Hood College helps students conquer math science anxiety

FREDERICK, MD — Some people tremble at the thought of sitting down to use a computer or picking up a pencil to balance the checkbook. Others look forward to simplifying routine tasks through a computer, or calculating the number of miles per gallon for their car.

Research suggests that early experience with mathematics and computer science and especially the influence of adult role models in these disciplines are important in preventing math and computer anxiety.

Nobody is born with math or computer anxiety, explains Paul Gowen, Hood College professor of mathematics and computer science. But the time youngsters leave high school, many have acquired the fear, he says.

Hood mathematics instructor Mary Ann Dvorsky says math and computer anxity sometimes can be traced to one incident that a student could not handle in elementary or middle school. A student who experienced traumatic failure in a mathematics or computer situation may focus attention on the fear the next time the subject comes up. The result is that the student does not concentrate fully on the topic being taught, she says.

"Some students may be conditioned to be frightened of the topic before they even enter school." If a parent has math or computer anxiety, it can be detected by the child. The child, sensing the fear in the parent, enters the classroom with a negative attitude or anxiety before the topic is introduced.

"Teachers may instill math anxiety; some teachers are math anxious," Gowen says. A teacher introducing a new unit may tell the students that working with fractions is difficult; students then are predisposed to believe mathematical fractions are hard to understand.

Computer anxiety affects adults more than children, he says. "Children aren't usually math or computer anxious. Most children like computers and love to play with such complicated gadgets. Children are growing up with computers. The adults are more frightened, and worry that they won't understand the computer or the system will break down."

Carolyn Kawecki, instructor of political science at Hood College, conducted a survey of Hood students to determine how prevalent computer anxiety is on campus. She found the majority of students who responded "showed no anxiety reactions" to the survey questions.

Since computer science courses are required in many high schools, and computers are becoming more accessible to students inside and outside the classroom, this may account for the low level of computer anxiety among young adults, she says.

In addition, "Computer anxiety is overcome if the perceived utility of computing to students is high. And students' high level of interest in future uses of computing at Hood suggests that this is probable," she says.

Gowen forsees a disappearance of computer anxiety in the future "because people will grow up with computers." As for mathematics anxiety, he believes it will be with us for a while longer. Students "learn math like any other discipline, but math is something that students need to work at and practice. It's not something that comes to you by magic."

Parents hoping to prevent or cure a child's anxiety should project a positive image about math and computers. Teachers should compliment small successes so the student can build on them, Dvorsky says.

Dvorsky suggests these hints to alleviate or prevent mathematics and computer anxiety; starting the learning process for these topics at a young age; working with students to encourage hard work in these fields in order to gain success; practicing on computers or with mathematics on a regular basis so learned skills do not diminish; and relating mathematics and computers to everyday use.

"Nobody is asking the student to be a whiz at higher level mathematics," she says. "We're just asking students to come to grips with it at their own pace."

Sports literature course offered at Essex CC

Judging from the throngs of Americans who actively participate, compete, observe, or enthusiastically support the entire range of sports, there are few other pastimes that would inspire such interest and devotion. And the important role which sports plays in our culture has certainly not gone unnoticed by either writers or film-makers.

A three-credit English course offered this fall at Essex Community College will examine how both writers and film-makers have treated this important subject in their works. "Sports in Literature and Film" will be organized around such themes as sports as an escape, reaching one's potential through sports, sports and the sense of a team, and sports and nationalism.

Under the direction of Al Starr, professor of English — who organized the popular "Why of Sports" program at Essex Community College three years ago — students will examine such literary works as **The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner, Rabit Run, The Boys of Summer,** and **The Universal Baseball Association.** Films to be discussed during the course include **Heaven Can Wait, Rocky, The Natural,** and **Breaking Away.**

Class sessions meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:50 a.m. on the Essex campus beginning the week of September 4. Registration for the fall semester is currently being accepted from noon to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday in the college Administration Building.

For further registration and schedule information, call the Office of Records and Registration at Essex Community College, 522-1263.

Training program offered at Cultural Arts Institute

The Cultural Arts Institute of Baltimore, 4517 Schenley Rd. in Roland Park, is taking registration for the Arts Activity Specialist Training Program. It is a six month certificate program approved by the Maryland State Board For Higher Education. Classes begin September 8, 1986, for the fall semester. The Day Program is in session 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Evening Program is scheduled for Monday and Wednesday evenings.

The objective of the program is to train individuals to work in the arts with special populations such as the elderly and the disabled, the deaf and the blind, the cerebral palsied and the mentally retarded as well as all children and adults.

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Courses offered are Group Dynamics, Special Population Exercie, Sign Language, Communication Skills, Dance Exercie, Aerobics, Music Appreciation, Arts and Crafts and Stage & Show Production. In the Day Program students will learn to apply classroom instruction by working two days per week in nursing homes and institutions. The Cultural Arts Institute offers job placement aid and has a 98 percent rate of success.

C..A.I. is a non-profit institution that trains people for careers in the Arts. In addition to the A.A.S.T.P., classes are offered in musical theatre, jazz dance, modern, and ballet. For more information call 366-1544.

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Roommates practice diplomacy using Hood College handbook

FREDERICK, MD — Disagreements between roommates are a normal occurrence on any college campus, but for some, disputes can escalate into open warfare. Others keep silent, letting anger build inside causing stress and misery. Finding a new roommate is one solution, but most of the disputes can be worked out, says Dr. Barbara Engram, director of counseling at Hood College.

Dr. Engram, who authored **The Roommate Negotiation Workbook** introduced to Hood's resident students three years ago, says disputes can be prevented or resolved when they do arise. Her **Workbook** provides a step - by - step guide for negotiating and written contracts, signed by both roommates, to specify the details of negotiated agreements. The **Workbook** helps roommates bring conflicts out in the open where they can be discussed and resolved. The contracts serve as reminders of agreements and of students' commitments to them.

The **Workbook** has been received with enthusiasm by college and university officials and staff concerned about the problems of student roommate conflicts. The book will be used by college students and university officials across the country this year.

"The **Workbook** can't eliminate conflicts, but it can bring them out in the open," she says.

Two roommates might enjoy listening to rock music, but when one needs to study for an exam, loud music in the room might cause a conflict between the two. The easy solution is to refer to the initial contract.

Dr. Engram's copyrighted **Workbook** has been such a success at Hood that it is in demand at colleges and universities across the nation with more than two dozen college and university officials ordering books for use by staff members and students. Dr. Engram says about 3,500 Workbooks will be used by both college officials and students this year.

"What many people need to realize is that talking freely, sharing ideas and opinions, and negotiating ways of handling situations does not mean the students must be best friends," Dr. Engram says. Learning these skills helps friendships develop and helps prevent existing friendships from dissolving because of petty annoyances which can get blown out of proportion when two people share a room.

Skills acquired in learning to deal with roommates are useful later in life, including in the workplace and in marriage, Dr. Engram says.

If you would like to sample copy of the **Workbook**, send a check for $3.50 made out to Hood College to: Roommate Workbook, Hood College, Frederick, Maryland 21701.

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Cultural Arts Institute offers courses for teenagers

The Cultural Arts Institute of Baltimore is taking registration for a Teen Performing Arts Workshop to begin in the fall. The course is open to teens ages 10 to 16. It will be held after school weekdays at CAI, 4517 Schenley Rd. in Roland Park.

The course is designed to involve students in cultural activities after school. Participants will learn dance, drama, and music. The workshop will be fashioned similarly to CAI's very successful summer workshop. The group recently performed the musical "Annie" at Keswick Nursing Home.

Deborah London is Executive Director of the Cultural Arts Institute. Audrey Terry, Director of the Baltimore Dance Arts Ensemble, CAI's resident dance company, will be teaching dance. Pegg Poff will be giving voice and drama instruction.

The Cultural Arts Institute is a non-profit institution that trains adults and children in the arts and works with the elderly, the handicapped, and disabled. CAI is also planning a fall outreach program in musical theatre in city and county schools. For more information, call 366-1544.

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Telecommunications course set at CCB

A new 4-credit course — "Introduction To Telecommunications" — will be offerd this fall at the Community College of Baltimore's telecommunications center located at Harbor Campus.

Approximately $1.3 million worth of state-of-the-art telecommunications equipment was donated to CCB last spring by MCI, Inc., a leading telecommunications firm. MCI and CCB have been working to develop an electronics program to meet the needs of the fast-growing telecommunications industry.

"Introduction To Telecommunications" is the first of a series of new courses designed to present the history, need, terminology, applications, and basic structure of telecommunications as an industry and as a career field. Some electronics background is required in order for students to register for the course. The course consists of 3 hours lecture per week, plus a 3-hour lab component.

For information about this course, and about CCB's expanded electronics program, call Dr. Shirish Shah at 396-1833.

Center for Professional Studies opens at Loyola College

Change is inevitable. In the business world, new ideas alter the way we work. At Loyola College's Sellinger School of Business Management, change means no more Division of Continuing Education. It's now the Center for Professional Development. This change is more than just a name change however, it marks the College's renewed commitment to providing Baltimore's business professional with quality, state-of-the-art programs.

According to Gail Yumkas, the Center's director, the Center strives to "provide unique and quality professional development programs to the business community of the Baltimore metropolitan area." While the Center attracts many middle-managers, it also accommodates executive managers seeking to "improve their skills and learn new business systems and ideas."

The Center offers courses in a variety of practical financial fields including accounting and finance for non-financial managers, insurance education, financial planning for professionals, finance and investment for individuals, real estate education and management and marketing. Executive level courses include corporate cash management, financial managements, mergers and acquisitions, and financial control. Of special interest is the newly created course entitled Professional Development for Women. This course provides women in secretarial or administrative positions with the skills necessary to advance to middle-management positions. Worth noting are the Center's two IBM PCXT hard disk computer laboratories which enable students to enhance their education with hands-on computer training.

Courses vary from one-day seminars to full 15 week classes. Tuition ranges from $50 to $395 depending upon the course. The Center offers classes at flexible times in convenient locations — on the College's North Charles Street campus and at its Columbia and Hunt Valley centers. For more information or a course catalog, call 532-5060.

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