

TO: Havidan Rodriguez
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Dallas G. Hoover, President
University Faculty Senate

FROM: B. David Saunders, Chair
Department of Computer and Information Sciences

SUBJECT: Permanent Status Program Review
BS with a major in Information Systems (INSY)

The Information Systems major was established in 2003 with its first students in fall of that year. The first class of about a dozen INSY majors will graduate this spring. The major was formed in close collaboration with the School of Business & Economics and in consultation with local industry. As a matter of career preparation, the INSY major has a high degree of technical skills associated with the use of data storage schemes, web based tools, and software deployment, together with some understanding of the associated business practices and social and psychological issues in the deployment of computational tools in organizations. This skill set is much sought by businesses, government agencies, and other organizations. The Computer Science major is much more immersed in all the techniques and knowledge that go into software design and development while the MIS major is more focused on organizational behavior and procedure. Philosophically, the INSY major can be seen as a combination of applied computer science with applied sociology. Information Systems majors similar to ours are now quite common around the country and it is well that we continue to provide this option to our students.

The INSY major has been taken up by relatively few students, but very enthusiastically by those who have chosen it. A new CISC course on business networks is combined with existing computer science and business courses in forming the INSY major. Current instructional resources meet the need for these courses and the enrollment in other of our courses by these majors. Only if the programs grow significantly larger would additional teaching resource be needed. INSY would benefit from the addition of faculty with research interest in databases and modern issues of information retrieval from complex data sources over networks. For this and other reasons, information retrieval is a recruiting priority of CIS.

I wholeheartedly recommend the permanent establishment of the Information Systems major.

CC: Errol Lloyd, CIS Undergraduate Committee
George Watson, Arts and Sciences