

Harvard College on the World-Wide Web

Harvard College has a new face on the world --- and if you have access to the world-wide web, then you can see it too. Our URL is www.college.harvard.edu, and what you will find there is the result of a planning and development effort that started last spring and continued through the summer. The College's web page was rolled out for the beginning of the fall term, and has already been adjusted and expanded in response to many suggestions that have been received.

This project had several objectives. First, we wanted to pull together into a single framework all the information that is most useful to students about undergraduate life and academic affairs. A great deal of information was already available on the web, but was not easy to find because it had not been knitted together in a convenient way. So Dining Services, Shuttle Bus services, and the University Health Services each already had its own web page; but now one can find the daily dining menus, the timetable for the shuttle buses, and information about health programs with a couple of clicks starting at the College home page. Most courses now have their own web pages; the information about a course that is printed in the course catalog is a small extract from the syllabi, readings, problem sets, and discussions that can be found on the web.

Second, we wanted make available on the web all the many publications issued by the College and by academic departments. We are all inundated by useful handbooks and brochures, and critical volumes such as the course catalog and the Handbook for Students; but we tend to lose or mislay them, especially at 3:00 AM when we really want to look something up. These are now available, in a neatly and logically organized form, at any time of the day or night. So are the publications of many student organizations, including the campus daily newspaper, the Crimson.

Third, and most important, we wanted to create not just a repository of static information, but a daily changing marquee informing the community of lectures, concerts, dramatic productions, meetings of student organizations, athletic contests, critical deadlines, and emergency announcements. We decided early on to devote a major portion of the College's home page to this calendar feature, since the vast diversity of our daily activities so defines what life at Harvard is like.

The College Web Page is a joint effort of the Dean's office, Computer Services, and students. The calendar software was written by the Harvard Computer Society, an undergraduate organization that has been heavily and helpfully involved in bringing this project to fruition. The graphic design and the delightful "look and feel" of the page are the work of Geoffrey Fowler '00.

While the pages were designed for the benefit of students and others in the local Harvard community, they also provide information useful to those who are away from Cambridge and want to know what is going on. Facts useful to parents, visitors, applicants, and others can be found by exploring the web site. The university

map is one of the most frequently accessed pages. Usage, both from within Harvard and from without, is growing rapidly. Indeed, even those of us who are used to the idea that the Internet has created a global community were struck by what happened when a prototype of the College web page was first made available in late August, with no public announcement. Within hours the page was being accessed from all over the world, including places as distant as Malaysia and South Africa.

We welcome you to explore these pages, and to convey your reactions and suggestions by using the "Suggest" feature that is built into the interface. Enjoy!