I. Assessment activities

A. Program goals

The Information Systems Program prepares people to be effective users, designers, and developers of information systems, people who can add value to processes and products in organizations. The Program also helps participants improve their professional writing, presentation, and teamwork abilities. Specific goals expected of our graduates include:

$ The ability to describe a situation as a system, specifying components, boundaries, and interfaces
$ Communication skills for effectively leading teams, collaborating with managers in defining needs and opportunities, and assisting colleagues
$ Knowledge of the basic hardware and software components of computer systems and their configurations
$ The ability to develop functional specifications for a software system in terms of functions, modules, and interfaces
$ The ability to gather and use information needed by management information systems (MIS) professionals
$ Technical and human skills needed to successfully deploy information technologies in various organizational settings

These goals have not changed during the reporting period. Faculty and focus group members are continually evaluating these goals and their relationship to our curriculum and assessment procedures. The table on page 4 shows the Program courses which address each of these goals.

B. Learning Outcomes / Data collection

(The table on page 5 summarizes this section.)

1. Outcome: Providing adequate preparation of incoming students.

Students may enter the Information Systems Program with a variety of academic backgrounds. Some may not have programming experience. To obtain this ability necessary for completing some aspects of our Program, students may take our IS 500 and IS 510 to gain two semesters of programming experience. Currently the program language taught is Visual Basic .NET. Students may substitute two semester courses of other languages such as Java, C, and C++. Grades of B or better in these courses are necessary to meet the programming requirement.
2. Outcome: *Students meet academic standards and achieve acceptable levels of technical competence.*

In the 2003-2004 academic year, six full time faculty members taught the Information Systems Program=s courses. Three of those were assigned full-time to the Program. The others taught one or more IS classes and also taught courses in the College=s Computer Science Program or in another program in the University. Together the Program faculty offers a wealth of experience and expertise in the topics addressed in the Program curriculum. They bring their collective knowledge to bear to ensure that courses meet academic standards and provide students with the knowledge they need to become effective professionals.

Feedback from students and employers has continued to be positive, but suggestions often result in revisions to course topics. In addition, the Program is continuing a review of its curriculum.

3. Outcome: *Teamwork abilities*

Many courses require students to work in teams on term length and shorter projects. This work is evaluated by written reports, oral presentations, and student evaluations. The teamwork not only provides students experience in working together, but also provides opportunity for them to exchange information and ideas and to become better acquainted with one another. This allows them to establish long term relationships that otherwise would be unlikely to develop in a nonresidential educational setting.

4. Outcome: *Employers value our graduates.*

Both focus groups and informal reports indicate that employers value our graduates and the abilities they bring to the job. To maintain this respect we make a consistent effort to keep course content and the curriculum consistent with employers=s needs.

C. Results

These are the identified results from Program assessment activities:
§ Regular changes are made each semester in course content to keep material current and useful for students.
§ The Program continues to evaluate the curriculum and proposed areas of emphasis.
§ An *ad hoc* College assessment committee is developing a structured assessment model for all College programs. When completed, the model will be consistent with University goals, with mandates of accrediting agencies, and the best interests College=s students.
IV. Plans for the current year

The College of Information Technology and Engineering will continue to develop a college-wide assessment model to be used by all of the College’s programs.

During the coming year focus groups of students and professionals will review and recommend curricula changes and delivery and assessment methods. Having many professional students provides us with regular, insightful comments and recommendations about the Program and courses which we expect will continue to result in Program and course modifications.

V. Assistance needed

We continue to need research assistants to collect assessment data by retrieving records from Banner and soliciting material from faculty members. We also need support for faculty development activities allowing us to stay current in a rapidly changing field and thus better serve the needs of our students.

VI. What one most important thing has the department learned through this process?

The absence of formal surveys of our graduates is a serious omission in data needed for Program evaluation.
### Relationship Between Goals and Course Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>IS 600</th>
<th>IS 605</th>
<th>IS 610</th>
<th>IS 621</th>
<th>IS 622</th>
<th>IS 623</th>
<th>EM 660</th>
<th>IS 625</th>
<th>TE 699</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ability to describe a situation as a system, specifying components, boundaries, and interfaces</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills for effectively leading teams, collaborating with managers in defining needs and opportunities, and assisting colleagues</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the hardware and software components of computer systems and their configurations</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to develop specifications for a software system in terms of functions, modules, and interfaces</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to gather and use information needed by information systems professionals</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of the technical and human skills needed to successfully deploy information technologies in various organizational settings</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: I - Introduced, C - Core presentation, R - Reinforced
## Summary Assessment of Student Outcomes: 2003-2004

**Program: MS in Information Systems**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Outcome</th>
<th>Person/Office Responsible</th>
<th>Assessment Tool/Approach</th>
<th>Standards/Benchmark</th>
<th>Results/Analysis</th>
<th>Action Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Student=s advisor/ Assistant Dean</td>
<td>Prerequisite coursework</td>
<td>Visual Basis 2 &amp; 2 or equivalent</td>
<td>Programming ability is applied in IS 621/622</td>
<td>No action taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic standards and competence</td>
<td>Division chair and Program faculty</td>
<td>Final project, exams, homework</td>
<td>Faculty experience and local/national business expectations</td>
<td>Continuous identification of need for change</td>
<td>Several special topics courses taught in past year; overall curriculum review underway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork abilities</td>
<td>Program faculty</td>
<td>Course projects</td>
<td>Effective group cooperation and reporting</td>
<td>Successful student projects in courses</td>
<td>Continued emphasis on group work in courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are valued by employers</td>
<td>College dean, Division chair, and Program faculty</td>
<td>Focus groups and informal discussions with employers</td>
<td>Standard business expectations and requirements</td>
<td>Continued support of the program by employers</td>
<td>Regular updates to course content and curriculum review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Submitted by:

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William Pierson, Chair of the Division of Engineering and Computer Science
Tom Hankins, Coordinator of the Information Systems Program