

OU teaches classes over 'Net

An essential tool for designing computer graphics is, of course, a computer. But students studying computer graphics at Oakland University in Rochester Hills need a computer just to take their classes.

That's because, for the first time, the classes are taught over the Internet. There are no classrooms or regular class meetings; classes meet "asynchronously" (not at the same time). Students log onto a "virtual classroom" site on the World Wide Web, and study lecture materials, take tests, and submit homework right from their computers.

"Computer graphics lends itself to multimedia, asynchronous presentation," says Louis J. "Jack" Nachman, professor of mathematical science. "It's easier for me to demonstrate the principles of computer graphics, and I think, easier for

students to learn them if they're right there on the computer screen, rather than on an overhead projector in a classroom or in a book. The typical student in my classes works full time and comes to OU after putting in eight hours on the job. In my classes, students can relax, take their time, and really study the complexities of a particular concept.

Each week, 15 graduate students and five under grads log into the virtual classroom, either on their home computers or at OU's on-campus graphics facilities. Nachman's "lecture" appears as a combination of audio, text and animated graphic illustrations. Students can send their homework and test answers to Nachman over the Internet, too — sometimes with just an e-mail message.

Just because there are no reg-

ular class meetings doesn't mean students can't engage in scholarly debate. Nachman and his students can make use of an active News group where the students pose questions and Nachman and other students post answers.

Nachman said he became interested in electronic technology as a graduate student, when he taught precalculus class over closed circuit TV. "The idea of teaching some class using the World Wide Web has been on the back of my mind for a couple of years," he said.

Before classes could begin, Nachman needed to obtain a web server, server software, and development software. Each week's lesson takes between 30 and 40 hours to prepare, a job Nachman tackles without any assistance.

"So far, the students say they like it," Nachman said.

Forum promote drug-free youth

The Birmingham-based Michigan Communities in Action for Drug-Free Youth will host the 12th annual Drug Awareness Conference for Youth and Adults on Saturday, Nov. 15, at the Lansing Center. This year's theme is "Celebrate Prevention with Pride."

Conference objectives include:

- To encourage middle and junior high students to reach out to their peers and the community.

- To address important drug prevention issues, focus on practical solutions and provide the latest research findings and information featuring state and nationally recognized speakers and presenters.

- To provide participants from throughout the state the opportunity to network, interact with each other and offer insights on innovative programs.

- To expand the partnership of volunteers and professionals

Funding offered for wheelchair-using grads

Oakland University in Rochester Hills invites physically challenged graduate students who use wheelchairs to apply to the Steven R. and Leah P. Vartanian Endowment Scholarship fund for financial assistance.

Applicants for admission to graduate study at Oakland University, and current Oakland University graduate students who meet this criterion should file a scholarship application with the Office of Graduate Study, 520 O'Dowd Hall, Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Mich. 48309-4401.

The application deadline for fall consideration is December 1. To apply, write a letter containing the following information:

- Name, address and telephone number

- Oakland University student number

- Oakland University program and degree sought

- A statement indicating eligibility for the Vartanian Scholarship

- A statement of career goals and aspirations

- Attach an Oakland University graduate transcript (if applicable)

"This scholarship reaffirms Oakland University's unwavering commitment to equality of opportunity for all persons," said Brian Goellin, acting dean, graduate study.

"In a society that relies on an informed, educated citizenry, no one should be denied the opportunity to attain his or her fullest potential. Oakland strives to build a community that welcomes and honors all persons and that provides equal opportunity in education and employment."

Call the dean of graduate study at (248) 370-2194 for more information.

through successful ideas and strategies for prevention, intervention and treatment.

Speakers include: Harold Crossley, DDS, PhD, Associate Professor of Pharmacology at the Dental School at the University of Maryland at Baltimore; Sharon Chappelle, MSW, ACSW, LCSW, president of Con-

sulting and Training Services Inc., in Middletown, Conn.

Club PRIDE of Atlanta will leader a youth track workshop for junior high/middle school students in grades 5 to 9.

For registration information, call MCADY: (248) 642-6270.

OAKLAND DIGEST

Oakland Digest provides a summary of headline stories from around the county during the week leading up to Nov. 9.

BIRMINGHAM

Court seeking tighter security: The 48th District Court, which is located in Bloomfield Township and serves West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Hills, Sylvan Lake, Birmingham, Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake and Bloomfield Township, recently proposed to add X-ray machines and metal detectors to guard against weapons being brought into court.

CLARKSTON

Bank heist suspect nabbed: The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) recently filed one count of federal bank robbery charges in U.S. District Court in Detroit against a suspect in the robbery of the Great Lakes Bancorp bank in Independence Township. Approximately \$4,000 was taken during the Oct. 20 heist. But the FBI will not proceed with the case until the man has been taken through the judicial process in connection with a more recent Royal Oak bank robbery, for which the man was arraigned and pleaded not guilty on Oct. 30.

FARMINGTON

Parents charged in beer bash: The parents of a 17-year-old Farmington High School senior have been charged with providing alcoholic beverages to

minors during an Oct. 25 keg beer bash in Farmington. The teen's mother and stepfather supplied beer and hosted the party at their residence, according to Farmington police. But police reports also include denials from the parents that alcohol was being consumed by minors in their home.

LAKE ORION

Walk for Life: Close to 100 students from Lake Orion and Oxford turned out Oct. 30 to affirm life by walking. The Walk for Life event, aimed at heightening an awareness about suicide and suicide prevention, was sponsored by the Orion/Oxford Community Schools Advisory Council. School administrators, teachers and parents from the area, where a number of teens committed suicide in 1996 and 1997, also participated.

OXFORD

Township considers drug tests: Addison Township may establish an employee drug and alcohol abuse program that would include testing of new hires and anyone suspected of substance abuse. Township trustees Nov. 3 suggested that such a program be considered for the township's fire department.

ROCHESTER

Book purchases will aid blind: A percentage of all book purchases made Saturday at the Rochester Hills Barnes & Noble store will be donated to Leader Dogs for the Blind, a Rochester

Hills-based, non-profit organization that serves blind and blind/deaf individuals throughout the world.

SOUTHFIELD

Incumbent wins tight race: Southfield Mayor Donald Fracassi won Southfield's close mayoral election Nov. 4, beating out challenger Barbara Talley by 199 votes. Fracassi, 62, received 60.1 percent of the vote. Talley, 65, captured 49.9 percent.

TROY

Troy loses land fight: An Oakland County judge ruled Oct. 31 that the former Rockwell International Corp. and the Nelson Companies, Inc., are entitled to build a shopping center and Target store on 22 acres of land in Troy near Maple Road. The companies filed suit against the City of Troy in 1994, after the City Council denied their request to rezone the property from light industrial to commercial.

WEST BLOOMFIELD

New store features Judaica art: A new retail store, called ZZZYX (pronounced "Zi-zick"), which features an extensive collection of Judaica art, opened its doors Nov. 1 at West Bloomfield's Boardwalk Shopping Center on Orchard Lake Road, south of Maple. For more information, call (248) 539-3309.

—Compiled by staff writer Nicole Stafford

IN THE RIGHT HANDS IT BECOMES AN INVALUABLE TOOL FOR BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS

With hammer and nails you can build a house. With bricks and mortar you can build a city. But to build a neighborhood you need people. People who are willing to work together to build neighborhoods where families can grow and children are safe to play.

The United Way supports 39 youth programs like YMCA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts that help the leaders of tomorrow develop the skills they will need today.



United Way

Give Help. Give Hope. Give Now.

Last year, you helped fund these agencies with \$2.5 million. This year, the need for skill and leadership building is even greater.

With every dollar donated, 90 cents goes directly to people in need. So your money is being put to good use, and so are the talents of the kids you help.

If we want to build better neighborhoods, a ball like this can be an invaluable tool.

And we can't afford to drop it.

MICS 11502-1097



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