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To: Chang-Hyun Jo, Chair
Department of Computer Science

From: Susamma Barua, Dean *Susamma Barua*
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Subject: Dean's Comments and Recommendations - Program Performance Review of
Computer Science MS

The Program Performance Review (PPR) Self-Study Report for the Computer Science (CS) MS, the Review Team Report, and the Response from the CS Department Chair have been reviewed at the Dean's level.

We appreciate and are encouraged by the several areas of strengths recognized by the Review Team. The Team suggested four program improvements for consideration:

1. Encourage the Thesis Option

The Review Team has made few recommendations towards the steps that the Department may consider for encouraging the Thesis option. It is worthwhile for the Department Graduate Committee to take these recommendations under consideration and explore the viability of incorporating the Thesis option as a strong component of the graduate program. The Graduate Advisors of the Department may also play an important role in encouraging students to consider the Thesis option.

2. Strengthen Student Connections to Industry

In addition to the suggestions provided by the Review Team, the Department is encouraged to consider the following:

- Facilitate student focus groups to understand their perspectives on workforce readiness and their expectations from the Department.
- Seek input from the CS Department Industry Advisory Board and the Software Engineering Program Advisory Board.
- Seek input from the CS adjunct faculty who are also practicing computer scientists and software engineers in the industry.



3. Remap Student Outcomes and Performance Indicators

It is valuable for the Department Graduate Committee to take a careful look at the current mapping of the Student Outcomes (SOs) and Performance Indicators (PIs) and discuss ways in which the Review Team's suggestion could be addressed. It is important that the Department ensures the conformity of the mapping of the SOs and PIs with all graduate study plans regardless of the elective track student chooses.

4. Balance the Required Elective Categories

Recently hired faculty members are developing and introducing new 400-level and graduate courses. With the approval of these new courses, the Department should definitely be able to address this suggestion.

Overall Recommendations and Observations from the Review Team

The Department and the College are fully aware of the increase in demand for computer science programs, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. We are also very cognizant of the need to build the human and infrastructure capacity to take advantage of the opportunities and challenges this will present. The College Dean, CS Department Chair and the ECS Academic Resource Manager will work collaboratively and strategically to create an optimal structure and operational efficiency to support the space, faculty and staffing needs of the Department as the enrollment continues to grow.