

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

- 13** Freshman lecture: "Cult of the Child" by Marah Gubar (Department of English)
- 19** Pathway to Professions: A Career Networking Event (www.alumni.pitt.edu/pathway)
- 20** Freshman Programs Reception for Families of Incoming Freshmen: Join us at the Academic Resource Center in the Gardner Steel Conference Center, 2-4 p.m., for refreshments and a chance to meet School of Arts and Sciences deans, advisors, and instructors. Watch the mail for your invitation, or call the Office of Freshman Programs at 412-624-6828.
- 19-22** University of Pittsburgh Homecoming and Freshman Family Weekend (www.pitt.edu/~ffweeknd)
- 26** Spring term registration begins; first two days reserved for seniors
- 27** Spring term add/drop period begins
Freshman lecture: "The Limits of Empire: Hadrian's Wall and the Barbarians" by Mark Possanza (Department of Classics)
- 30** Spring term registration begins for all degree students

November

- 3** Freshman lecture: "Rarity in Birding and Biology: The Trill of the Unexpected" by Tony Bledsoe (Department of Biological Sciences)
- 13** Spring term registration for nondegree students
- 17** Deadline to apply for April 2007 graduation
- 22-26** Thanksgiving recess for students

December

- 8** Last day of fall term classes
Deadline to register for spring term without a penalty fee
 - 11-16** Final exams
 - 16** Fall term ends
Official date for degrees awarded in fall term
 - 17** Residence halls close
- December 17-January 2** Winter recess for students

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES • THE PITT PRIDE

Fall 2006 Volume 3 Issue 1

Publisher
Regina Schulte-Ladbeck

Contributing Writers:
Sue Crain
Peggy Heely
Carol Lynch
Barbara Mellix
Z Taylor

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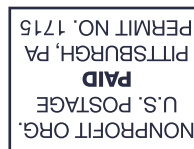
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Published in cooperation with the Department of University Marketing Communications. UMC5741-0906

Questions or Concerns? E-mail us at: pittpride@as.pitt.edu

- Office of Student Records 412-624-6776
- Office of Experiential Learning 412-624-5428
- Office of Freshman Programs 412-624-6828
- Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies 412-624-6480
- Academic Resource Center 412-648-7920
- Advising Center 412-624-6444

IMPORTANT CONTACTS:



University of Pittsburgh
School of Arts and Sciences
Undergraduate Studies
140 Thackeray Hall
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

We understand that transferring to a new school can be academically and socially challenging. Transfer Student Services is here to help with these challenges. Program coordinator Teraya White meets with each transfer student individually to give the personalized support and assistance necessary to help our students succeed at the University of Pittsburgh. White also provides critical information about Academic Resource Center (ARC) services, offers referrals to campus resources, and coordinates social and educational events for transfer students. She says, "As the Transfer Student Services coordinator, it is my pleasure to serve as a direct contact for transfer students and their families."

We strongly encourage first-term transfer students to participate in the Transfer Student Focus seminar (ARTSC 0107). This one-credit course introduces students to University resources such as the library system, computer services, internship and undergraduate research opportunities, Career Services, and study abroad, as well as providing an overview of the curriculum. For more information about Transfer Student Services, visit the office in the ARC in G-1 Gardner Steel Conference Center or call 412-648-1203.

Teraya White
Transfer Student Services Coordinator



TRANSFER STUDENT SERVICES MAKES TRANSITION SMOOTHER

School of
Arts & Sciences

FALL 2006
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

COMPUTER SCIENCE:

Education for a New Era

In 1966, the University of Pittsburgh appointed the first chair of its newly created Department of Computer Science. One of the first such departments in the nation, the Department of Computer Science has grown in the ensuing 40 years to occupy two entire floors of Sennott Square, employing 47 full- and part-time faculty to serve approximately 250 undergraduate and 70 graduate students.

The department also participates in efforts to engage students before they start college. Faculty members are involved in the School of Arts and Sciences' College in High School program, which gives high school students the opportunity to earn college credit and acquire valuable technical skills. In addition, the Department of Computer Science contributes to Upward Bound, a federally funded outreach program designed to help traditionally underserved students succeed in college.

This past summer, the department launched an endeavor of its own. The Technology Leadership Institute offered a six-week workshop for disadvantaged high school students designed to foster the knowledge and skills they will need to pursue a career in the technical world (see "Future Leaders Learn Today" on page 3 for more information about the Technology Leadership Institute).

The Department of Computer Science gears the bulk of its curriculum toward preparing computer science (CS) majors for graduate school or the world of work. But the department recognizes the need for all students to have an understanding of computers from an end user standpoint.

To fulfill this need, it offers courses that introduce students to the basics of computers, including popular software packages, applications, and programming languages. To expand the general curriculum, department chair Rami Helham encourages faculty members to submit proposals for new courses. One such proposal, which was approved last spring and will be available for the first time this fall, addresses advanced Web design. The department also started experimenting with online courses during the summer, so that students can return home and still take classes.

The contributions of the department extend beyond the classroom. Computer science sponsors the Society of Women in Computing, a coeducational and social service organization that supports women in pursuit of a computing degree, and it supports a local chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery, an international organization that brings computing professionals and students together. The department also encourages students to participate in a co-op program that allows them to alternate terms between school and work, enabling participants to gain experience, make contacts in the technology field, and earn money while pursuing their degrees. Last but not least, the department provides undergraduate research projects for Arts and Sciences students and also extends support to undergraduate students from other universities who want to work with University of Pittsburgh faculty during the summer months.

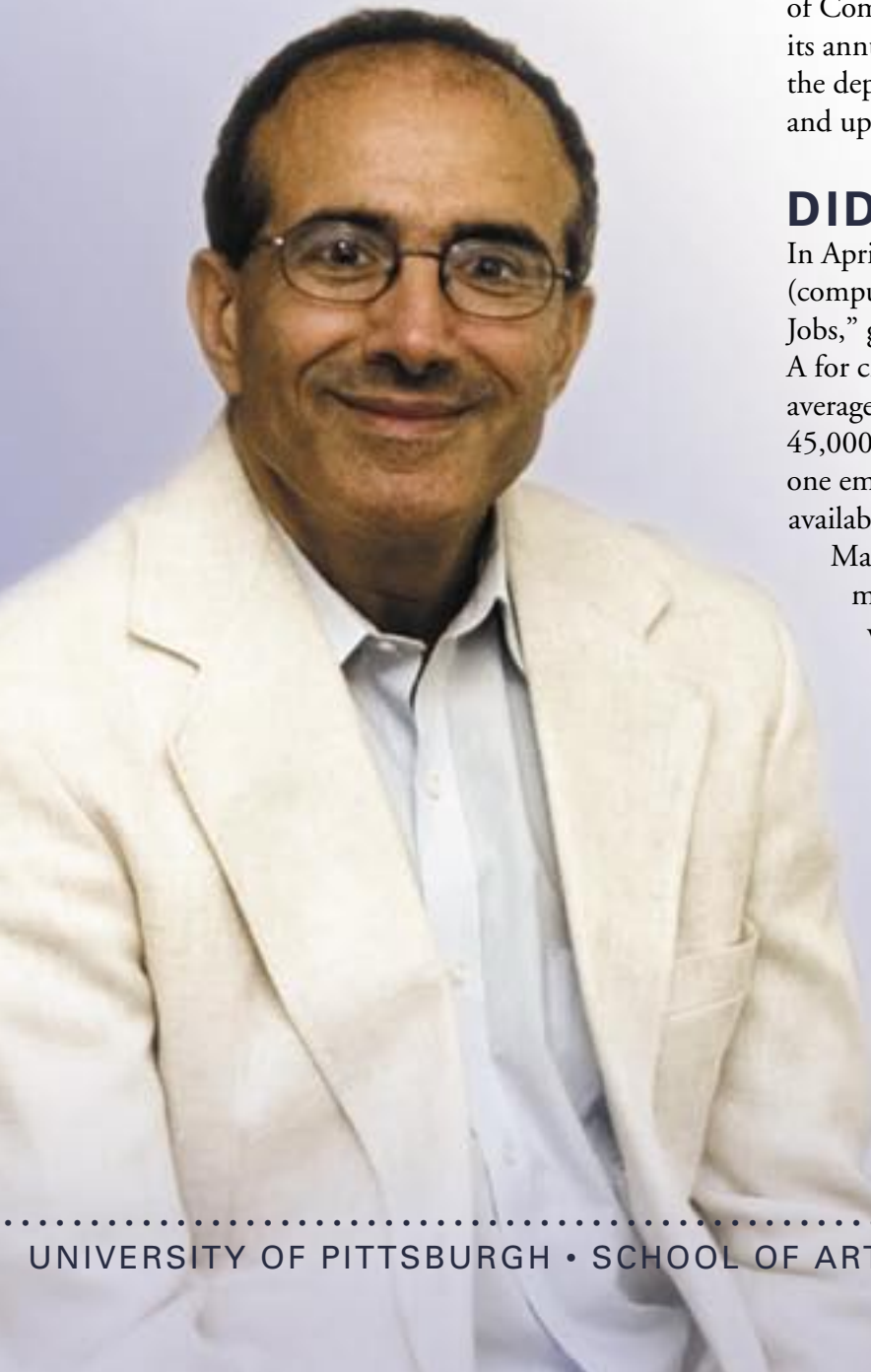
In celebration of its 40th anniversary, the Department of Computer Science is planning a special event during its annual CS Day, which takes place every February. Visit the department online at www.cs.pitt.edu for news, events, and updates.

DID YOU KNOW?

In April 2006, *Money* magazine rated software engineer (computer programmer) as number 1 in the "Top 10 Best Jobs," giving the field a B for stress, a B for flexibility, an A for creativity, and a C for ease of entry, and quoting an average annual salary of more than \$80,000, with almost 45,000 job openings each year. A quick search of just one employment Web site revealed roughly 3,000 available positions for software engineers in locations from Massachusetts to Texas to Washington state. What's more, *Money* ranked computer IT analyst seventh, with entry-level positions requiring a bachelor's degree and offering a salary of \$60,000 or more. The same employment site returned more than 6,000 open positions for an IT analyst.

(Sources: <http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/bestjobs> and www.dice.com)

Rami Melham
Professor of Computer Science
and Department Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome and Welcome back

For those who have recently joined the University of Pittsburgh family, welcome. And for those who are returning to us this fall, welcome back. We introduced the expanded *Pitt Pride* newsletter last year as a resource for the families of students enrolled in the School of Arts and Sciences. It is our goal that this publication will help you and your student to more easily and successfully navigate our very large community of learners.

Last spring, we conducted a readership survey to gather feedback about how to improve this publication to better meet your needs. To all who responded, thank you. As a result of the feedback we received, we have made a few changes to our format and contents. Please know that we always welcome your thoughts, story ideas, and questions. Contact us at pittpride@as.pitt.edu to share your input or just to say hello.

The School of Arts and Sciences is a vibrant, dynamic environment, constantly growing and changing to better serve the needs of our students. We are very proud of the ongoing growth and expansion of our academic programs. Each year, we offer new majors, minors, and certificate programs that reflect the expertise of our faculty members and the interests of our students. During the past several months, we have launched a Bachelor of Science degree in actuarial mathematics, a minor in mathematics, and an Arts and Sciences leadership certificate. Adding a second major, a minor, or a certificate adds value to an undergraduate degree and offers students the opportunity to explore a broader range of studies during their college career. Of our 1,398 April 2006 graduates, 430 chose to pursue a double major, 489 earned minors, and 211 completed certificate programs. I invite you to find out more about all of our programs by visiting our Web site at www.as.pitt.edu/departments.html.

Participating in life beyond the classroom is also an important way to add value to the college experience. At the School of Arts and Sciences, our undergraduates are encouraged to take advantage of internships, research, study abroad, and other activities that enable them to develop as individuals as well as scholars. For more details on these activities and others, visit our Office of Experiential Learning online at www.pitt.edu/-oel.

Best wishes for a successful and rewarding academic year!

Regina Schulte-Ladbeck
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies



Shown at the 2006 Tina and David Bellet Arts and Sciences Teaching Excellence Award ceremony are (from left to right) Regina Schulte-Ladbeck, professor and associate dean of undergraduate studies; Daniel Mossé, associate professor in the Department of Computer Science; Anthony Bledsoe, lecturer in the Department of Biological Sciences; Tina and David Bellet; and N. John Cooper, professor and dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.

FACULTY PROFILE

Award-Winning Faculty Set Tone For Excellence

Without dedicated professors, students would be unable to attain the high level of academic achievement expected of them at the School of Arts and Sciences. Each year, the school recognizes excellence in undergraduate teaching with the Tina and David Bellet Arts and Sciences Teaching Excellence Awards. Students and peers nominate and evaluate faculty members. The 2006 winners are Anthony Bledsoe, a lecturer in the Department of Biological Sciences, and Professor Daniel Mossé of the Department of Computer Science. Bledsoe received his doctorate in biology from Yale University in 1984 and came to the University of Pittsburgh in 1987. He teaches courses in biology and ecology and his research focuses on the evolutionary history of birds. Bledsoe believes that he does not so much teach the course material as facilitate the students' ability to learn. His students say that Bledsoe's enthusiasm and his desire for students to take an interest in what he is teaching make him a favorite lecturer. Bledsoe says, "I enjoy the material so much that it is fun for me and rewarding for me to try to convey the incredible beauty and interesting, curious nature of

biological systems. It's not only fulfilling, it's exhilarating to know that students are doing well ... in part because I would like to help them."

A full professor since 2004, Mossé has been teaching at the University of Pittsburgh for more than a decade. He earned his doctorate in computer science from the University of Maryland at College Park in 1993. Mossé teaches courses on distributed and real-time systems, advanced topics in operating systems, and the social implications of computing technology. His research focuses on distributed systems. Mossé says, "Computer science changes every 10 minutes. So if [students] just memorize one thing and this thing changes next year, they get a job next year and they say, 'Oh, I can't do this. I don't know it.' But if you teach them the principles, and if you teach them how to develop their own answers, then ... they can easily adapt their thought process to the technology."

To see these award-winning faculty members in action, and to find out more about the Bellet Teaching Awards, visit www.umc.pitt.edu/m/060403video.html.

PROGRAM OFFERS HANDS-ON RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND ACADEMIC CREDIT

The First Experiences in Research program provides Arts and Sciences undergraduates with opportunities to earn academic credit and invaluable knowledge while working with faculty mentors on their original research. Students who qualify for federal work study may elect to receive a stipend instead of credit. All students who participate in First Experiences meet together as a group every other week to discuss topics in research. The program concludes with a student poster presentation. Information sessions about the application process are held in October. Contact the Office of Experiential Learning at 412-624-5428 for details.

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT OFFERS JUNIOR FELLOWS OPPORTUNITIES

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States. The Carnegie Endowment's Junior Fellows Program provides a substantive work experience for students who have a serious career interest in international affairs.

Graduating seniors, as well as those who have graduated within the past academic year and who have not yet started graduate school, are eligible to apply to be Junior Fellows. Applications are due in early December. Check the Arts and Sciences Web site this fall for more information, or contact the Office of Experiential Learning at 412-624-5428.

News & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Is Your Senior Graduating in April 2007?

April 2007 graduation applications are due in the School of Arts and Sciences Office of Student Records no later than November 17, 2006. The April graduation applications will be available in 140 Thackeray Hall on October 26, 2006 (the first day of senior spring term registration). Students must fill out their applications early so the student records office can review their academic requirements for graduation and notify them of any deficiencies before the beginning of the spring 2007 term. For more information, contact student records at 412-624-6776.

Recognizing our December Graduates

The School of Arts and Sciences will host a graduation reception and recognition ceremony for the Class of December 2006. An invitation will be mailed in mid-November to those School of Arts and Sciences undergraduates who have applied for December graduation. For more information, contact the Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies at 412-624-6480.

Dean's Stars

A \$50 University of Pittsburgh Book Center gift certificate will be mailed to undergraduate students in the School of Arts and Sciences who complete the fall term with a minimum of 12 credits and a term GPA of 4.0. The certificate will be mailed in mid-January. If your student qualifies for a gift certificate but does not receive one, contact us at pittpride@as.pitt.edu.

Many Answers, One Resource

The *Undergraduate Student Handbook* is an excellent resource for students and parents. Available online at www.cas.pitt.edu/ASUS_Handbook2006/index.html, this tool contains key information about school policies, programs, and personnel. If you do not find the answer you are looking for, we welcome you to contact the associate dean's office at 412-624-6480 or drop us an e-mail at pittpride@as.pitt.edu.

FUTURE LEADERS

Learn Today

If you saw an opportunity to make a positive difference, would you take advantage of it? That is exactly what Tonya Groover did. A senior in the School of Arts and Sciences majoring in computer science and sociology, Groover discovered, through a research project partially funded by the computer science department's Alfred Moyé Information Technology Initiative Fund, that degrees earned by underrepresented or disadvantaged students make up a disproportionately tiny fraction of all computer science degrees awarded each year. In an effort to improve those statistics, she conceived, sought out funding for, and launched the Technology Leadership Institute (TLI), a program aimed at engaging high school students from underrepresented groups in activities to promote foundation skills and knowledge in the computer science field.

This past summer, the six-week TLI program, sponsored by the School of Arts and Sciences and by the Department of Computer Science, included workshops and classes in mathematics, Web design, computer systems, and robotics. Participants in the program also attended talks with industry professionals, went on field trips to Pittsburgh-area technology centers, and received counseling about applying to college.

When asked why she designed the program, Groover said, "I strongly believe the African proverb, 'It takes a village to raise a child.' It is important that as a community we provide opportunities, exposure, and encouragement for the next generation."



Tonya Groover
Executive Director,
Technology Leadership Institute



Everyone knows what an A+ means on a grade report, but you may not be quite as certain what a G, an I, or a W means, or what impact these letters can have on your student's grade point average (GPA).

The letter grades indicate what you might expect—an A+ reflects performance above and beyond expectations, while an F shows lack of adequate performance in a class. Students in the School of Arts and Sciences have other grade options in addition to traditional letter grades. They can choose to take a class pass/fail, in which case they will receive either an S (satisfactory) or an NC (no credit) grade. Or they can choose to audit a class without earning credit for it, in which case they will receive a grade of N (audit).

Calculating a student's GPA can be a little tricky. Only those classes taken for letter grades while students are enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh are used to calculate GPAs. Each letter grade is assigned a value on a four-point system; the number of credits earned in a class is multiplied by the value for the grade received. The calculated values for all classes are totaled and then divided by the number of credits attempted for the term to determine a student's GPA for that term. Cumulative GPA is calculated in a similar fashion, except that all letter grades taken while enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh are included in the calculations. The *Undergraduate Student Handbook* (www.cas.pitt.edu/ASUS_Handbook2006/index.html) is an excellent resource for detailed information about grades, GPAs, and student records.

In addition to end-of-term grade reports, select introductory courses provide first-term freshmen with midterm progress reports so that new students can gauge their performance. Midterm grades will be H (high), S (satisfactory), or U (unsatisfactory). Departments whose instructors submit midterm progress reports include anthropology, biology, chemistry, economics, English, mathematics, neuroscience, physics, and psychology.

Students who receive U grades on their midterm progress reports, or those who feel they are struggling with their course work, can get help from their professors and teaching assistants, their freshman orientation course instructors, or their academic advisors, or by visiting the Academic Resource Center in G-1 Gardner Steel Conference Center.

The University of Pittsburgh no longer sends grade reports in the mail. Students can access their grades, whether for midterm progress or the end of the term, through the Pitt portal (www.my.pitt.edu). In September 2006, students will be able to view their academic advisement transcripts through Pitt portal by accessing PeopleSoft's self-service degree progress report. Students will be able to check their academic progress using this feature and see which requirements they still need to fulfill. Additional self-service options will become available throughout the academic year; watch for announcements on our Web site (www.cas.pitt.edu) and in this newsletter.