

ACTION ITEM #8
Proposal for New Bachelor's Degree
(Erica Weintraub Austin)

May 6, 2016

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

SUBJECT: Proposal for New Bachelor of Science Degree

PROPOSED: That the Board of Regents approve a Bachelor of Science Degree in Software Engineering

SUBMITTED BY: Erica Weintraub Austin, Interim Co-Provost

SUPPORTING
INFORMATION:

The demand for software engineers, especially in state of Washington, is at an all-time high. The Washington state government and legislator as well as Washington industries are making large investments in education and training of computer scientists and software engineers as demonstrated by the recent state's engineering expansion investments. With faculty expertise in computer science and engineering and adding new expertise in software engineering, the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) is well positioned to establish the proposed program and address one of the state's highest workforce needs. The demand for software engineers is expected to continue to grow till 2020 and beyond.

BSSE graduates are rare and easily demand 6-figure salaries upon graduation. While other states such as California, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Indiana have committed to building software engineering programs and producing SE graduates, the State of Washington is lagging in this area. To the best of our knowledge, currently there is no BSSE degree offered in any of the 4-year institutions of higher education in the state of Washington. The closest offering is an AAS-Software Engineering program at South Seattle Community College. UW-Bothell offers a BS in Computer Science and Software Engineering degree, which has some similarities to the proposed BSSE degree. Western Governors University offers competency-based degrees as BS Information Technology-Software and BS Software Development. While these programs share some similarities with the proposed program, they are intended as competency-based programs

designed to provide formal educational opportunities for experienced information technology professional.

Therefore, the proposed new BSSE program at the WSU North Puget Sound at Everett (also simultaneously offered in Pullman) will be unique and will help the State and its computing/IT industries meet their needs by producing highly skilled and trained graduates.

At a meeting on February 16, 2016, the Academic Affairs Committee approved the proposal to create a new degree, the Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering, to be offered on the WSU Pullman and Everett campuses.

The following were noted and/or addressed during the review process:

- Degree will be offered on the Pullman and Everett campus
- Degree approval is dependent upon approval of new courses on UPMCB 7

The proposal has support from the Provost, Budget Committee, Catalog Subcommittee, and the Library Committee. The proposal recommends an effective date of fall 2016. This recommendation was passed by the Faculty Senate on March 10, 2016.