Randolph-Macon College
Ashland, Virginia

Spring 2011

COMPUTER SCIENCE

In 1966 Randolph-Macon was one of the nation's first small, liberal arts colleges to establish a Computer Science Department. The department's founder, Dr. Richard E. Grove, properly saw that Computer Science could be both effectively and appropriately presented within a full liberal arts curriculum. Today the department holds fundamentally to Dr. Grove's vision in its presentation of a modern Computer Science curriculum. In doing so, it is dedicated to excellence in teaching, fundamental preparation of students, and involvement of students in research. The major in Computer Science incorporates many of the curriculum recommendations of the Association for Computing Machinery. In addition to the core courses, a student may choose from a variety of elective courses and cutting-edge topic courses (see http://www.rmc.edu/Academics/computer-science/courses.aspx).

Action Plan for Studying Computer Science:

- Consult the Computer Science section of the current Randolph- Macon Catalog or web site to find information about our courses, about requirements for the major and the minor, and to read our newsletter. Check out our bulletin boards around the faculty offices for information about the major, opportunities for Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF), Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), jobs, and internships as well as current information on the field. Attend department functions both social and academic. The department recently initiated a colloquium series.

- Meet with a Computer Science department instructor to discuss your potential interest in the major:
  Dr. Benjamin Burrell – Associate Professor – bburrell@rmc.edu
  Dr. John Rabung – Professor – jrabung@rmc.edu
  Dr. Chuck Leska – Associate Professor/Chair – cleska@rmc.edu

- Consider pursuing a minor that would supplement your computer science skills and your career interests.

- Use Alumni Link to find Randolph-Macon graduates who majored in Computer Science and contact them to discuss the major and computing careers.

- Take Computer Science classes during your freshman and sophomore years to determine your interest in the major.

Features of the R-MC Computer Science Program:

- All faculty members have a Ph.D. and view their primary task as undergraduate education.
- Small class sizes facilitate interaction among students and faculty.
- Students are encouraged to participate in faculty research projects, perhaps earning recognition in the form of conference presentations and publications.
- Computer facilities are very accessible; the college network provides campus-wide and internet access from your dorm room.
- Topics classes can be designed around interests shared by the student and a faculty member.

Integrating Experience and the Discipline

Recent Summer Research Activities of our Majors:
Summer 2010
SURF
Mark Lotts worked with Prof. Rabung on improving lower bounds for van der Waerden numbers.
Summer 2011
SURF
Larry Ballance worked with Prof. Leska investigating the split conjecture and the traversal conjecture on splay trees.
REU
Victoria Cooper worked at UNC Charlotte on understanding and building interactive technologies that inspire, teach, and connect people.
Mark Lotts worked at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology on a project in computational number theory that is mapping the discrete logarithm.

POSITIONS HELD BY RECENT COMPUTER SCIENCE GRADS

- Senior Automation Technician for Chesterfield County Public Library System
- Computer Technician for an IT firm called Seltek
- Lead Developer and Release Manager for Kinsale Insurance
- Software Developer for ITT Corporation
- IT Consultant for Amentra
- System Administrator for SRA International
- Technical Consultant for DemandTec

SOME RECENT INTERNSHIP SITES

Scott & Stringfellow Inc.
Capital One
Dominion Digital
Virginia Department of Taxation
Genworth Financial
Henrico County Mental Health & Retardation Department
RWD Technologies
MCV Medical School

STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING EXPERIENCE AND DISCIPLINE

1. Find an internship/job/REU/SURF experience during the summer months using your computer science skills to get experience outside the classroom or doing research.
2. Join us in revitalizing our The Association for Computing Machinery chapter.
3. Get involved in student activities, such as:
    - Programming contests
    - Classroom/laboratory assisting
    - Becoming a Higgins Academic Center computing tutor, a departmental lab assistant, or work as a tech for Information Technology Services.
    - Initiate a new activity