

Board Meeting
January 21, 2010

ESTABLISH THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN INFORMATICS, GRADUATE
COLLEGE, URBANA

Action: Approve Establishment of the Doctor of Philosophy in Informatics,
Graduate College

Funding: No New Funding Required

The Interim Provost/Chancellor at Urbana with the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Senate recommends approval of a proposal from the Graduate College to establish the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Informatics.

Informatics, generally, is the study and application of information technology in any field, including the consideration of the impact of technology on individuals, organizations, and society. Informatics applications use computation as a universal tool to solve problems, to communicate, and to express ideas. The Ph.D. in Informatics includes study of the structure and behavior of natural and artificial systems that generate, process, store, use, and communicate information. It also includes the development and application of systems to solve problems in any research domain including the sciences, humanities, or arts. The Informatics Ph.D. Program (IPP) provides support for interdisciplinary research, to allow great flexibility in creating new technologies, and to position Illinois to be an international leader in Informatics with a strong capacity to shape it.

The initial areas of study will be Bioinformatics, Medical Informatics, Spatial Informatics, Art and Cultural Informatics, Design and Societal Informatics, Data Analytics and Information Visualization, Cognitive Sciences, and Language Processing. Students must be capable of professional quality research at the intersection of Application and Foundations.

The IPP will be administered by the Illinois Informatics Institute (I³). I³ was established in September 2007 in response to the campus strategic plan recommendation to raise the national prominence in information and computation by leveraging informatics to enhance the campus overall. The mission is to “invent the information environments of the future and educate those who would build and use them.” I³ will support the admissions process by way of an interdisciplinary admissions committee, with graduate students admitted directly to the IPP program. Participating faculty will be formally associated with I³, but faculty lines will reside in other campus units. The Graduate College will award the degree.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The Interim President of the University recommends approval. This action is subject to further review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.