

Comprehensive Program Review

Masters of Science in Applied Computer Science

Review Date: February 20, 2014

External Committee

Dr. Jon A Preston
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School of Computing and Software Engineering
Southern Polytechnic State University

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D. Abbott Turner College of Business
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Procedure Followed and Information Gathered

Drs. Preston and Goldfrank reviewed the comprehensive program review self study for the Masters of Science in Applied Computer Science beginning February 7th, 2014. They formed individual assessments of this self study material and then came together for an on-campus review. This review consisted of meetings with administrators, faculty, and students and also included a tour of the facilities. At the end of this visit, Drs. Preston and Goldfrank met and generated a summative review of the program based upon all data gathered. They then presented their findings and assessment to Dr. Wayne Summers.

Findings of External Review Committee

Assessment of Program Quality

The external team agrees with the self-study and finds the overall program quality to be very strong.

The external committee had exposure to a limited sample of faculty and students. We note that the list of publications for the faculty and students is impressive. We are also particularly impressed with the outreach programs and see this as a strategic asset of the program.

We agree with the self-study and find the quality of the faculty, quality of research and scholarship, the quality of service, and the quality of faculty and student achievement to be very strong. We also find the quality of teaching and curriculum to be above average. We find the quality of facilities and equipment to be satisfactory.

Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

We believe there exists an opportunity to better involve masters students with the high school mentoring and outreach initiatives.

Assessment of Program Productivity

The external team agrees with the self-study and finds the overall program productivity to be above average.

We agree with the self-study and find the enrollment in the program for the past five years, the degrees awarded over the past five years, and the comparison with CSU and USG programs to be very strong. We also agree that the cost-effectiveness of instructional delivery are above average. We believe the student learning indicators are average, the program retention rate is satisfactory, and the graduation rate of the program is below average.

Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

We believe the program should continue to address the 6105 and 6106 success rate and seek to increase this success rate through improvements to student support and course design.

Assessment of Program Viability

We agree with the self-study and find the program's overall viability and the program's improvement plans are very strong.

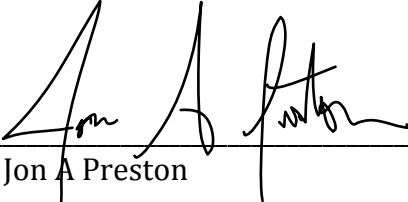
Recommendations for Improving Program Viability

We recommend that the department examine the possibility of offering a more on-campus/in-house Masters of Science in Applied Computer Science to test the viability of further graduate programs in computing.

Final Recommendations of the Review Team

The external review team finds the following:

1. We support the need for additional faculty
2. We believe the department should incentivize and support student recruitment and mentoring. This includes providing student transition guidance upon entering the program.
3. We believe the department should explore the viability of an in-house masters program, and if this is successful, revisit the potential to add a doctoral program
4. The department should explore the use of mini grants and course releases to stimulate quality research. In particular, this would benefit the graduate research course offering.



Dr. Jon A Preston

2/24/2014
Date

Dr. Jack Goldfrank

Date