On January 31st, 2013 the Undergraduate Council (UGC) met with Dr. Lucas Vespa and Dr. Ted Mims of the Computer Science Department to discuss their proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Security (ISS). Dr. James Ermatinger; Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Science was also present at this meeting.

Scope and need for the program: The UGC commends the CSC department for a well-constructed and timely new degree proposal. This degree will be offered both on-ground and online. Given the current teaching expertise in the department, the department is well positioned for the delivery of this dual mode of delivery of the degree. ISS is concerned with protecting the confidentiality, availability, and integrity of information in computer systems. Due to the pervasive use of computers for information storage, systems security has become an integral and significant part of every aspect of business and government. As a result of this integration there is a tremendous need for qualified individuals in this area. Currently there is a significant shortage of trained systems security experts. As documented in the proposal (Part 1, page 6) there is potential for computer specialist jobs to increase by 286,000 jobs from 2008 to 2018. According to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, in fall 2010, there were only 324 students enrolled in similar programs in Illinois. None of these programs are in central Illinois, and, as a result, this degree at UIS could prove quite attractive to area students. The online delivery of this degree will also help in drawing students from a much larger geographic area.

Curriculum: The systems based approach of this degree will give students the technical knowledge and theory behind security tools as well as the ability to administer, write, and implement security plans. The major consists of 36 hours of course work and all of the courses are currently taught at UIS. The curriculum is distinct from the B. S. in computer science. The packaging of the core and elective courses will allow students to focus on a security-centered curriculum. While there is no accreditation required, the CSC curriculum is externally validated every three years. UIS is a certified National Center for Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education. To maintain this certification, the curriculum is evaluated by the National Security Agency (NSA) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS). UIS is also a State Farm target school (a distinction held by a small number of institutions) for recruitment and maintaining this status requires curriculum evaluation by State Farm as well. The department’s association with the Center for Systems Security and Information Assurance (CSSIA) is designed to aid in development of quality curriculum in the area
of information security. The department is also well equipped technologically to teach new security concepts.

Admissions and Advising: The department will follow UIS guidelines for admission to the degree program. There are no department-specific admissions requirements. The department has a strong advising history and advising plan for this degree.

Assessment: The assessment process in place is dependent on the exit test administered by the department and individual course assessments. Another point of assessment includes the Systems Security and Information Assurance Capstone course. The UGC finds these assessment tools satisfactory but encourages the department to continue to further develop their assessment plan.

Resources needed: The department has indicated that capacity exists in the current course offerings to serve the new students enrolled in this degree. Current departmental staff is adequate to support administering this degree. This program is enrollment driven and based on its success the department is requesting an additional faculty member in the 5th year of offering this degree, provided enrollment targets are met.

The UGC recommends that in the third year of existence of this degree, the CSC department should provide a progress report directly to the UGC addressing the following: enrollment in the major, enrollment in the major courses, pattern of course offering and availability, number of credit hours generated by the major and the number of graduates from this major. Overall this is a strong degree proposal that will enhance the degree offerings at UIS.

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