Memo from the ITOM Department Chair
Re: Healthcare Information Systems (HIS) Minor proposal.

Jobs in Healthcare Information Systems
Information Systems are a key consideration of health administration in any healthcare organization today. National adoption of Electronic Health Records (EHRs) is considered an essential component of the health care system overhaul sought by policy makers and health care professionals, in both U.S. and Europe, to cut costs and increase benefits, Health care is an information-intensive industry, in that a large percentage of its activities are enabled by the storage, processing, transfer, and analysis of data. In United States, the recently adopted stimulus package dedicates $50 billion over five years to spur the adoption of EHR. In November 2005, the U.S. Senate passed with unanimous consent the Wired for Health Care Quality Act (S. 1418), a bill to enhance the adoption of a nationwide interoperable health information technology system and to improve the quality and reduce the costs of health care in the United States.

The need for highly trained information system professionals to implement and carry out the Information System modernization of healthcare is felt in every state, nationwide, and especially in South Florida in which healthcare industry is one of the top contributors to the state's GDP.

Healthcare and healthcare information systems jobs are in highest demand and have highest job growth projections through 2020, per the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Labor.

Skills needed
The skills needed for jobs in Healthcare Information Systems are inherently interdisciplinary comprising both of knowledge in Health Administration and Management Information Systems. These two disciplines are taught in business schools, but unless a cross disciplinary minor is created to encourage specialization in this field, students rarely take course across the two disciplines to acquire the necessary knowledge. This minor will provide the opportunity to the students.

The Council on Certification of the American Health Information Management Association has approved competency skills for health information system professionals, including: 1) Contribute to the definitions for and apply clinical vocabularies and terminologies used in the organization's health information systems, 2) Use specialized databases to meet specific organization needs such as medical research and disease registries, 3) Apply information system policies and procedures required by national health information initiatives on the healthcare delivery system, 4) Use technology, including hardware and software, to ensure data collection, storage, analysis and reporting of information, 5) Use specialized software in the completion of Healthcare Information Management processes such as record tracking, release of information, coding, grouping, registries, billing, quality improvement, and imaging, 4) Apply policies and procedures to the use of networks, including intranet and Internet applications to facilitate the electronic health record (EHR), personal health record (PHR), public health, and other administrative applications, 5) Apply knowledge of data base architecture and design (such as data dictionary, data modeling, data warehousing) to meet departmental records, 6) Query and generate reports to facilitate information retrieval, 7) Design and generate reports using appropriate software, 8) Maintain archival and retrieval systems for patient information stored in multiple formats, 9)

Coordinate, use, and maintain systems for document imaging and storage, 10) Apply confidentiality and security measures to protect electronic health information, 11) Protect data integrity and validity using software or hardware technology, 12) Apply departmental and organizational data and information system security policies, 13) Use and summaries data compiled from audit trail and data quality monitoring programs, 14) Contribute to the design and implementation of risk management, contingency planning, and data recovery procedures, 15) Participate in the planning, design, selection, implementation, integration, testing, evaluation, and support for organization-wide information systems.

The objectives of this minor relate specifically to the above listed skills.