Biology Graduate Students Get Specialized Computer Lab

Nov 02, 2011

Humboldt State University has opened a new computer lab for graduate students in biology. The shared-use laboratory supports graduate-level study and research in the biological sciences.

“It’s a perfect place for graduate students to conduct specialized research, study or find a quiet place to meet in between classes,” says Biology Core Facilities Manager Anthony Baker.

Located in the invertebrate museum in Science A 461, the lab houses three personal computers, each equipped with software for graduate student research in areas like DNA sequence analysis and GIS analysis of geospatial data. The lab also offers word processing, laser printing and database searching capabilities.

Tim Girod ('13, Amphibian Ecology), a teaching assistant in Biology and Zoology, uses the lab to print readings, labs and quizzes. “It’s also great for using specialized software, like [statistics package] Minitab,” Girod says.

Over 50 students are currently enrolled in HSU’s Biological Sciences Graduate Program, which allows students to complete programs in almost any area of biology.

Laboratories on the main campus are equipped for biotechnology; scanning and transmission electron microscopy; mammalogy; genetic analysis, including DNA sequencing, and computer modeling. Field opportunities include the Telonicher Marine Laboratory in nearby Trinidad, a university forest and a 90-foot ocean going research vessel, the R.V. Coral Sea.

With the growing emphasis being placed on the training of secondary school teachers in California, Humboldt State’s M.S. degree in Biological Sciences can be combined with a California Teaching Credential to allow students to compete for jobs on both the national and international level.

The lab was funded through the Biology Department and the Humboldt Loyalty Fund and Parent & Family Fund, which are supported through generous gifts from Humboldt State alumni, parents, families and other supporters.