February 15, 2019

Dr. Mark Rudin
President
Texas A&M University-Commerce
P.O. Box 3011
Commerce, TX 75428

Dear Dr. Rudin:

Thank you for your letter of September 20, 2018, transmitting a prospectus for the offering of 50% or more of the credits for the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) program in Computer Science at an off-campus instructional site in Bryan, Texas, effective September 2019.

The site is:

Texas A&M University System RELLIS
3100 Texas Highway 47
Bryan, TX 77807

The previously approved B.S. in Computer Science will be offered at the Texas A&M University System's RELLIS campus which is an innovative partnership that brings together education, workforce development, industry, and research in a single location. Establishment of the RELLIS site was approved by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents in February 2018. The primary target audience for the B.S. program will be students from nearby Blinn College who are enrolled in the Associate of Science in Computer Science program, or who are participating in the Engineering Academy which has a pre-computer science track. The initial enrollment is expected to be 15 students, with instruction delivered through traditional face-to-face methods. Administrative oversight is provided by the Department of Computer Science & Information Systems. A comprehensive list of programs offered by Texas A&M University – Commerce was provided, along with a list of approved off-campus instructional sites.

There will be no difference in admissions, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled in the Computer Science program at the Texas A&M University - Commerce main campus and those enrolled in the program at the RELLIS off-campus instructional site. Evaluation of the Computer Science program at this site is a component of the University's ongoing continuous improvement process, which was described in detail. The process monitors the quality of programs at all its teaching locations using a variety of data collection tools. Student learning outcomes assessment results are analyzed by program faculty at the end of each academic year, then improvement strategies are developed as needed. Program Educational Outcomes have also been developed which reflect skills students should demonstrate a few years after graduation.

The Faculty Roster describes the qualifications of the fifteen full-time faculty members providing support for the Computer Science program. The faculty members each have a related graduate degree and appear to be qualified to teach the assigned courses. Two additional faculty members will be hired for the off-campus site as enrollment grows. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review teams who will assess the faculty as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

Library and learning resources appear to be adequate. The Texas A&M University - Commerce Library has an extensive collection of physical and online resources such as databases, journals, books/eBooks, and videos that support the computer science curriculum. The collection includes over 900,000 monographs; 95,000 serials volumes; and over 1,000,000 microforms. Access to these items is available either in person or online through the Library website. Additional external materials are available to students at the RELLIS location from the nearby Evans Library on the campus of Texas A&M University - College Station. Reference and research assistance is available from professional librarians either in person, through online tutorials on the Library website, or through the Ask-A-Librarian service via email, text, and chat.

Student support services appear to be adequate, and are available to all students regardless of location. Along with standard services such as financial aid, student records, and admissions, the University provides additional support through counseling, placement testing, and disability services. The College of Science and Engineering will provide an undergraduate advisor for students at the RELLIS campus. This advisor will be responsible for general academic information, degree evaluation, graduation checkout, and probation appeals. Faculty at the RELLIS campus will be available to assist students with academic advising, career guidance, and applied research opportunities.

Instruction for the Computer Science program will take place at the RELLIS campus which is located on 2,000 acres in Bryan, Texas, approximately eight miles from Texas A&M University – College Station. All of the computer science major courses will be taught in the department's designated classroom/computer laboratories within the Texas A&M University System Academic Complex. In addition to formal instructional spaces, the Academic Complex will house student services, faculty offices, and student study/lounge areas. The campus will also offer students access to housing, dining, bookstore, and library services. The physical resources appear to be adequate.

Financial support for the new site appears to be adequate; a five-year sample budget was provided. The Texas A&M University System has established a common tuition and fee schedule, along with a revenue sharing model, for all of the participating schools at the RELLIS campus location. Revenues for the Computer Science program will come from tuition and fees, plus appropriations as calculated by the State of Texas funding formula. Expenses will include instructional salaries, supplies, library resources, and information technology support. Revenues are expected to outpace expenditures after the first year of the program's operation.

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The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval to offer 50% or more of a program at the Texas A&M University System RELLIS off-campus instructional site. It was the decision of the Board to approve the site and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for $500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus.

Sincerely,

Belle S. Wheelan

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/SKO:efk

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Associate Provost, Academic Foundations
        Dr. Mary P. Kirk