

University of New Hampshire

## University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

---

Media Relations

UNH Publications and Documents

---

9-24-2007

### UNH Launches New Programming Assistance Center

Rachel Purnell

*UNH Media Relations*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.unh.edu/news>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Purnell, Rachel, "UNH Launches New Programming Assistance Center" (2007). *UNH Today*. 923.  
<https://scholars.unh.edu/news/923>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the UNH Publications and Documents at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Media Relations by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact [Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu](mailto:Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu).



## UNH Launches New Programming Assistance Center

Contact: [Rachel Purnell](#)  
603-862-3778  
Administrative Assistant  
UNH Department of Computer Science

September 24, 2007

---

DURHAM , N.H. –The academic experience of UNH’s first-year computer science students has been revamped; one could say it is now more "centered."

CS 415, Introduction to Computer Science I, is many students' first foray into the nitty-gritty of programming. And for some, the challenges associated with it become overwhelming and discouraging enough to drop out of the major. Professor and former chair Dan Bergeron knew something significant had to be done without cheating the students out of the essential programming skills they needed to learn. One solution: creating the Programming Assistance Center (PAC).

Bergeron likens the PAC to the English Department's Writing Center. Like writing, programming involves "organizing your thoughts in a coherent way or you won't get your point across," he says. "It's a skill you have to do over and over again, and that's how you become a better writer and a better programmer."

Before, students relied on recitations, class time, and instructor and teaching assistant's office hours to get through CS 415. Now, in addition to all of those things and the PAC, students must take a hands-on lab section of CS 415 in the department's new Computer Classroom in Kingsbury Hall.

There are also more checks and balances in place for CS 415 students. If they miss an assignment, an email is sent out telling them they need to go to the PAC and arrange a plan to work on the assignment there. What's more, if students are unable to finish an exercise in class, they will be sent to the PAC to complete it.

"If students are having trouble with the content of the course, we are hoping to intervene earlier," said Bergeron.

The PAC opened its doors on Sunday, September 16, 2007.

During the fall semester the center will be open five days a week:

Sundays: 4-8 pm  
Mondays: Thursdays: 10am-8pm  
Fridays: 10am-3pm



