

## **Report Proposal**

**To:** Steve Wolfman, BCS Director

**From:** Madeleine Leroux

**Date:** February 20, 2019

**Subject:** Proposal for making the transition into the BCS program easier

### **Introduction**

The University of British Columbia's Bachelor of Computer Science (BCS) is a twenty-month intensive program for students that already have a Bachelor's degree in a field unrelated to Computer Science. The program is intended to help university graduates transition from their original field of study, to a career involving information technology. Many of the BCS students have worked for several years before deciding to return to school.

### **Statement of Problem**

BCS students often feel overwhelmed and like imposters. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, many BCS students have been out of school for years. It's shocking to return to a school environment, especially in a program that is very competitive and condensed. Secondly, students currently pursuing their first degree in computer science have often been coding since they were young. In order to be accepted into the BCS program, applicants are expected to have very little programming experience. As a result, the BCS students are often dismayed to see that their younger first-degree peers are so much more advanced than they are.

### **Proposed Solution**

A possible solution is to give each BCS student a "transitioning" and welcoming package upon admission. This package could include:

- Resources on learning new programming languages
- Practical coding tutorials to help students gain experience
- Tips from previous BCS students on how to approach the program successfully

### **Scope**

1. What factors can help BCS students feel more confident?
2. In what areas of study do BCS students feel the least prepared?
3. What are coping mechanisms that BCS students can use to deal with the stress of the program?
4. What are the costs of creating a welcoming package?

### **Research Methods**

My primary methods will involve interviewing current BCS students, as well as, alumni. I'll also be conducting a survey intended for BCS students. The current students will help address the areas of interest that the welcome package should cover. The alumni will be able to address how they successfully transitioned and completed the program. As for secondary methods, I'll take a look at literature provided for incoming students in other programs.

**My Qualifications**

I am currently in my first year of the BCS program. Like my peers in the program, I have often felt overwhelmed with the pace of the program.

**Conclusion**

In order to help second-degrees students fully succeed, the program needs to take additional steps to help them transition successfully into a new career path.