

Marine program features sea air, salty experience

By Steve Ostrosky
Collegian Staff Writer

Imagine yourself faced with beaches, salt marshes and ocean instead of Willard, College Avenue and your nearby pizzeria, and still taking University courses. That is what about 60 students and faculty members will do Spring Term when they participate in the Marine Science Program held at Wallops, Va.

The three-course, 12-credit program, in its third year, is "an educational commune set out in limbo," according to Albert L. Goober, associate professor of geology and director of the marine science program.

"It's as much an educational experiment as a marine science training ground," Goober said.

The 50 students and 10 faculty members in the program work, play and live together at facilities operated by the Marine Science Consortium Inc., of which the University is a member.

Facilities at the Wallops station include a 95-foot several small craft for work in bays and channels,

laboratories, classrooms, dormitories and a cafeteria.

The courses are taught one at a time with oceanography and coastal geology as three-week courses and marine biology as a four-week course.

Goober said the courses are flexible and there is little lecturing, with most experiences occurring outside and in labs.

Each course has its own set of instructors — three or four faculty members from various departments teaching only that course.

The students are of both sexes and from various majors. Goober said selection is based on grade-point average, willingness to work and some science background. He said the science background is not always necessary and students without it have participated in the program.

Last year, 38 men and 12 women from 20 different majors participated in the program.

Bill Murphy (11th-anthropology), who took part in last spring's program, said it was a "really worthwhile program."

"The atmosphere was really good," Murphy said. He said the students and the faculty became close very fast. "We would have get-togethers and bull sessions."

"The teachers were super. They were there 24 hours a day and you could see them anytime. The teachers knew you personally and most of them approached it not as a student-teacher relationship but as guidance," Murphy added.

Murphy said the courses were well-planned and most of the learning took place through the labs.

Murphy's enthusiasm was typical of students in the program, according to Goober. "The students are overwhelmingly interested from what I've seen," he said.

"The students develop an extremely close-knit relationship that lasts. The faculty-student relationship would be almost impossible to develop at University Park in most majors. You have to depend on one another and work with each other down there," Goober noted.

The cost for each student in the program which will run from March 18 to May 25, is about \$800. Goober said \$300 takes care of tuition and the other \$500 is paid to the Consortium for use of the facilities.

Applications for the program are available from Goober in 309 Deike, and will be accepted until Dec. 21. Students will be informed of their selection by the time classes resume in January.

New, easy computer lingo in use

By STEVE OSTROSKY
Collegian Staff Writer

Talk to a computer in English? Ridiculous, right?

Well, you still may not be able to talk to it, but two University statisticians have developed a computer pseudo-English "which almost anybody can learn."

Bryan L. Joiner, associate professor of statistics, and Thomas A. Ryan, assistant professor of statistics have developed Minitab, a general purpose computing system for statistics.

"If you know Fortran (another computer language), I can teach you Minitab in a half hour," Joiner said. "If you are used to analytical thinking, I can teach it to you in an hour."

Joiner said he first thought of Minitab when he worked at the National Bureau of Standards, where Omnitab, a system similar to Minitab, was developed.

"He said he tried to use Omnitab at the University, but it was too slow for the needs of students."

Ryan already had developed some ways to use the computer for introductory statistics courses.

During Christmas vacation, 1971, Joiner

and Ryan agreed to adopt a new system patterned after Omnitab and directed towards introductory statistics courses.

Joiner said one unique thing about Minitab is its pseudo-English commands. Commands such as "add," "multiply" and "divide" are used, and the only other data required is information on the column of numbers where the commands are performed.

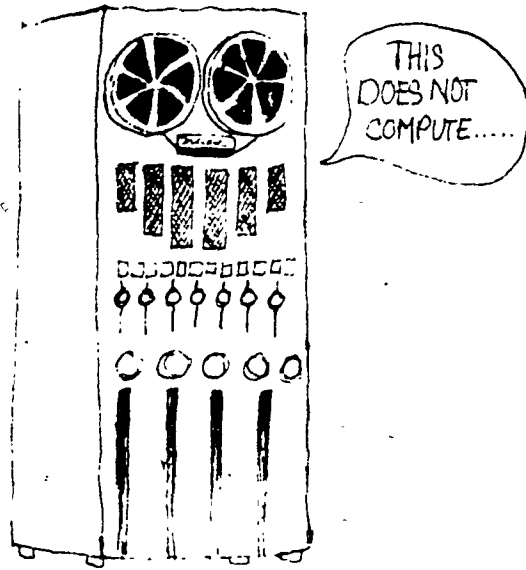
The large plotting capability is another unusual Minitab feature, Joiner said, since most other statistical packages have only small plotting capabilities.

"But Minitab is not all there is to know about computers," Joiner said. "With kinds of problems it is better to use another system. But for statistical courses, I know of nothing else as good as Minitab."

Minitab now is taught in all statistics courses using data. It also is used in other courses and is the primary computational tool of the Penn State Statistical Consulting Service.

Many businesses and firms are requesting the Minitab system to plug into their own computers to aid in statistical work, Joiner added.

Joiner said he and Ryan, along with two graduate students, still are working on the system to increase its capabilities.



Calculators Available for Student Use

Electronic calculators are available in Room 6 Sparks Building.

For use in University courses only.

Mon-Fri: 9-12 noon, 1-4:30 p.m.

Evenings - 7-10 p.m.

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Absenteeism under fire

WASHINGTON (AP) - Congress's bid to reassert its responsibilities has provided the opening for some lawmakers to deal with an old problem - congressional absenteeism.

Calling absenteeism "a thorn in the side of Congress," Rep. Clarence Miller, R-Ohio, has introduced a constitutional amendment providing for expulsion of members who miss 40 per cent of the votes during a term.

There is nothing new about the proposal. Former Sen. Margaret Chase-Smith, R-Maine, tried in 1969 to make it possible for delinquent members to shape up or be shipped out. Her bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee, where it died.

Four similar bills now are languishing before the House Judiciary Committee. Their chances of survival - like other bills seeking to disqualify members at age 60 - are said to be minimal.

Miller believes that whatever reasons congressmen had for not wanting to pull the rug from under less zealous colleagues are no longer valid in today's post-Watergate political climate.

"There could be no better way of promoting public confidence in our abilities and commitment to move America forward than a high level of congressional attendance and voting participation," Miller said in introducing his bill.

The Ohio congressman, who has not missed a vote since coming to Washington in 1967, noted that a five per cent absentee rate in private industry is considered high, yet the 11 per cent rate in Congress this year is its best record since 1959.

According to his count, the House was unable to form a quorum on 330 occasions last year because members were absent.

Miller is hopeful of getting positive action on his measure in time for the 1974 congressional elections, when absenteeism is expected to skyrocket.

Some members argue that their elective responsibilities sometimes require their presence elsewhere during congressional votes. They explain that whenever relatively unimportant issues are being debated, they may fulfill more important engagements that have direct bearing on their jobs.

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Colors: tan outer, blue liner, blue tan, blue blue

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