To support the unit initiatives outlined in this academic plan at the highest possible quality level, the Department of CIS and QM is requesting approximately \$276,000 for 2004-2005, of which \$130,000 is to support the proposed BBA in CIS degree at the RRHEC. The funding for 2005-2009 is estimated at \$300,000. The majority of this funding request is for technology-related support such as computer hardware, software and information technology infrastructure.

II. Process

The Department of CIS and QM strongly believes in the shared governance model. Therefore, the department faculty was involved at each stage in the development of our academic plan. All faculty members, including those not on tenure-track, willingly and enthusiastically participated in the process.

The planning process started with an initial meeting in spring 2003 to discuss responses to the planning questions. In two subsequent face-to-face meetings and countless email exchanges, we were able to examine, evaluate and refine the department's responses to the planning questions. The document containing our responses to the planning questions became the starting point for developing the current academic plan.

At the first planning meeting of the fall semester, the faculty evaluated the department's planning document against the College plan. This allowed the department to refine its initiatives to align with not only its vision but also with the mission of the College of Business Administration. The department faculty met twice again to fine-tune the academic plan. After much discussion on academic programs to pursue as well as options to attract and retain quality undergraduate and graduate students, the faculty endorsed the final plan. This academic plan is the result of faculty's dedication to and strong involvement in the planning process. Willingness to meet for three or more hours on late Friday afternoons each week is a clear indication of this dedication and commitment.

III. Program Maintenance

By its very nature, the discipline of Information Systems (IS) and Information Technology (IT) is ever changing. The faculty is faced with the difficult task of keeping curriculum current with the many and frequent paradigm shifts in IT. Such shifts can have a massive impact on the maintenance of academic programs such as ours. Faculty is constantly in a "re-tooling" mode, computer labs are obsolete even before they come on line, and qualified IT infrastructure support is always lagging.

Since its inception, the Computer Information Systems (CIS) faculty has had to battle these curriculum problems. The program has managed to survive on a shoestring budget for technology, inadequate computer lab facilities, and an absence of a full-time lab coordinator. The program that serves 360 majors and offers service courses to several thousand additional students each year has managed with two small labs (one has 32 computers and the other 20), both of which also double up as our classrooms. In addition, there has been no full time technical support. In most cases, the department chair and senior faculty have had to step into that role. In comparison, similar programs in Computer Science have the support of at least six dedicated computer labs, a full-time lab administrator, countless number of graduate assistants, and a new building.

To maintain pace with our ever-changing curriculum and to offer a quality program, there needs to be an immediate infusion of capital into the program. More specifically, our immediate needs are for:

- One professionally qualified, full-time lab and network administrator to manage our computer labs and technology classrooms as well as provide technical support to our faculty and students. This would be a new staff position in the department at an annual cost of approximately \$50,000.
- Financial support for technical training of our faculty. The training cost is estimated at \$15,000 per year. This will provide technical training to three faculty members each year.
- Adequate computer lab facilities for instructional use. In order to do a quality job of teaching software development and in order for our students to have the best learning experience, we need to have a networked computer for each student in all our classrooms. Learning to develop quality business software is an interactive and team-oriented process. Our students deserve to receive their training in such a learning environment if they are to remain competitive in global IT marketplace. While the lack of computer lab facilities will be eventually resolved when we move into the new College of Business building in 2006, we

must still find a short-term solution. One option is to provide wireless network access in each of our first call classrooms for network access and fund a mobile notebook lab so that we may roll in notebook computers into any one of the classrooms to convert the room into a computer teaching lab. This alternative is estimated to cost \$75,000, including the cost of notebook computers.

- One additional graduate assistant to support the mobile teaching lab at an annual cost of \$9,000.

The Department of CIS and QM is therefore requesting immediate financial support for acquiring these infrastructure services to support our current curriculum.