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New Graduate Programs to Enroll First Students in the Fall

Doctoral in Computer Science to Equip Students for High-Level Careers

UMass Boston has established a Ph.D. program in computer science which will prepare talented students for industrial or academic careers as developers and researchers of software. The University has begun accepting applications for next fall for what is expected to be an initial class of several students, according to program director Dan Simovici, a professor of mathematics and computer science.

"This new program is a significant step forward for the University and an indication of our commitment to the field of computer science, which is so important to our regional economy," Simovici said.

Students can complete the Ph.D. program in computer science with a mixture of full- and part-time study. Courses are offered on a flexible evening schedule. The dissertation portion of the degree requires at least one year of full-time work. While pursuing their studies, some doctoral candidates will be able to earn stipends by doing research or serving as teaching assistants at the campus, or by working in the University's Software Engineering Research Laboratory, where faculty, graduate students and engineers from software companies collaborate on interesting, innovative projects.

UMass Boston's graduate programs in computer science have been attracting considerable recent years. 120 students currently pursue master's degrees. The University's computer science faculty are deeply involved in research in such areas as interpreters and compilers, data bases, document and image processing, parallel computing and digital typography. The Ph.D. program in computer science is the University's sixth doctoral degree program. Doctoral degrees are also offered in clinical psychology, education, environmental sciences, gerontology and public policy.

Campus Notes

Chancellor Sherry H. Penney has been appointed to the boards of directors of the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching and the Private Industry Council.

Dean Brenda Cherry of the College of Nursing is collaborating with the Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for the Aged in Roslindale on a scholarship and training program that will enable 20 to 30 nursing students each year to earn money for their education while working and conducting research at the Center. The first group of UMass Boston students is expected to begin their assignments at the facility in the fall.

According to an analysis conducted by the Journal of International Business Studies, finance professor Lawrence Franko is among those researchers most frequently cited in that publication. The Journal points out that the number of citations received by an individual "are a measure of the innovativeness of research." Franko ranks 19th among researchers in the number of times his work has been cited in Journal articles published between 1984 and 1990.

Governor William Weld has appointed Yung-Ping Chen, the Gerontology Institute’s Frank J. Manning Scholar, as a delegate to the 1995 White House Conference on Aging.

Patrick Walker, a part-time lecturer in the Graduate College of Education, will visit the Judge Baker Children's Center in Boston this month to talk about a partnership involving UMass Boston which is aimed at promoting literacy and ethical behavior among the city's youth. Walker will be at the Center's Children's Monday, February 13, at 4:30 p.m. to talk about family, friends and community, a collaborative effort involving the UMass Boston Graduate College of Education, the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the Judge Baker Children's Center, the Boston Public Schools and the Child Development Project of San Ramon, California.

Chancellor Penney was among 26 university heads from around the country to meet last week with President Clinton to discuss higher education funding. David Bartley of Holyoke Community College was the only other official from Massachusetts to attend the White House meeting.

Trotter Institute director James Jennings was among four advisors who worked on the PBS television series, "America's War on Poverty," which aired in January on Channel 2. Series' executive producer Henry Hampton holds an honorary degree from UMass Boston.

Faculty, staff and students are asked to donate canned food items to needy Boston children during a two-day charity event that will take place at the campus February 14 and 15. A drop-off area will be set up at the Information Booth on the first floor of the McCormack Building.
Grant Enables Faculty to Lead HS Students on River Research

UMass Boston has been awarded $78,000 by the NYNEX Foundation to help a team of Rhode Island high school students study the causes and consequences of pollution in the Runnings River, a tributary that feeds Narragansett Bay. The study was proposed by four seniors from the Wheeler School in Providence. The students will develop and carry out the study over six weeks this summer in collaboration with three UMass Boston geography instructors — assistant professors Dick Gelpke and Dave Nellig, and professor Jack Looney. Beginning in June, the UMass Boston instructors will present the four Wheeler students with a mini-course on geographic information systems.

The instructors and the students will then work together to evaluate water samples taken from the Runnings River and from groundwater near the river. They will also investigate several drains which empty into the river and are believed to be a prime source of pollution. The students’ findings, as well as their suggestions for improving the health of the river, will be presented to environmental officials in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The Runnings River proposal was the first place winner of the 1994 NYNEX Science and Technology Awards, a two-year old program that supports problem-solving projects involving high school students in their communities. NYNEX selected three proposals for funding out of several hundred that were submitted by high school students in New England and New York.

Besides the grant to UMass Boston, NYNEX awarded funds to two other colleges or universities that are collaborating with high schools in their areas on projects. The second place proposal, submitted by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, received $78,000. The third place winner, a proposal from UMass Lowell, was awarded $85,000. In addition to funding these research endeavors, NYNEX is providing college scholarships of $15,000 to each of the students participating in the projects.

Urban Scholars to Hold Teen Talks

Several hundred teenagers from Boston will exchange opinions on a variety of topics during the Seventh Annual Student Conference, to be held on Friday, February 17, from 8:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the World Trade Center, Commonwealth Pier, Boston. The conference is organized by the students of UMass Boston’s Urban Scholars Program, which is directed by Joan Becker. The title of the conference is S.T.O.P. (Survive, Tackle, Overcome, Prosper). Participating in the conference will be middle and high school students from 10 local schools. The students will attend workshops designed to promote open and frank dialogue on such subjects as domestic violence, higher education, professional careers and substance abuse. The workshops will be led by adults.

Deadline for Grant Proposals: March 3

The deadline is Friday, March 5, for submitting proposals for 1994-1995 International Development Grants to the Office of Grant Development.

Science Day Activities Draw 800 HS Students to Campus

Eight hundred students from high schools in Greater Boston were at UMass Boston on January 10 and 11 for the University’s second annual Science Day activities. The Patriot Lodge covered the events. Students participated in laboratory sessions chosen from among 35 interesting and fun topics in the sciences, including biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, geography, mathematics and computer science, and physics. The students’ endeavors included viewing sunspots through the telescope at our Martin Observatory, measuring the flight speed of birds and insects, exploring the chemistry of copper and testing a proposed method for cleaning up oil spills. Sessions were led by 34 UMass Boston faculty members and a number of University students.

Boston Magazine Profiles

Author Patricia Powell

Patricia Powell, an assistant professor of English, is the subject of a profile in the January issue of Boston Magazine. Powell, who teaches creative writing courses at the University, has just published her second novel, A Small Gathering of Bones. Her first novel, Me Dying Trail, was published in 1993. The magazine story on Powell focuses on her Caribbean background — a powerful influence on her work — and on her rising stock as a writer, which has resulted in Heinemann, her New Hampshire-based publisher, sending her on a nine-city tour to promote her new book. Powell is a 1988 graduate of Wellesley College and has a master’s degree from Brown University. She has been teaching at UMass Boston for four years.

More Campus Notes

Heidegger’s Political Thinking

written by associate professor of political science James Ward, has been published by the University of Massachusetts Press. The book is about German educator and philosopher Martin Heidegger.

McCormack Institute senior fellow Albert Cardarelli recently participated in the Conference for New Legislators, which was co-sponsored by the state legislature and the University’s Donahue Institute of Government Services. Cardarelli gave a presentation on criminal justice.

Thirty boys and girls ages 11 to 13 have been visiting the UMass Boston campus throughout the school year as part of a Boston Police Department program to provide enriching academic and athletic opportunities to young people. The Boston Police Youth Service is also operating this program at Boston College, Boston Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, and on the University’s Northeastern campus. Students assigned to the UMass Boston campus have been led by Rodney Hughes, the athletic department’s community coordinator, and several of the University’s student-athletes.