

The Spatial Information Engineering program was originally known as Surveying Engineering. Surveying was formed as a department in 1988 from a surveying option within the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. It was designated as the regional four-year and graduate surveying program for the New England region. From its inception, the program enjoyed an excellent reputation. Student populations were adequate. The student population was aided by the two-year surveying program that existed at the University of Maine. GIS became a major component of the program with a resulting name change from Surveying Engineering to Spatial Information Engineering. Unfortunately, the student population dropped and the program drifted away from the main constituency of the program – surveying firms. (There is only one licensed Maine surveyor in the faculty.)

As the only four-year surveying program in the New England area and one of less than twenty four year surveying programs in the United States, the existence of the University of Maine program is critical to supplying graduates to enter the surveying profession. Many states require a four year degree for licensure. Many more states are expected to require a degree in the future. The proposed certificate that would be offered by the proposed Information Science Program will not meet the requirements of these states or many employers. As a consequence, the School of Engineering Technology is proposing the undergraduate program be transferred to the School of Engineering Technology with a name and focus back to survey engineering.

The transfer of the program and focus back to survey engineering is eagerly sought by employers and surveying societies who seek educated and trained graduates ready to perform surveying services. The United States Bureau of Land Management has stepped forward with an offer of financial support to refocus the program on surveying practice in order to fill an expected shortfall as more than half their employees retire in the next few years.

The transfer and reestablishment of a survey engineering program within the School of Engineering Technology is expected to bring enrollment up to the National average for undergraduate surveying programs (70-100 students). The program will directly address the needs of the constituents in the New England area. Their strong support of the program will include recruiting efforts and scholarship funding. With the surveying program

falling under TAC/ABET accreditation, transferring from two-year surveying programs will be easier with “2+2” articulation agreements. Salaries for graduates are expected to be approximately \$42,000 a year. Summer employment opportunities will be widespread and bolster recruiting efforts.