

Computer and Information Science News April 2007 – October 2007
Fall 2007 Engineering Advisory Board Meeting
Updated 2 October 2007 (Version 4)

Dr. Paul Ruth, a 2007 PhD graduate from Purdue University, joined the faculty in August 2007. Ruth's specialization is in high performance computing and networking, with a focus on machine and network virtualization. Ruth is teaching CSci 211 (Computer Science III) and a graduate special topics course on virtualization in Fall 2007. He will teach Engr 661 (Computer Networks II) in Spring 2008.

The returning faculty members are Dr. Conrad Cunningham, Professor and Chair; Associate Professors Dr. Tobin Maginnis, Dr. Pamela Lawhead, and Dr. Dawn Wilkins; Assistant Professors Dr. Stephen Rice, Dr. Philip Rhodes, and Dr. Yixin Chen; and Instructors Cynthia Zickos and Charles Jenkins, PE. The full-time staff consists of Anthony Nocentino (Network Administrator) and Karen Lovett (Administrative Secretary). Lawhead also serves as Director of the Institute for Advanced Education in Geospatial Sciences (IAEGS). Jenkins and Nocentino are also computer science PhD students.

The adjunct instructors for Fall 2007 are IT Helpdesk manager Teresa McCarver and MS graduate Kristi Davidson. As she has for several years, McCarver is teaching the online section of CSci 191 (Office Applications) and a special CSci 191 section for the "Getting a Great Start" pilot program. As in Spring 2007, Davidson is teaching one section each of CSci 111 (Computer Science I) and CSci 191. In Spring 2008, Davidson is scheduled to teach two sections of CSci 111.

The Graduate Instructors hired for Summer and Fall 2007 include PhD students James Church (CSci 112 and 490), Liang Huang (CSci 103), and Breneria Travis (CSci 191) and MS students Danny Davis (CSci 300 and 103), Indika Jayasinghe (CSci 111), and David Saulnier (CSci 259/390). Davis, who has a law degree and work experience in computing, is teaching the professional ethics course.

Conrad Cunningham served as Program Chair for the 2007 International Conference on the Principles and Practice of Programming in Java (PPPJ). Faculty member Steve Rice, PhD student Derek Park (Global Technical Systems), former Chair Bob Cook (Georgia Southern), 2005 PhD graduate Yi Liu (South Dakota State), 1998 MS graduate Yan Zhou (South Alabama), and 1995 BSCS graduate David Coppit (William and Mary) served as members of the Program Committee. Faculty member Dawn Wilkins and 2003 PhD graduate Sudharshan Vazhkudai (Oak Ridge National Laboratories) also helped to review a few papers. We are investigating the possibility of hosting a future PPPJ conference on the Ole Miss campus, perhaps in 2009 or 2010.

Dawn Wilkins is co-editor of a special issue of the journal *BMC Bioinformatics* for articles selected from among the presentations at the 2007 MidSouth Computational Biology and Bioinformatics Society (McBIOS) conference. Wilkins is President-Elect of the McBIOS board for this year.

Wilkins is also heading a University-wide task force that is defining the requirements for the new online catalog system to be implemented as a part of the SAP-based Campus Management system.

Yixin Chen is on the program committees for three conferences: the 9th ACM SIGMM International Workshop on Multimedia Information Retrieval (MIR 2007), the Pacific-Rim Conference on Multimedia (PCM 2007), and the 6th IEEE International Conference on Machine Learning and Applications (ICMLA 2007). Chen is also an Associate Editor of the journal *Pattern Recognition* until August 2008.

Chen is representing the School of Engineering on the Faculty Senate this year.

Phil Rhodes reviewed grant proposals for a National Science Foundation program in August.

Dr. Kathy Gates (PhD graduate, UM Chief Information Officer, and Research Assistant Professor of CS) served as Program Chair for the 2007 EDUCAUSE Southeast Regional Conference in Atlanta. She is also serving on the EDUCAUSE Advisory Group on Enterprise Information Systems (AGEISS) for three years.

May 2007 BSCS graduate Scott Blackburn received a 2007 Taylor Medal, one of the University's top academic awards. He is now pursuing a PhD degree in computer science at Vanderbilt.

The Department's 2007 Phi Kappa Phi inductees included MS students Madhavi Karuturi and Mohamed Frihi and undergraduates Brent Roth and Meghan Oswald.

We awarded the Fall 2007 \$500 SAP Scholarships to undergraduates Jason Boyd and Brent Roth and the Spring 2008 scholarships to Roth and graduate student Aik Min Choong.

Yuanyuan Ding completed her PhD under the supervision of Dawn Wilkins in August 2007. Ding will join the faculty of Maryville College in January 2008.

The Department's students with summer 2007 internships included Baoqiang Yan at Oak Ridge National Laboratories, Mei Zhang at Alcatel-Lucent, Nan Yang at Alitalia, Jian Weng at Rockwell Collins, Roshan Shrestha at Saks, Suresh Chellamalla at Pearlsoft Solutions, Sandeep Kosaraju and Ashraf Mohammad at FNC, and Arvinder Kang at the Student Media Center. The internships for Yang, Shrestha, and Kang continued into the Fall 2007 semester. Ashish Regmi also began an internship with the University's Outreach and Continuing Education department during Fall 2007.

The officers of the ACM student chapter for this year are Brent Roth, President; Carlos Maury, Vice-President; and Sufian Ahmad, Secretary. Dawn Wilkins is the chapter advisor.

The officers of the Upsilon Pi Epsilon (UPE) Honor Society chapter this year are Brent Roth, President; Jason Boyd, Vice-President; and Meghan Oswald, Secretary. Cynthia Zickos is the chapter advisor.

The local student programming contest was organized by Steve Rice and held by Rice and Yixin Chen on 10 September. There were 14 contestants. From among the eligible participants, Rice formed a three member programming team consisting of undergraduate students Jason Boyd and Brent Roth and first-year graduate student Courtney Humphries. The team will compete in the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest at the Southeast Region site in Mobile on 13 October and perhaps at other contests in the spring.

The faculty is conducting the self-study for the ABET accreditation visit scheduled for Fall 2008. The self-study document is due to ABET in June 2008.

The Department continues to be innovative in its course offerings. We are teaching three new course topics in Fall 2007. PhD student James Church is teaching an undergraduate special topics course on Python and Django programming. Faculty members Phil Rhodes and Paul Ruth are teaching new graduate special topics courses on Advanced Graphics and Machine Virtualization, respectively. Conrad Cunningham is also teaching a graduate special topics course on Software Families, taught previously in Fall 2003. For Spring 2008, Cunningham is reviving the long dormant course CSci 541 on Expert Systems and Logic Programming with a new focus.

We are increasing our attention this year on activities to recruit new computer science majors and retain existing ones. Chuck Jenkins is the coordinator of this effort. Graduate student Aik Min Choong staffed a well-received activity using Lego Robots at the NASA Space Exploration Trailer exhibit on 20-21

September. Jenkins participated in a college fair at Tupelo High School on 27 September and is organizing a group of students to equip and staff a booth at the on-campus Majors Fair on 10 October.

Yixin Chen is coordinating the Computer Science Seminar Series during this academic year. Speakers scheduled to speak in Fall 2007 James Mauro (Sun Microsystems), Dr. Kathy Gates (University CIO), Conrad Cunningham, the staff of IAEGS, and graduate students David Thigpen, Arvinder Kang, James Church, Baoqiang Yan, and Xiaofei Nan.

The faculty committees and assignments for this year include the following.

Graduate – Dawn Wilkins (chair), Phil Rhodes, Yixin Chen.

Undergraduate – Steve Rice (chair), Tobin Maginnis, Paul Ruth, Cynthia Zickos

Equipment – Conrad Cunningham (chair), Tobin Maginnis, Anthony Nocentino

ABET Consultant – Pam Lawhead

Library Liaison – Philip Rhodes

Honors and Awards Coordinator – Cynthia Zickos

Engineering Computing Committee – Chuck Jenkins (chair)

Curriculum & Policy Committees – Conrad Cunningham

We upgraded the North Adler Lab by purchasing 24 dual-core Dell workstations with flat panel monitors. The three-year-old Dell workstations from that student lab were moved to the Systems and Networks laboratory, replacing the older machines there.

The Department purchased an additional seven of the above workstations for the offices of Paul Ruth, Cynthia Zickos, Pam Lawhead, Conrad Cunningham, Anthony Nocentino, Kristi Davidson, and Yixin Chen's research assistant. Previous workstations in these offices were reallocated to the Weir 106 classroom and graduate student work areas.

We also purchased Apple Mac laptop computers for faculty members Paul Ruth and Chuck Jenkins.