

10/20/2014



Proposal to the Senate Educational Policy Committee

PROPOSAL TITLE: To Eliminate the Masters of Science in Human Factors Degree Program

SPONSOR: John C. Hart, Assoc. Dean, Graduate College, 333-8740, jch@illinois.edu

COLLEGE CONTACT: Same

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Pursuant to a closure timetable established by the Board of Trustees, the Institute of Aviation was discontinued in August 2011. The Human Factors MS degree remains, but has not accepted any new students since the 2011 decision, and currently lists zero registered students. The human factors faculty who remain affiliated with the university have since been reappointed to positions in educational psychology, computer science and the fire service institute, where they continue to serve, teach, research and advise students in human factors through appropriate sub-areas of those disciplines. This proposal thus seeks to remove the Human Factors MS program.

JUSTIFICATION:

The Institute of Aviation was discontinued by the Board of Trustees at their June, 2011 meeting, at the recommendation of Interim Chancellor Easter, due to its low enrollments and high costs. The Human Factors MS program remained, but no longer accepted students and currently lists zero students. The remaining human factors faculty have relocated to Educational Psychology, Computer Science and Psychology where they continue to advise graduate students in human factors through the appropriate research areas within these departments.

The Human Factors MS was recently included in an inventory of graduate programs housed outside of departments performed by the Graduate College. This inventory was performed by a committee chaired by Bill Buttlar, including Gay Miller, Ramona Oswald and Dana Rabin, and assisted by Mary Lowry and Wendy Wimmer. The report "A Graduate College Review of Housing Graduate Programs Outside of Departments" dated 27 Jan. 2014 identified 33 programs across campus including the Human Factors MS. Among its recommendations is a phase-down plan to shutter programs once they are no longer needed. While most of these programs are quite successful and active, the Human Factors MS stood out as the only one with zero students, not accepting any new students, and with no plan for future development.

The facts of this proposal have been confirmed by Prof. Alex Kirlik (244-8972, kirlik@illinois.edu), former Acting Head of Human Factors in the Institute for Aviation, 2006-2010.

BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:

No financial impact is incurred by removing a zero enrollment program not accepting any new students and housed outside a department by a discontinued unit. The program’s faculty have already been redistributed and continue to lead human factors programs through their new units. Impact on PSYC 406, 407 456 and 527 will be negligible as the Human Factors MS program has not allowed any new students for the past several years, and these courses are also in the process of being discontinued.

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 Jan. 2015

STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG:

Remove the Human Factors entry in the Programs of Study Catalog. Current entry is at:

http://provost.illinois.edu/programsofstudy/2014/fall/programs/graduate/human_factors.html

which includes the following table reproduced here for reference.

Required Courses:	Required Hours
PSYC 406, 407, 456 and 527	16
AVI 455 and 597HF	8
AVI 497ST or 597ST	3-4
Thesis Hours Required–AVI 599 (min/max applied toward degree):	4-9
Total Hours	36
Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall:	12
Other Requirements:*	
Minimum GPA:	3.0

CLEARANCES:

Signatures:

Unit Representative:

Date:

College Representative:

Date:

Graduate College Representative:

Date:

Council on Teacher Education Representative:

Date: