To: Curriculum and Programs Committee (CPC)

From: Academic Program Working Group (APWG)
       Mark Greenwood, Doug Downs, Bill Brown, Kirsten Ostergaard
       Michael Babcock (Chair)

Date: November 12, 2015

Re: Level II proposals for re-titling the Department of Computer Science to School of Computing

Overview. This is a proposal from the Department of Computer Science requesting the re-titling of this academic unit to the School of Computing. No changes in curriculum are requested and resources in the existing department are sufficient to support this change. The re-titling represents the Faculty’s aspirations to become more interdisciplinary and position themselves for future growth and funding opportunities. This department has ~480 majors and 25 graduate students, and expects to see growth. The department is currently small, but has developed relationships with external donors to support growth and build relationships with industry. This re-titling has the potential to expand these ongoing activities.

The proposal offered several links to programs that currently have the designation of “School”. Without exception, these external programs are much larger and complex compared to what MSU would have as a new School of Computing initially. Nevertheless, these external programs show how a school designation can serve an institution. A School of Computing at MSU can help positioning this institution as a state leader in computing. No other institution in the MUS system has a School of Computing, and this is also the case for each of the designated MSU peer institutions.

Proposal Strengths:

1. This is a strategic and forward thinking proposal. According to the Provost’s office, computing and data related areas are one of MSU’s research priorities. Indeed, in making decisions for new hires this fall, extra consideration was given to faculty that used or needed data rich infrastructure or collaborations in this domain.

2. Our campus has been building high performance computing capabilities that are in alignment with, and can support, growth in areas like computing.
3. Re-titling this program will help elevate and differentiate this unit among other engineering programs in the college.

4. A School of Computing at MSU would provide an opportunity for interdisciplinary programs and collaborations. Re-titling represents an important first step for developing this area on campus.

5. The Dean of Engineering is in full support of this proposal.

Summary:
The APWG has no concerns regarding the proposed re-titling and believes that it represents an important opportunity for our institution.