

May 24, 2006

VICE PROVOST ALISON GALLOWAY  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

RE: Proposal to Establish BS in Computer Science: Computer Game Design

Dear Alison:

Attached is the revised Computer Science proposal to create a new major, the BS in Computer Science: Computer Game Design. The proposal was originally submitted in January 2006. Since that time, we have received letters of support from all the campus departments affected by this proposed new major. The degree proposal, program charter documents, and letters of support are attached but can also be found at:

<http://www.cs.ucsc.edu/~ejw/gamedesign/>. This new major is important to current campus interests including interdivisional cooperation.

I am pleased to give my enthusiastic and full support to this new program. UCSC will be among the very first institutions in this country to develop and offer this exciting new major. We have early indications of support from industry – especially Microsoft.

Some concern in the Arts Division has been raised concerning whether this degree program will cause participating courses to become impacted due to high enrollments. As discussed in the program charter, we are committed to reviewing participating courses to identify those that may become impacted, and to work to alleviate those as soon as they become known. Below, I have addressed the concerns that both you and Acting Dean Leta Miller have expressed over the past few months.

Regarding Faculty FTE: In this current round of faculty recruitments, we have successfully hired a computer game design professor. In addition, I have committed to two additional hires, one in 2007-08 and one in 2010-11. These hires are consistent with the SOE's recently revised Academic Plan. Our new hire, Michael Mateas has expertise in the area of artificial intelligence for realistic non-player characters which will provide increased visibility for the new program. His research focus on creating interactive drama will additionally help this program build further bridges to the Arts Division.

Regarding Space and Funds for the Game Development Lab: I am committed to providing space and funds for the game development lab. As this is a highly specialized lab, BELS (Baskin Engineering Lab Support) rather than ITS, will assume responsibility for its support. I have also committed to provide on-going funds to support the maintenance of the lab. Internally, we are currently in the process of agreeing to the required staff FTE – approximately .25 to .50 needed to support this lab. This has my full support.

Regarding Funding for Lecturers: The Computer Science department will pay for Gaming lecturers from their departmental TAS allocation. I have committed to funding lecturers in the Film and Digital Media Department in 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Regarding TAS Support: School of Engineering allocates TAs to departments based on enrollments. CS is committed to providing TA support to Computer Gaming from its department allocation.

Regarding Library Support: The campus provides \$5,000 as part of each engineering faculty start-up package. These funds will be sufficient to fund the library needs as outlined in the proposal.

Regarding Accreditation Support. I am committed to funding accreditation activities. My staff has agreed to align the timing of the Computer Game Design degree program to coincide with the ABET re-accreditation of CE and EE which will take place during 2009-10 academic year with preparatory activities in the 2008-09 academic year.

In Acting Dean Miller's letter of support, she states: "...I feel that there has been sufficient commitment on the part of the engineering division and the central administration to assure that any strains caused by the establishment of this program will be met. I am very enthusiastic about this collaboration and hope that other similar programs linking our two divisions will materialize in the near future."

It is my hope that after reading all the materials prepared for the Computer Game Design degree program that you, too, will be enthusiastic about this exciting new addition to the Computer Science offerings. All the initial indications point to the fact that this new degree program will significantly reverse the downward trend in enrollment in Computer Science. We look forward to the interdivisional aspect of this program and to producing graduates who will be innovative and creative in this exciting new field.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Isaacson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Michael Isaacson  
Acting Dean