Academic Assessment Plan
Department of Computer Science, College of Arts and Sciences

Master of Arts

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Steps 5 & 6 – to be completed in Fall 2006

1. Program goals
The mission of the Master of Arts Program in Computer Science is to impart the student with the technical knowledge and skills necessary for success within the information and high technology industries. The program emphasizes breadth-of-knowledge in advanced computer science topics to augment the student’s baccalaureate degree. An enhanced foundation is provided that allows the student to maintain their skills in the rapidly evolving field.

2. Learning objectives
Below are a list of cognitive capacities and skills, relating to Computer Science, that represent the learning objectives of the Master of Arts in Computer Science program.

• Knowledge and understanding. Demonstrate breadth-of-knowledge and understanding of essential facts, concepts, principles, and theories relating to advanced topics in applied Computer Science.
• Communication. Make succinct presentations and written reports about advanced technical problems and their solutions.
• Project development. Development and realization of a project that integrates knowledge and practice.
3. Approaches and Methods for Assessment

The Department of Computer Science will utilize a number of methods to assess how well students are meeting the stated learning objectives. These methods will be implemented and integrated vertically into the curriculum to allow a full spectrum view of student progress. Additionally, students work with an Academic Advisor who monitors their progress in the program.

The methods that will be used for assessment include the following:

- Entrance requirements for the Masters Program to assure basic prerequisite knowledge and ability
- Plan of Work to support and assure breadth of knowledge learning object
- CS 69191 Masters Seminar to support communication and knowledge learning objects
- Masters Seminar presentation to assess communication learning object
- MA project and oral examination to assess communication and project development learning object
- Exit Survey to assess learning objects

4. Measures for Assessment

A number of measures and metrics can be derived from implemented assessment methods, enrollment data, graduation data, and student data (i.e., grades and transcripts). As the duration of the assessment reaches the point where complete data for the degree program is acquired additional measure and metrics can then be examined.

The measures that will be used in the first stage of assessment are the following:

- Time to submit Plan of Work
- Changes and deviations from Plan of Work
- Completion estimates (from Plan of Work) versus actual completion times
- Participation and feedback from Masters Seminar
- Completion rates for Masters presentation
- Completion rates MA project and oral examination
- Student GPA
- Career & position
- Correlate Exit Survey results with time to admission data, completion time, and Plan of Work.
5. Results & Findings
First set of initial findings to be presented in Fall 2006.

6. Improvement
Initial improvements will be presented in Fall 2006, however little data will be acquired by that time frame and as such changes to this plan may be premature.