

Software Engineering, M.S.E. Kara. Nance, Computer Science and Software Engineering

The degree was originally designed to address the needs of working professionals who did not have a B.S. in Computer Science, but were currently working in the technology field. Enrollment has varied greatly over the years, and opportunities for new partnerships are being evaluated this year, including a partnership with the National Defense University. This is a partnership that UAF is eligible for since achieving NSA designation as a Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education. It is anticipated that statewide demand for the program will grow as more courses are moved to the online format.

Students - Currently there are four students in the program for the fall, 2006 semester. The program has consistently had 1-2 students graduating each year since its inception.

Faculty – The ABET accredited B.S. in Computer Science accreditation reports have noted that the number of faculty is minimal for running all of the programs currently being offered by the department. Additional ABET requirements for course releases for faculty when conducting assessment, and for the Department Chair have made covering classes challenging. Currently the program is run in conjunction with the other programs offered by the Computer Science Department. Due to lower demand for this program in contrast with other CS programs, these are usually the first classes cut when there are not enough faculty members to cover all of the courses. Since the software engineering courses are frequently cross-listed with the computer science courses and the faculty are shared between the programs, there is some flexibility in scheduling the program. There has not been sufficient faculty to consistently offer the required core courses each year as planned.

Some of the M.S.E. courses have been moved to the online format through the Center for Distance Education in order to provide the program to students off campus and to make the best use of available faculty resources. The National Defense University is working with UAF to offer the program online in conjunction with their certification program. It is anticipated that these changes will not be undertaken until additional faculty are available to undertake the work required and to be able to offer the courses consistently and reliably in the online format.

Assessment – For consistency, all of the programs offered by the Computer Science Department have formal assessment plans that comply with ABET requirements.

Student Satisfaction - The last student who received the degree (Ron A. Robinson) was very satisfied with his educational experience and is currently working at Ft. Wainwright in an IT position. Current students have some difficulties with scheduling due to a low number of course offerings each semester.