MIS Faculty Fall Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2017
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Adamson Hall – Conference Room

Attending: Dr. Tom Gainey, Dr. Doug Turner, Dr. Jeannie Pridmore, Dr. Joan Deng,
                Ms. Mariana Sanchez, Mr. Philip Reeves, Dr. Brad Prince, Ms. Sheila Harry

Topic #1:   Future of Learn Smart – In terms of the LearnSmart system, the feedback from students and the success rate on certification exams has not been great.   However, the decision was made to continue to use LearnSmart for CISM 3350 (Information Systems Research) and CISM 4355 (Cyber Security) with the following changes: (1) Brad will purchase additional seats from LearnSmart so that we have 60 total – this will also allow us to make the two sections of CISM 3350 semester-long courses in Spring 2018 , (2) Doug will provide additional resources to students in the CISM 4355 course and will examine the videos in both courses more closely to try to determine why more students are not passing the Network+ and Security+ certification exams and/or why many students do not seem like this system, and (3) Brad will benchmark what we are doing against schools that LearnSmart tells us are having positive results with their programs.   We also hope that once UWG gets an on-campus Pearson Review Site, the easier access to certification exams will result in more positive outcomes for our MIS students.

Topic #2: CISM 3335 (Business Programming and Web Design) – Change to Visual Studio – Sheila Harry will use Visual Studio instead of DreamWeaver to teach this course in the Spring 2018 semester.   This move will give us more control over the software and, hopefully, eliminate some of our issues with DreamWeaver. However, Visual Studio does require more hard-coding by the students.   One of our issues with this class has been the relatively low number of students that we allow in the course (20-23).   Sheila noted that at UAB, a similar course is often taught with 40 students.   Hopefully, she can show us some of the techniques she has used to handle more students in this course.   This will help us better balance the flow of students in the MIS major courses.

Topic #3: CISM 3335 (Business Programming and Web Design) – Gatekeeper Course – A decision was also made to require students to make a "C" or better in CISM 3335 before allowing them to take other MIS major courses (or at least the courses for which CISM 3335 is a prerequisite).   We are getting too many students in our upper-level MIS courses who simply do not have the skill set to be successful.

Topic #4: MBA MIS Concentration – The concentration in Business Intelligence and Cyber Security is proving to be a challenge for a couple of reasons. First, we have limited resources in the MIS area and the MBA concentration is stretching these resources.   Second, when individuals who earn a B.B.A. in MIS come back to take the MBA concentration, they cannot take the same course again for credit.   Currently, Jeannie is working with the Computer Science Department to offer these students an alternative. But, if this does not work out, our MIS faculty simply cannot manage independent studies for each of these students.   We will reexamine this issue next year to determine if the concentration option is still feasible.

Topic #5: MIS Program Changes – We discussed a proposal to increase the flexibility within the MIS program by allowing three MIS select courses. It will be much more feasible at this point to work with MIS select courses rather than establishing different MIS tracks.   The proposal would make CISM 3335,

CISM 3340, CISM 3350, and CISM 4310 required courses in the MIS program. Then, the student would choose from a pool of courses for the three remaining MIS "select" courses.   This pool would include CISM 4350, CISM 4355, CISM 4330, CISM 4390, an MIS internship course, possibly an MIS travel abroad course.   Tom will work up a proposal and share with the MIS faculty.   This alternative would also allow students to earn the SAP certificate (CISM 3330, CISM 4330, and CISM 4350) without having to save an "elective" course for CISM 4330.

Topic #6: Renaming CISM 3350 – Doug suggested that if we initiate these changes in the MIS program we consider changing the title of CISM 3350 from "Information Systems Research" to "Networking Research and Certification".

Topic #7: The MIS Schedule Rotation – We examined several alternative schedules for the MIS courses. There just does not seem to be a "best" rotation at this point. With about 52 students per year coming through the MIS program and with the MBA concentration, we need to be offering each major course 3-4 times every two years.   As we firm up the changes with our MIS Program Sheet, we will make another attempt to resolve the scheduling issues.   It was suggested that some of the new "MIS Select" courses might be good alternative for summer.   The students would not be required to take the summer courses, but this would give students an alternative for finishing the program in a more timely manner.