港中文大學
THE
CHINESE
UNIVERSITY
OF
HONG
KONG

查詢電話
ENQUIRY
TELEPHONE
NUMBER
0-6045592

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The Department of Computer Science of The Chinese University of Hong Kong organized an open house on February 9 to commemorate the installation of a new VAX-11/780 computer system and the expansion of the Department's Computing Laboratory. Guests at the event were given the opportunity to tour the recently expanded Laboratory and view several demonostrations of the Department's major projects in progress, including the computerized Chinese chess and graphic packages, both developed by students.

The installation of the highly-sophisticated VAX-11/780 computer system costing around US$480,000 was made possible through the generous offer of a substantial discount from its supplier, the Digital Equipment Corporation. As a further gesture, Digital also made available to the University other valuable items including ten terminals and a data-base management software.

The Department of Computer Science in the University was first established in 1973 to offer a minor programme in Computer Science as well as elective computer-oriented courses open to all students in the University. Five years later in 1978, the Department implemented a major programme which provides students with advanced knowledge and skills in computer science required to hold professional positions in the fast developing local scene. A graduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Philosophy in Computer Science was introduced in 1982. Current student enrolment of the Department is 403. These include 111 major students, 288 minor students, and 4 graduate students.

The Department of Computer Science is located on the second floor of the Pi-Ch'iu Building in the University. Its teaching and research activities are support by three Computer Laboratories , namely, the Computing Laboratory, the Microprocessor & Micro-Computer Laboratory, and the Digital & Logic System Laboratory. These together occupy a total floor area of up to 500 sq. meters and are all equipped with the most up-to-date computer facilities. The newly-installed VAX-11/780 system, for instance, is widely used by universities abroad to facilitate research and teaching in computer software design and development.

To cope with the social need for high-level trained personnel in computer technology arising from the widespread applications of computer in the present day society, the University intends to introduce part-time degree programmes in Computer Science in the next triennium, while emphasis of computer education will be placed on such areas as management information and computer communication in the years ahead.

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