

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Establishment of the Master of Human-Computer Interaction & Design

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 Design:Use:Build Graduate School Interdisciplinary Committee to offer the Master of Human-Computer Interaction and Design degree program, effective Autumn Quarter 2013. This will be a fee-based program offered in coordination with UW Professional and Continuing Education (PCE). The degree program will have provisional status with a review to be scheduled for the 2018-2019 academic year. At such time that continuing status is granted, a ten-year review cycle would begin.

BACKGROUND

In February, 2011, the Graduate School received a full proposal from the graduate faculty of the Design:Use:Build Graduate School Interdisciplinary Committee requesting authority to offer the Master of Human-Computer Interaction and Design. Implementation is planned for Autumn Quarter 2013. This four quarter, 46-credit program anticipates enrolling and graduating 30 students per year.

The proposed program will educate designers and engineers who will design, prototype, and evaluate the user interfaces to all types of software and hardware produced in the state of Washington. Examples include office applications, games, medical devices, phones, and aircraft cockpit controls and displays. Both nationally and in Washington State, there are not enough designers trained to create these types of user interfaces that increasingly require a new generation of designer: one who combines the creative aspects learned in design studios with the analytical techniques of engineering-oriented Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). The audience for this program is primarily early- and mid-career professionals in the computer software, hardware, web, or telecommunications industry. They will have been exposed to HCI and Design in their existing jobs, but are interested in additional education that will allow them to develop the deeper skills and knowledge necessary to perform as an interaction/user experience designer, user interface engineer, or usability/user research specialist. The practice-oriented Master of Human-Computer Interaction and Design will give them this training in a multi-disciplinary setting.

In April, 2011, the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School appointed two reviewers to evaluate the Master of Human-Computer Interaction and Design

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proposal. The reviewers both supported approval of the degree program. Each reviewer also made specific recommendations for improving the program, to which the program provided detailed responses.

The Graduate School Council met on May 19, 2011, to discuss the degree proposal. The Council recommended that the program be forwarded on for final approval. The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School concurred with this recommendation.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation to approve the Master of Human-Computer Interaction and Design.