

Department Adds New Computer Science Degree

The computer science department chairman says he hopes the new major will attract more students.

By Emily Drum
Staff Writer

Computer science students have a new degree option starting this fall, and department faculty say they are excited about the alternative.

The Department of Computer Science is offering a bachelor of science degree in computer science beginning this academic year, the first undergraduate degree awarded by the department.

Previously, students interested in computer science followed the computer science track in the Department of Mathematics. The computer science department offered only graduate and Ph.D. programs.

"There's a theory that you can't be a great university without a computer science program in the 21st century," said Kevin Jeffay, undergraduate studies

director for the computer science department.

Jeffay said the new major will be beneficial to graduating students because of increasing demand in the work force for workers with computer science degrees.

And students are eager to take advantage of the opportunity, he said. "The students have been clamoring for a computer science major for years."

Only four mandatory classes distinguish the new major from the current offering in the math department, and students will be required to take one more class than previously required.

But Jeffay said that while the classes are not that different, the physical changes the department is seeing — including updated courses, new labs, and additional faculty — are significant.

"It is more of an environmental change," he said.

Jeffay said the department has been working on creating the major since a professor proposed the idea in 1987.

"I think everybody has been surprised at how long it's taken," he said.

Stephen Weiss, chairman of the computer science department, worked with

the University to create the program. He said the department finally submitted the proposal in July 2000, and UNC officials approved it last spring.

The department had to wait until personnel slots were approved by the University before the program could be established. "We've been trying to do this for a long time, but we knew it would take additional resources," Weiss said.

He said that students who are following the computer science program in the math department will finish the curriculum but eventually that option will disappear.

Students who enroll in the new major will go to the computer science department for advising.

Jeffay said he hopes the new option will attract more students. "We are gearing up a rather large publicity machine," he said. He said this includes getting the word out to high schools so students will know the computer science major is available at UNC. "This is sort of a brave new world for us," Jeffay said.

"It's pretty exciting."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

Freshmen at Risk for Disease

By Michael Davis
Staff Writer

Health officials are urging freshman living in residence halls to receive the bacterial meningitis vaccine after a study found they are at a high risk of contracting the disease.

The study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, concluded that college freshmen living in residence halls have a higher risk of contracting bacterial meningitis than freshman who live elsewhere, said Dr. Michael Bruce, lead author of the report.

Viral meningitis is a relatively common but rarely serious infection of the fluid in the spinal cord and the fluid that surrounds the brain, according to the CDC Web page.

Bacterial meningitis causes symptoms such as fever, headache and stiff neck and can become fatal within 24 hours. Bruce said the disease has a 10 to 15 percent fatality rate.

"(Students) should know that this is out there," Bruce said.

But he added that the main risk factor found by the study is living in a residence hall.

"Overall, college students did not have a higher risk of meningococcal disease compared to other people of the

age." Dr. Kelly McKee, head of General Communicable Disease Control in the N.C. Division of Public Health, said the close living conditions of residence halls naturally promote diseases such as meningitis.

"Freshmen who live in dormitories are at a slightly increased risk over other college students," McKee said. "The chances for a person-to-person spread just rises."

In 1999, 49 cases of meningitis were reported in North Carolina, and 39 followed in 2000.

McKee said the decline between years was not a trend and that statistics change from year to year, with no real pattern for support.

Menomune, a commercially available vaccine, can guard against the four most common strains of meningitis, McKee said.

But he added that the vaccine does not totally protect people from the disease.

"Even if you are vaccinated, you are not 100 percent covered on all strains,

but most of them," McKee said. While cases appear fairly constant throughout the year, he said numbers usually increase during the winter months, when more people remain indoors and are more susceptible to the disease.

But Bruce said conjugate vaccines, which have a longer immunological memory than current drugs, will be available within two to three years.

And he added that immunizations are easily accessible for students at colleges and universities.

Carol Kozel, UNC Student Health Service nursing director, said no cases of meningitis were reported on campus during the last five years.

Kozel said SHS will sponsor a campuswide vaccination drive from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Oct. 10 in the

Great Hall. She said the event exists to "provide better protection for our students regarding meningitis."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

"Freshmen who live in dormitories are at a slightly increased risk over other college students."

DR. KELLY MCKEE
General Communicable Disease Control

Bush Defends Tax, Medicare Policies

The Associated Press

INDEPENDENCE, Mo. — President Bush said Tuesday he will give his family's \$600 tax rebate to charity as he fiercely defended his tax cut against Democratic charges that it has already imperiled both Medicare and Social Security.

In Harry Truman's hometown, at a

high school named for the president who first championed federal health benefits for the elderly, Bush swore that under his administration "every dime that comes into Medicare will be spent on Medicare."

He also sought to assure Americans that "we've got enough money" to pay for his tax cuts, pay down more than \$100 million in public debt and boost spending on defense and education — all without

dipping into Social Security reserves.

"I know this: We're not going to raise the taxes on the people. I know this: that we're going to make sure additional spending doesn't cut into essential programs like Social Security and Medicare," the president said.

He expressed confidence there would be no government shutdown over a spending stalemate with Congress, but he did suggest he would veto any bill that spent more than what Congress agreed to in a budget resolution earlier this year.

Bush spoke on the eve of a scheduled announcement by the Office of Management and Budget updating projections of the federal surplus.

The new estimates are expected to show that the Medicare surplus — as with all but about \$1 billion of the rest of the general-revenue surplus — is gone.

Democrats blamed the Bush tax cut.

"I see no more irresponsible act than that of the Bush administration's tax cut," Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., said in an interview.

"It was the tax cut that was based on faulty projections."

Campus Calendar

Today

Noon — The Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center will hold a Study Abroad information session.

For the Record

In the Aug. 21 issue of The Daily Tar Heel, the photo caption accompanying the article "ALE Sees Drop in Citations During Sting" incorrectly stated that Gregory Wilson was cited for underage possession of alcohol. Wilson was cited for obtaining alcohol with a fictitious ID and aiding and abetting another minor.

In the same issue, the graphic accompanying the article "Freshman Class Largest in University History" incorrectly stated that Native Americans make up 6.5 percent of the freshman class. The graphic should have stated that Native Americans make up 1 percent of the freshman class.

The DTH regrets the errors.

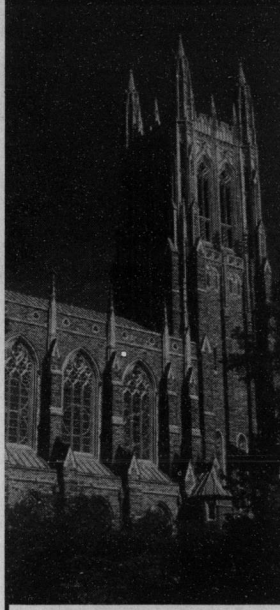
The Daily Tar Heel

P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515
Katie Hunter, Editor, 962-4086
Advertising & Business, 962-1163
News, Features, Sports, 962-0745
© 2001 DTH Publishing Corp.
All rights reserved

Sing with the

World-Renowned, 150-Voice,

Duke Chapel Choir

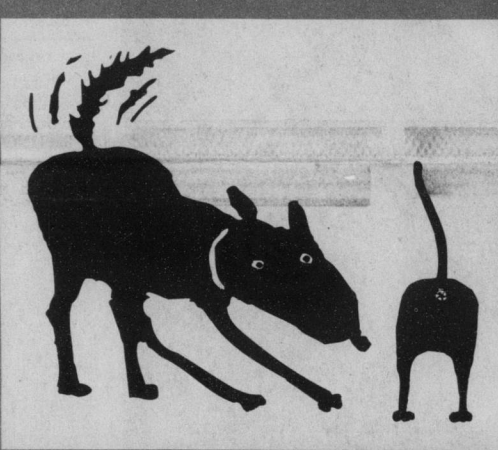


AUDITIONS

Monday, August 27 to Friday, August 31

Call 684-3898 to schedule an audition

Sniffing out the best buy in textbooks can be complicated!



Ram Book & Supply is the best store for your bottom line!

Low prices. Used textbooks our specialty. Shorter lines.

Ram Book & Supply

UNC's Off-campus Used Text Book Headquarters

Behind Wicked Burrito
306 W. Franklin Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516
Phone (919) 969-8398
Fax (919) 969-8996

Harder to find ... but worth it!

★★★	Gumby's Pizza	Wicked Burritos
	Granville Towers	UNC Campus

Columbia St. E. Franklin St.

ABBNEY COURT CONDOMINIUMS



The Tarheel Companies of NC, Inc.

— SPECIAL PRE-LEASE OFFER —

2 Bedroom Condo...
\$550 Per Month Beginning August 1st
1 month's rent FREE with 1 Year Lease

Large 3 Bedroom 2 Bath Condo
\$750 Per Month

On the "J" Busline
Swimming Pool
Tennis Courts
Laundry Facilities
W/D Connections in 3 Bedroom
Wall to Wall Carpet
Range, Refrigerator, Dishwasher & Garbage Disposal

www.tarheelcos.com (919) 929-2220