

Texas A&M Kingsville
Undergraduate Academic Program Review
Ad-hoc Subcommittee on Computer Information Systems

March 27, 2009

During the period under review (2003-2008), the Department of Accounting and Computer Information Systems has experienced a nearly one-third decline in the number of majors, from 183 to 115. The department ascribes this to national and international factors affecting the number of ACIS majors generally, but the trendline is sufficiently dramatic to prompt consideration of more systematic recruitment and retention efforts.

Overall, CIS begins from a foundation of strength. It services not only its own majors, but provides crucial course study for students from a wide range of disciplines. Its excellent full-time teaching faculty manage to produce a substantial output of refereed journal articles and paper presentations, while conducting four-course teaching loads. For its courses, the department as a whole receives Student Ratings of Instructor (SRIs) slightly above the university average.

Nearly all of its faculty also offer independent-study courses to insure that majors are able to graduate with the requisite classes in a timely manner. At present, however, the department has adequate faculty to meet the demand for its courses.

In addition to its scholarly output, the department has consistently worked to update its curriculum, adding, dropping and updating its courses to meet the requirements of one of the most rapidly-changing fields in academia.

A number of challenges face ACIS, most saliently in its declining majors. While it is certainly true that broader factors affect this, several things within the university's control may also play a role, including the sufficiency of resources available to faculty members to carry out their professional tasks, and the availability of scholarships available to students. The development of a program of recruitment and retention of majors, now in its early stages within the department, will be vital.

Recommendations:

The sub-committee recommends that a more systematic effort be made for recruitment of students into the program. Actively undertaking recruitment efforts in area High Schools, and increasing the number of scholarships available to students, are among the techniques some other departments have used with success. It is also important that the problem of inadequate resources available to faculty be properly addressed. Finally, as noted in the department's program review, a more formal review and planning process is needed for curriculum/program development.

The faculty of the department are to be commended for maintaining high standards of professional scholarship, while working in a challenging and time-consuming teaching environment, in a rapidly-changing discipline.

Overall Recommendation: Unconditional Continuation

Dr. Matthew Price, Chair

Dr. Fidel Hernandez

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