

BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

LORAIN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE Associate of Applied Science in Computer Engineering Technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

**This program clearly meets Regents' standards for associate degree programs.
There were no serious concerns raised in this review.**

Request: Lorain County Community College proposes an Associate of Applied Science degree in Computer Engineering Technology. As part of the proposed program, the College also developed a new Technical Major and a new One-Year Technical Certificate in Computer and Digital Forensics. The College's ability to offer all three program components gives students the opportunity to enroll in a comprehensive computer engineering program that does not currently exist in the region. It also provides employers in Northeast Ohio with graduates in the computer engineering and digital forensics areas.

Computer and Digital Forensics is a discipline that focuses on the acquisition, recovery, documentation, and analysis of information contained within a computer system and other digital storage devices. Digital forensics is a growing field due to recent events such as September 11th, the proliferation of computer identify theft, public and private network security incidents, corporate computer criminal activity, internet privacy invasion and other such activities. The increase in computer criminal activity has created the need for additional computer engineering and digital forensics technicians who can assist in the prevention and reduction of computer, cyberspace and digital crimes.

Graduates of the proposed program will find employment opportunities at local, state and federal government and law enforcement agencies, software development companies, banks, accounting firms, insurance organizations, computer network companies and others. A recent Bureau of Labor Statistics report indicated that the median income for individuals in these jobs is \$60,000 a year.

Program Purpose/Mission: In response to the severe loss of jobs in the area and as part of its mission, Lorain County Community College has recently developed new degree programs and One-Year Technical Certificates that will serve laid-off, downsized or displaced workers. New technical degree programs are particularly important to this region, which lost over 2000 jobs in 2006 as a result of the closing of the Ford Lorain Assembly Plant and the downsizing of Columbia Gas, and others. The proposed program is expected to attract individuals who are unemployed or underemployed and interested in a computer engineering career.

The region's high school students, Seniors to Sophomores students, College Tech Prep students, and others interested in the computer engineering technology and digital forensics will also find the proposed program attractive. The College is anticipating that, due to the growing need for graduates in the computer industry, some graduates will be interested in starting their own computer business and creating additional jobs in the region. Students interested in starting their own businesses will be able to utilize the wide-range of training and business-support services available through the College's Entrepreneurship Innovation Institute.

Students successfully completing the proposed program will be able to continue their education by enrolling in the College's University Partnership program that enables students to earn a bachelor's degree from one of several Ohio universities, without having to leave the College campus.

Enrollment: The proposed program has already attracted student interest through the College's distribution of questionnaires and surveys to assess the level of student interest. The College is projecting an enrolment of 15 full-time students and 12 part-time students in 2009, with a potential for growth to 24 full-time students by 2010.

Curriculum: The proposed Computer Engineering Technology program will be a part of the Engineering Technologies division at the College. Students enrolled in the program will complete the general education classes required for the proposed program, as well as the technical courses developed specifically for the program.

The College plans to seek ABET accreditation (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) for this proposed program when approved. The earning of ABET accreditation guarantees the transfer of credits and encourages students to pursue a Baccalaureate degree.

Faculty/Resource Needs. The College plans to appoint a new program coordinator from existing faculty, eliminating the need to hire a new faculty member. The program coordinator will report directly to the division dean. The College plans to use existing full and part-time faculty members, reducing the need to hire new faculty.

The College has several state-of-art computer laboratories that will be available to students enrolled in the program. The College is financially prepared to operate this program.

Program Duplication: Lorain County Community College will be the first community college in the region to offer a comprehensive program in Computer Engineering Technology with a specific focus on Computer and Digital Forensics. Representatives of the College contacted Cuyahoga Community College and Lakeland Community College to ensure that the proposed program does not duplicate a program currently being offered. Both colleges expressed their support and cooperation for the program's development and its need in Northeast Ohio.

Lorain County Community College is willing to share best practices and resources with Cuyahoga Community College and Lakeland Community College, and other institutions interested in developing this or similar programs.