

Computer science an essential program, says dean

July 05, 2012 10:30 AM Ryan Rivet
rrivet@tulane.edu

Computer science was one of the programs cut in the restructuring of the Tulane University post-Katrina Renewal Plan. Now School of Science and Engineering dean Nick Altiero is aiming to have a full department back on campus sooner rather than later.



Look for computer science to have an increasingly strong presence on the Tulane campus in the years to come. (Photo from ThinkStock)

“I want a full computer science presence within the next four to five years,” Altiero says. “What I mean by that is an undergraduate and graduate program and research activity within four to five years at the latest.”

The [School of Science and Engineering](#) began offering introductory courses in computer science in fall 2011 and plans to jump-start the process with new faculty hires and additional classes.

Altiero says that rebuilding the computer science program has always been on his agenda. "A 21st century university needs to offer computer science," he says, his point exemplified by the influx of technology-focused jobs and businesses to New Orleans.

"I think having a booming tech sector in New Orleans adds a lot of enthusiasm and a little more urgency than we might have otherwise had," Altiero says. "This is a city where the tech industry has a healthy future; obviously we want to be responsive to that."

Altiero envisions the department working with members of the tech industry through an advisory committee. A model for this is in place in the biomedical and chemical engineering departments, as well as the engineering physics program. Their input has proven to be invaluable, says Altiero.

Altiero says he sees the computer science department educating "leaders in the city's IT industry" for years to come.

"I think that we want to continue to be a part of the economic development of this region," Altiero says. "Computer science is certainly a part of that and we need to be a player."