

Please save this letter for
future reference

Richard E. Pattis
Freshman Advisor & Associate Teaching Professor
Computer Science Department (CSD)
School of Computer Science (SCS)
Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3891

pattis@cs.cmu.edu / richardepattis (AIM)
<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~pattis>
Office Phone: (412) 268-8342
Fax Phone : (412) 268-5573

May 31, 2006

To: All Incoming SCS Freshmen

On behalf of Randal E. Bryant, Dean of the School of Computer Science, Jeannette Wing, Chair of the Computer Science Department, Klaus Sutner, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, and Mark Stehlik, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education, I would like to welcome you to Carnegie Mellon.

My name is Richard Pattis (CMU class of 1975) and I will be your advisor for your first year at CMU. My main job will be to smooth your transition from high school to college. While my focus is on academics, I know that you will encounter many other interesting and varied issues during your first year at CMU, and I look forward to discussing them with you. Besides our discussions online during the summer, we will have many opportunities to talk in person: I will be running Academic Day for SCS during Freshman Orientation; I will be meeting with each of you individually during the fall semester; I will be teaching many of you in 15-200; and, I will host 15-128, the School of Computer Science's (SCS) Freshman Immigration Course, which you all will attend. Of course, there are many ways to communicate with me electronically as well, both during the summer and after you arrive at CMU.

I am now preparing your Fall Registration and Scheduling materials. This year, for the first time, I will distribute all these materials (and collect all student response forms) online. In about two weeks, I will start activating links on my web site (www.cs.cmu.edu/~pattis/advising). At that time I will send you email (in fact, I'll be updating this web site and continuing to send you email throughout the summer). For now, I ask that you hold all your questions until after you have carefully read these materials: they will answer many of your questions. The materials will focus on how to construct your course schedule for the fall semester; they will also include information about how CMU awards advanced placement and transfer credit. Note that other matters, such as financial aid, payment of tuition, housing, food service, etc. must be processed directly through those university offices, not through me.

I am reachable throughout the summer, primarily by email (pattis@cs.cmu.edu). I will also hold online discussion hours via IM (my AOL screen name is **richardepattis**; I will post my weekly online hours on the web site). Finally, it will be difficult to reach me directly by phone, but I will check my messages weekly: if you need to talk to me by phone, please leave your phone number and a convenient day/time for me to call you back (include your time-zone).

If you have AP/IB credit, college transfer credit, or your high school offered college level courses, you will need to send me copies of your AP/IB transcripts, college transcripts, and/or course syllabi to receive placement (and credit). This is especially important if the placement is for courses that serve as a prerequisite to courses that you want to enroll in this fall. The materials that you already mailed to CMU usually don't arrive at my office until midway through your first semester here. So, you should send a copy of these materials directly to me, as soon as possible (in one mailing/fax). If it is more convenient, you may scan these materials and email them to me as an attachment.

With a large and diverse group of incoming students, spread over the globe, I know that problems will arise: I will fail to update web page links correctly. You will make mistakes filling out forms or forget to submit them. I will make mistakes processing your forms. Something will go wrong –you can count on it. But, so long as we stay in contact, we should be able to resolve most of these problems over the summer; we will fix any remaining problems in August, when you arrive on campus for Freshman Orientation, the week before classes start. Don't panic.

If you do not have internet access, or cannot reach my web site, please contact me with your best address to receive regular mail, and I will send printed copies of these materials to you immediately (foreign students, see the back of this page for information about delivery via couriers).

(over)

You are about to begin a new, exciting, and life-altering experience. We here at the School of Computer Science at CMU will do everything within our power to make this experience a tremendously positive one. I am looking forward to hearing from you during the summer, meeting with you in August, and teaching some of you in the fall.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Pattis
Freshman Advisor & Associate Teaching Professor

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If you cannot access my web site, I can send printed copies of the Fall Registration and Scheduling materials to you via a courier (e.g., Federal Express). Unfortunately, courier services cannot deliver to post office boxes. So, if you use a post office box as your primary address, please send me (via email or an **air mail** post card/letter, at the address shown below) an alternative address –one that is usable by a courier service. This address can be another person's home or business. Also send me the name of the person who will be there to accept the packet. I will then ship the packet to you, in care of that person, via a courier.

Please do not call or fax this information. Time zone differences make connections difficult, and the poor quality of international phone calls makes recorded messages difficult to understand; international faxes are often unreadable.

FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

My email address is **pattis@cs.cmu.edu**
My AOL IM screen name is **richardepattis**
My URL (for freshman advising) is **www.cs.cmu.edu~/pattis/advising**
My office phone number is **(412) 268-8342**
My mail address is

Richard E. Pattis
Freshman Advisor for SCS
Computer Science Department
School of Computer Science
Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3891
U S A

If any problems arise over the summer, please use email as the preferred way to reach me, even if it must be sent by another person. I typically check my email many times during the day; I check it, although less often, on weekends (and even when I am on vacation). So email is the best and most timely way to reach me. I will reply as soon as possible, even if it is just to acknowledge receiving your email before I have time to resolve any issues that it raises.

Domestic students can also call me on my office phone, **(412) 268-8342**. If I am not in the office when you call, please leave a message with your name, phone number, and time zone –and a good day/time to call back. During the summer, I often work at home, but I will check my messages weekly. Email is still the best way to reach me.

International Students should reach me by email or airmail. Questions and problems concerning visas and other documentation that are required for travel to Carnegie Mellon **must** go directly to the Office of International Education. Sending them to me will only slow down the solution, since I must forward them to this office.

Likewise, questions from all students, concerning housing, meal plans, tuition, and other non-academic matters **must** be directed to the appropriate university offices. Again, sending them to me will only slow down the solution, since I must forward them to these offices.

I understand that you are eager to get information and begin the registration process. My advice, and I am now officially your advisor :-) is to relax and wait for your Fall Registration and Scheduling materials to be posted on my web site. After you have read these materials thoroughly, if you still have questions, please send email, chat on IM, or call me. By the way, you might not know it, but smileys (also known as emoticons) in text messages, like :-) were popularized by Scott Fahlman at CMU. See the web site www.nerdtimes.com/emoticons/ for details.

Finally, I will be around CMU for most of the rest of the summer, but I will be grading AP exams June 13 - June 22.