The fourth meeting of this academic year was held on Friday, March 30 beginning at 2:05pm. Bill Gasarch presented the first three topics for discussion. First Bill mentioned that a committee had been formed to determine how JAVA can be integrated into the lower level courses. The committee has met once and will solicit opinions from members.

Second, Bill reminded everyone that they should consider if CMSC 251 should be a prerequisite for any of the courses that they are now teaching. Each of the area committees should consider this before too long if changes are to be made for fall 2001.

Third, a discussion concerning the current prerequisites for CMSC/MATH 456 and possible changes to the prerequisites followed.

Current Prerequisite: two 400-level MATH courses or two 400-level CMSC courses

Proposed Prerequisite: two 400-level MATH courses or two 400-level CMSC courses + CMSC 251.

Concern was voiced that students who do not have sufficient math skills might want to take the course. By adding 251, this would help alleviate the problem. After much discussion, members felt that requiring CMSC 330 +251 should be a sufficient prerequisite. A motion was made, seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The fourth topic, the IT Program proposal, was presented by Larry Davis. The current proposal has gone through a number of drafts with several people contributing to its content. The proposal came about as a response to Dean Halperin who has indicated a need to increase the student retention rates in the CS program. Since a large number of students who list CS as their major do not have strong math skills, the thought was to develop a program which would meet the demands of the public regarding computer knowledge but which would not require the same level of math proficiency. It should be possible to develop an IT program that has a strong base of knowledge, meets the public's demand, and helps the CS program by decreasing the number of students who declare it as a major and therefore, help increase retention rates.

The overall reaction of the members present was that the concept was a positive one and it would be to the Department's credit to develop an IT program. However, everyone voiced concerns regarding the level of resources needed to handle such an undertaking. Clarification was asked for in the following areas:

a. Who would develop the curriculum
b. Who would teach the courses
c. Size of program and timing of its growth would need to be in conjunction with the "core" CS program
d. Space requirements should be emphasized and perhaps tied to an agreement that the Department would have its own building with sufficient space for both the CS and IT programs.
e. An agreement as to the funds necessary to initiate the development of the IT program, not distract from funds required for the CS program, and a continuing level of funding required over an extended period of time should be formulated in writing.
Larry asked how many members felt that they did not have any interest in further development of the IT program? No one voted against pursuing the further development of the proposal.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50pm.