

APPENDIX K

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Science Degree in Computer Science and Information Systems at UNC-Wilmington

Introduction

UNC-Wilmington notified the UNC Office of the President of its intent to plan a Master of Science degree in Computer Science and Information Systems (CIP# 11.0101) in May 2003. The university requests authorization to establish the program in August 2005.

Program Description

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation is funding the planning and establishment of Professional Science Masters programs, and UNCW received a Sloan award for the proposed program. The proposed interdisciplinary graduate program is a combined effort by the Department of Computer Science in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Information Systems and Operations Management in the Cameron School of Business. The program will provide a balance of instruction in advanced computer science and development of systems and solutions applied in a business environment. It will enable information technology professionals to have a broader perspective of the rapidly expanding and evolving science of technology and how it can be managed and leveraged to support commerce and trade activities. The 36-semester hour program will prepare students for leadership roles in the development and implementation of computer and information systems. A research project or thesis will serve as a capstone experience.

Program Need

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that computer software engineering is one of the fastest growing occupations during this decade. This program is designed to enable computing professionals to balance their technical knowledge with business management expertise. UNCW has sought the participation of local and regional businesses in the design of the proposed program and has established an industrial advisory board for input into the design of the curriculum. Surveys of undergraduate computer science and information systems students, local professions working in the information technology field, and regional businesses indicate a level of demand more than sufficient to justify the program. It is anticipated that 40 full-time and 15 part-time students will be enrolled by the fourth year of the program.

Resources

No additional state resources are required. Program needs will be addressed through internal reallocations and enrollment increase funds. A new technology building will be completed in January 2007, which will accommodate any additional space needs as the program grows.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Master of Science in Computer Science and Information Systems degree (CIP# 11.0101) at UNC-Wilmington effective August 2005.

