

CIS Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, March 19, 2012
Room A-228 6:00 PM

Present: Susan Grever, Sara Pohl, Jim Sager, Vickie Klick, David Klick, Rick Bunton, Mark Alderson, Eric Epps, Gene St. Louis. Mark Uscian came in during a break in his class.

The formal meeting started at 06:18

1. Approval of minutes from November 12, 2011 meeting

Moved to approve by Vickie, seconded by Gene, unanimously approved.

2. Update on Program Review

The program review (held every five years) shows an enrollment increase of 22-27% (depending on whether KEC is included or not). Dual credit enrollment has dropped 36% in the same period. Enrollment has been a roller coaster during this period.

Student demographics mostly match the college except that the department is 75% male (and would be even worse without CIS 101, CIS 123, and the cross-listed Office Systems classes). It would be good to consider programs for middle-school girls to increase their interest in STEM careers.

Career outlook 2008-2018: nationwide 23% increase expected in network admins, web admins, web developers, 15% in Illinois; 25% increase expected for software engineers in Illinois. Straight coding jobs are the only ones expected to decline. Locally (DeKalb County), a 1-3% increase expected in the 2008-2018 interval. Software developers need a bachelor's degree; web developers will be judged by their portfolio.

74% of students are seeking degrees; 33% are planning to go on for a bachelor's degree, 14% are seeking certificates, 11% are taking classes for personal interest. It is unclear how students from NIU are counted when taking classes at Kish that are articulated with NIU; this could affect the completion numbers, since these students are not seeking a Kish degree. Eight students completed a degree; 21 more completed the final project or internship (not clear why they didn't actually complete a degree).

Full-time faculty is teaching 75% of hours in CIS, versus 61% in 2007 (which was close to the college average).

Student surveys were positive - almost all (eight returned) were satisfied. Student concerns matched faculty concerns (e.g., up-to-date equipment).

Retention is very close to the college average.

Average class size has increased from 10.4 to 12.9 students (slightly higher than CT as a whole). Individualized study, internship, projects are excluded from class size calculations; however, the cross-listed courses are only counted 50% for CIS. NIU started requiring CIS 123 for business and accounting majors to transfer, plus there is a need for more on Excel. CIS courses are required for thirteen programs at Kish and are recommended for five others. 40% of CIS enrollment is generated by courses that support other programs (CIS 101, CIS 123, CIS 150).

The department is looking at adding more faculty and keeping programs current while continuing to provide solid coverage of the basics.

Asked to estimate future enrollment, which is very difficult; enrollment depends on money available.

3. Update on Programs of Study project

Recommendations:

- Move Microcomputer Applications certificate back to Office Systems
- Web Development certificate needs to be more rigorous, in light of need for a good portfolio upon graduation
- Agreed with dropping Web Administration certificate (already done)
- No Child Left Behind has impacted KEC enrollment, especially with the 2 hour round trip travel to Kish for many of the students. Mark Uscian and Mark Alderson are investigating the possibility of creating an "IT Academy" using the distance learning facilities at Kish. This would eliminate the travel time and make the program more attractive to college bound students. One possible course being considered to start out is a gaming class. PC repair was considered, but the on-site equipment logistics would be difficult for an initial course. It would cost \$2000 for the equipment to be used at each school for the distance learning if they didn't already have the facilities.
- There has only been one CIS 106/206 class in the last five years, partly because of instructor load. The project management course was offered after the mailer stopped going out, which resulted in essentially no enrollment. Advertising is needed for one-time classes such as these.

Rick said that one problem is defining a clear pathway through the CIS program. He showed a graphic for the network administration degree. Rick is also working on a graphic showing the path for high school students. He suggested there could be two tracks, one for the transfer track students (who would need pre-calculus, physics, and chemistry) and ones who have less ambitious goals. Vickie questioned whether this would be "dumbing down" the program, and what courses will enable students to be successful in courses that require logical thinking. Sara said we have to walk a fine line between scaring students away and setting the necessary requirements.

4. Discuss Certified Internet Webmaster and whether there is any benefit to becoming a CIW Academy

Based on previous discussion, discount vouchers for the exams could be included in courses, but exams would not be part of the program. There is a decline in testing centers, which does not indicate a strong CIW certification market. Rick reported that his research indicates certification is not that important versus a strong portfolio. Dave asked Eric if he could provide content that he would be looking for in a portfolio. Vickie moved that we defer the CIW Academy and focus on improving the portfolio aspect of the web development program. Eric and Jim both seconded. Approval was unanimous.

5. Present and discuss CT division policy changes to the Advisory committee.

Advisory committees within CT are being defined in a more formal way, with a charter defining their structures and responsibilities. Susan shared a sample charter for Welding Technology, and a list of advisory committee activities. It is possible that this committee could divide into two, one for networking and one for programming/web design. Sara mentioned that some committees need to focus on fund-raising/donations, others need to provide detailed input on curriculum.

A draft charter needs to be written up by a subset of committee members, with input from the full-time faculty. Dave mentioned that it would be nice to have a recent (within five years) graduate on the advisory committee to provide feedback on how their education is serving them. It would help to have members with backgrounds in the various areas of study within CIS (web design as well as programming and networking) to provide input. Gene wondered where we would find new CIS committee members, and suggested it might be possible to rotate members based on new members found within the community (and possibly extend terms if new members are not found). He suggested advertising on Facebook and other social media. Eric suggested using discussion boards and other media to allow people to participate remotely. Susan said that WebEx is available on campus, and the conference room can be set up with a phone for teleconferencing.

Sara would like to have the charter in final form for approval at the November meeting. Gene volunteered to come up with a first draft. Sara said she would provide more examples. Susan offered to be the distribution point for material; Dave suggested sending Gene all members' email addresses so he can send information to all directly. Eric suggested putting the document up in Google Docs for collaborative work. Dave suggested that we defer dividing the committee into separate networking and programming/web design committees until numbers made it feasible. Rick has some leads on additional members.

6. New business: Dave mentioned the Working Connections Illinois program coming up the week before Memorial Day. They are short of students and he encouraged all members with an interest to sign up for a class, and encourage others to

attend.

Jim moved to adjourn; Eric seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50.