

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Department of Linguistics – Title Change for the Master of Arts in Computational Linguistics

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the Department of Linguistics to offer the Master of Science (MS) in Computational Linguistics as a change of degree title from the current Master of Arts (MA) in Computational Linguistics, effective immediately.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Linguistics began offering the Master of Arts (MA) program in Computational Linguistics in 2005 and awarded its first degrees in 2006. Since that time the program has been highly successful, graduating 44 students. However, the department has found that the MA designation does not reflect the technical content of the program and thus puts students at a disadvantage when they enter the workforce to compete against students with MS degrees in the field. In terms of the integration of computational methods with previously non-computational disciplines, the computational linguistics program is comparable to the iSchool's Master of Science in Information Management and the Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering's Master of Science in Human Centered Design and Engineering.

In December, 2011, the Department of Linguistics submitted a proposal to the Graduate School to convert the current MA in Computational Linguistics to an MS program. This change would impact the degree title only; all other aspects of the program would remain unchanged. As part of the department's Academic Program Review in February, 2011, the faculty review committee recommended approval of this conversion. The proposal was then taken to the Higher Education Coordinating Board Education Committee as a "Moderate Degree Change Proposal" in June, 2011, followed by approval from the full Higher Education Coordinating Board on June 30, 2011.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will be informed of the Board of Regents' approval of the Department's master's degree program title change.