Response to 'Areas of the MSIT Program Improvement' as recommended by the MSIT PPR committee

We thank the PPR committee for their time and valuable feedback. We have worked meticulously to come up with a plan that addresses the key points raised by the committee as a means to improve the MSIT program. Our responses are outlined below.

1. **Possible Growth of Enrollment:** Such a high quality program supplies excellent employees to the IT industry. The IT industry needs more graduates from the program. While maintaining the quality of incoming students, maybe outreach activities can attract more prospective students.

   Response 1: First, as recommended, we will increase our outreach activities and attempt to contact more firms who may be interested in sending their employee to the MSIT program. Second, we expect the enrollment to grow significantly after introducing the 'Data Science' Concentration. Several recent surveys have predicted that demand for Data Science graduates will continue to be very healthy in the near and distant futures. The program director has established contacts with major IT employers (Aerospace, IBM, Kaiser Permanente, Cisco and various other IT service companies), financial institutions and educational institutions to engage and promote the current program during 'open house' sessions. With the overarching goal of increasing program enrollment, we look forward to further outreach and connect with IT and Data Science employers.

2. **Engagement of the Industry Advisory Board:** In addition to providing inputs for improvement of the program and curriculum, the Industry Advisory Board may also help to spread the words and recruit more students.

   Response 2: As mentioned in Response 1 above, we will further our outreach activities with IT and Data Science employers, including IAB members to increase enrollment.

3. **Development of the Data Science Concentration:** Big data and data science is an emerging area in IT industry. It is a good time to introduce this new concentration. Three new courses are being developed and the new concentration will increase the enrollment.

   Response 3: Pending approval, the proposed Data Science concentration will be offered beginning fall semester 2016.

4. **The Alignment of the Curriculum between the Certificate Program and the MSIT Program:** The ISDS Department is developing a Certificate Program in Health Care Analytics. The curriculum needs to align with the MSIT curriculum so that students may transfer to the MSIT program with 9 units taken from the Certificate Program.

Response 4: All graduate programs at CSUF accept up to 9 transfer units of graduate work completed at other similar programs. The HealthCare certificate program consists of the following required courses:

ISDS-474, Data Mining for Managers
ISDS-555, Business Database Design & Processing
ISDS-556, Data Warehousing and Foundations of Business Intelligence

All 3 of these courses may be transferred to the 'MSIT-Data Science' concentration, while ISDS 555 and ISDS 556 may be transferred to the 'MSIT-IT Management' concentration.

5. **Possible Improvement in Student Services and Technology:** According to the Self-Study Report, U.S. News ranks the program with the following indicators: faculty credentials & training, student services and technology, student engagement, and admissions selectivity. The MSIT program scored 93, 67, 80, and 92, respectively. There is potential in the area with low score that may be worth looking into, for example Student Services and Technology.

   Response 5: We believe the main reason for scoring subpar in this category is due to the relatively low ratio of campus IT employees to students. There was one question in the US News & World Report survey on the ratio of IT employees to students at your institution. Unfortunately the department has no role in management decisions regarding hiring more IT personnel campus-wide and these should not be tied to the rankings of the MSIT program. Nevertheless, we will further investigate ways through which this parameter can be improved.

6. **Provide additional options in electives for students with technical background:** Students with extensive technical background may find it beneficial to select complimentary non-technical courses as electives.

   Response 6: Given the relatively low enrollment numbers currently in the program, it is not feasible to offer many electives. However, the ISDS Center for Information Technology and Business Analytics (CITBA) center offers frequent weekend and Friday workshops and speaker series that focus on non-technical skills to complement class. The department faculty with the CITBA center plans to continue to offer these workshops and speaker series. As interest and enrollment grows, we plan to add more technical and non-technical electives in the program.

7. **Group Projects and Team Work:** Most of the MSIT faculty already has class assignments that require individual as well as team effort and collaboration. A formal emphasis to have certain percentage of the assignments to require collaboration may be helpful.

   Response 7: Every course has a built-in group project component with percentage points assigned for group project collaboration. These percentage points may be reevaluated in the future to place further emphasis on group projects. The following table provides a summary of the current percentage point breakdown. Please note that while project work is implicitly required of instructors as it has educational value, it is reasonable to allow the percentage of group work to vary based on the course needs and in accordance with academic freedom principles.

Course Name	Weight assigned to the Group Project on the Final Grade
ISDS 505 – Programming Concepts for Information Technology	20%
ISDS 550 – Telecommunications and Business Networks	10%
ISDS 551 – Information Resource and IT Project Management	35%
ISDS 552 – Systems Analysis, Design, and Development	42%
ISDS 553 – Electronic Commerce: Analysis and Evaluation	40%
ISDS 555 – Business Database: Design and Processing	14%
ISDS 556 – Data Warehousing and Foundations of Business Intelligence	49%
ISDS 418 – Information Privacy and Security	10%
ISDS 557 – Issues in Information Technology	50%
ISDS 577 – Seminar in IS Implementation	40%