AGEP-NC NEWSLETTER

NC State Computer Science Departmental Plan

The Computer Science Department at NC State is implementing a comprehensive plan to foster student success throughout their PhD journey. Key goals include ensuring that all PhD students establish a relationship with an advisor and engage in meaningful research by the end of their second year. A cornerstone of this initiative is the refinement and formalization of CSC 801, Introduction to PhD Research. This course will now feature a well-defined syllabus, regular faculty participation, and a structured 12-week research experience designed to help students identify an advisor and gain hands-on research skills. In addition, CSC 801 will become mandatory for all incoming PhD students to ensure they are equipped with essential research skills and guidance from the start.

Another important change includes the introduction of CSC 889, a new course to guide students through their written prelims. This course will provide scaffolding for students to complete a conference-quality paper with milestones and practice opportunities. Additionally, a new TA training course, CSC 860, will support students in their first semester, ensuring they are well- prepared and supported in their teaching roles. As part of the broader initiative, the department is formalizing advisor-advisee relationships, encouraging mentorship beyond advising, and requiring CIMER mentor training for faculty. This will help ensure that all students have the support they need to thrive, both academically and personally. The plan also emphasizes the importance of Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and mutual expectations statements (SMEs) to clarify goals and foster strong advisor-advisee relationships.

Through these changes, the department aims to build a sustainable framework that supports PhD students from day one, helping them to succeed in their research, teaching, and professional development. You can view the entire plan online here.

NSF Continues Review of Research Grants Amid Administation Directives

Please find the full Nature Article: Here

Two months after the NSF's decision to temporarily freeze research funding, the agency has continued its review process to ensure that its grants align with new directives issued by the administration. The review involves carefully assessing grant proposals to ensure compliance with broader government goals, including addressing national priorities in science. This process has led to some uncertainty among researchers, particularly early-career scientists, as they navigate changes in funding timelines. While the review is ongoing, many researchers remain focused on the broader impacts of their work and the importance of securing funding to continue their research and contribute to the scientific community. The NSF's commitment to supporting a wide range of participants in STEM remains central to its mission as it evaluates and adjusts its programs.