

GIST Program Report
BOV Meeting
Fall 2008

Context

The Graduate Information Science and Technology (GIST) Program has been in existence since Fall 2006, with the reorganization of SIS. The GIST program is similar to the Department of Information Science and Telecommunications (DIST) from the earlier organization of SIS, but is more limited in scope:

1. GIST is a degree program (MSIS and Ph.D.) – thus our role is limited to curricular matters and does address the research mission of SIS, except as it impacts those degree programs – mainly the Ph.D.
2. Under DIST, the Telecommunications Program was virtually autonomous – that autonomy is now formalized under the new SIS.
3. The undergraduate program, formerly under the DIST umbrella is now also autonomous.

Progress

1. Enrollments. The PhD program has had steady enrollments for several years. Our MSIS enrollment upswing is continuing (see Table). Efforts in marketing (Kelly Shaffer), recruitment (Shabana Reza), and increased demands from industry.

	Fall 03	Fall 04	Fall 05	Fall 06	Fall 07	Fall 08
MSIS Total	123	96	73	79	87	98
MSIS New	41	29	24	25	38	40

2. Curriculum. The introduction of tracks for Database & Web, Security, Geoinformatics, and most recently Telecommunications has also had a positive effect on enrollments. The tracks have also had the benefit of giving structure to our course schedule. A fifth track in Cognitive Science & Systems is in the final stages of development.

Challenges

1. Enrollments. The issue of enrollment remains a challenge, especially with the uncertainty of the economy.
2. Curriculum. Traditionally, the most frequent employment destination for MSIS grads has been in the area of systems design and management, and thus this area has been a major draw for our

MSIS applicants. This area, previously led with great skill by Professor James Williams until his retirement several years ago. Ken Sochats has managed to keep this area solvent by identifying qualified (student) instructors, and with some assistance from Glenn Ray for the past several years. The recently announced retirement of Ken Sochats leaves this area in an uncertain position. We expect to be able to manage with the help of adjuncts, but the situation is suboptimal, and is a top priority.