

New class relieves computer anxieties

A student is sitting at the computer center, frustrated and furious, waiting to find the magic combination of keys to allow him to run his first computer program. The assignment is due when class starts in one hour.

While this scene can be typical of someone's first experience with a computer, it does not have to happen anymore thanks to some short courses offered by the Academic and Research Computing. The hour-long sessions teach basic computer programming and are open to faculty and students.

"These are short practical courses to help you over some of the initial barriers of using the machines," says Stephen Pruch, program coordinator. "Nothing we're doing in the classes is directly taught in computer science courses."

Students often come into the center with their book and maybe a few instructions from

professors, he explains. Often it takes them hours just to "log on" to the computer system so they can start their assignments, Pruch notes.

"We are also interested to hear what people want in the future," he says.

"I use computers every day, but I still don't know it all," admits Pruch. "I'll be taking some of the courses."

"We want to take the frustration out," he says. "For the students this means the first hour or two in front of the machine will be much more pleasant and productive — it won't be hit or miss."

The 10 sessions can handle 20 people each. ARC will add sessions if necessary to deal with the special needs of a class or a group of people.

"We look at the courses as opening doors," says Pruch. "The five of us in here will work to make the computer center less intimidating and less frightening."

Grad student needed

The University Bookstore is accepting applications from graduate students to fill an opening on the board of directors. Board member Bobbie Weidner graduated, creating the vacancy.

The board will interview all interested graduate students, preferably MBAs, this week to select one to serve out Weidner's term, which ends in June, 1983.

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