

Contact: Rachel Boon

REQUEST TO ELIMINATE THE INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE INSTITUTE (ICUBE) AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by Iowa State University to eliminate the Information Infrastructure Institute (ICUBE) at Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: The request to eliminate ICUBE resulted from change in institutional funding streams and shifts in the nature of the research in the field. The Board Office reviewed this request and recommends approval.

Background:

- ◇ **Description of center.** ICUBE was formed in 2003 by approval of the Board of Regents as part of an ISU Presidential Initiative to enhance research. The Information Infrastructure Institute consisted of faculty members from various academic units with a mission of strengthening the existing research and education programs of various departments and colleges. Faculty from the Colleges of Engineering, Agriculture and Life Sciences, Business, and Liberal Arts and Sciences participated. The goal was to develop common information solutions for seemingly disparate applications. ICUBE was to facilitate large funding proposals from ISU and then be attractive and competitive by providing the necessary critical mass and synergy. ICUBE initially reported to the Vice President for Research (VPR), and base funding provided by the VPR office provided seed funding for the project to emerge. In 2010, ICUBE began reporting to the College of Engineering.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed center elimination.** The unit was very successful in attracting a variety of projects providing seed funding to many application-theory groups and generated a large number of proposals. ICUBE did not recruit support staff and/or administrative support personnel, rather it depended on departments for administrative support and all central funding was utilized to provide seed funding. The leadership was provided by faculty in their institutional service role. The researcher belonging to ICUBE attracted large funding, several millions of dollars. For example two large computing grants (an NSF MRI - CYBLUE machine NDSF CRI - CYSTORM machine), a GAANN fellowship program grant (approximately \$550K) from the Department of Education, and several other research grants were obtained.

ICUBE has successfully served its purpose for the last 13 years, as it supported a variety of application development. However, at this point in time, the nature of research in this area has changed dramatically and newer approaches are needed to address the problems. There is no seed funding available from the institutional sources. Funds were withdrawn in 2010 in a move when several centers and institutes were restructured by the VPR office. In the absence of the funding, it is not possible to maintain the collaboration. Moreover, the nature of research support has changed. ICUBE has evolved into multiple components and the main unit is not as relevant any more.

- ◇ **Transition plan and expected impact of proposed center elimination on programming.** The operational aspects of ICUBE have been non-existent for the past two years. There are no ongoing needs/responsibilities from this Institute that need to be covered. Therefore, there is no transition plan or time period.

- ◇ Impact on resources. No effect on resources or costs is expected.
- ◇ Impact on other units at the university. No impact on other units is expected.
- ◇ Temporary or permanent closure. This will be a permanent closure.
- ◇ Effect on current students. No students will be affected as the faculty doing research in this area who may use student research assistants will continue their work.
- ◇ Effective date of termination. Effective immediately upon Board approval.