



University of Pittsburgh

OCT 10 2009

Office of the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor

801 Cathedral of Learning
4200 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-4223
Fax: 412-383-9640
E-mail: jvmaher@pitt.edu

James V. Maher
Provost
Senior Vice Chancellor

October 7, 2009

Dr. Alfred L. Moyé
Chair, Information Sciences Board of Visitors
124 Gramercy Drive
San Mateo, CA 94402-1215

Dear Al:

Thank you for your very comprehensive report on the deliberations of the October 15-16, 2008 meeting of the School of Information Sciences Board of Visitors. Your report touched on almost all facets of the School that are of operational or strategic importance to its continued advance among the select group of "I-Schools" with which it identifies itself, and reflects not only on the quality of those deliberations but also the breadth of information and data that the School provided during the various sessions. It goes without saying that I'm especially pleased that the Board has responded so positively to what the School has been accomplishing in recent years, as well as with regard to the progress that had been made in the year since the Board's previous meeting. While I can't comment in detail on all aspects of your report, I would like to make several observations with regard to some of the points made in the body of your report that were carried over into the summary of the Executive Session that I had with the Board at the end of the meeting.

The Board expressed interest in ensuring that faculty recruiting is strategically-driven, with an emphasis on hires that bridge several areas within the School. I agree completely, and I should note that Dean Larsen has been providing leadership in encouraging the faculty to adopt that perspective as being the most likely means of building a reputation as an Information School that trains professionals and prepares scholars for careers in a number of fields that are integrated through their use of information. In agreement with the Board, I'm also heartened by the revitalization of the Telecommunications and Networking program and agree further that a renaming of that program to reflect current usage and its home in an Information School might be advisable. Given its geographic location, I agree with the School's decision to emphasize telecommunications/networking as an option within the BSIS and as a doctoral specialty and to de-emphasize the MST program. I also found the reference to the Board's discussion of the research potential of the interplay of social networking and telecommunications networking to be

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intriguing and hope that it has fostered similar faculty discussion since its meeting. The Board's interest in exploring at the forthcoming meeting the School's potential for additional fundraising is also acknowledged and appreciated.

These are but several points among the relatively large number of topics that were touched on in the Executive Session and in the report more generally. You've provided a helpful outline of the issues facing the School that I know that Dean Larsen and his colleagues have been reviewing in the intervening months. All in all, I share the Board's enthusiasm with the School's progress and look forward to being with you again at your next meeting on October 19-20.

Sincerely,



James V. Maher

JVM/cwm

cc: ✓ Dean Ronald Larsen