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## Students launch tutoring service

If you've been hopelessly trying to figure out the classes you need to fulfill your major requirements or fretting over a paper that is just too embarrassing to turn in as it is, help is on the way. Last semester various campus groups got together to create a support system that intends to bridge the gap between academic resources in order to make them more accessible.

Aptly named for its purpose, the freshly minted Student Academic Resource Network (SARN) spans an umbrella of programs including the Writing and Math workshops, Career Resource Center, Health Professions Advising, Pre-Law Advisory, Dean's peer tutoring program, and services for non-native speakers, among a host of other initiatives.

"Previously [students found] that all the offices were scattered and there was no connection at all," said Tu Chi Nguyen '06, one of the eight peer advisors hired to field queries from overwhelmed students.

According to Nguyen, the network was initiated with one goal in mind: to connect the established resources on campus. In its final form, SARN has embraced a personalized approach toward extending these services to students by making a one-on-one peer advisory system the foundation of its outreach.

SARN peer advisors like Nguyen are on duty to help students at the Information Commons in the Campbell Reference Center of the Olin Library from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

"We are hoping that whether people have general academic questions or specific ones about a particular subject, they'll come to us," said Anjali Saxena '06, who focuses on Science in Society.

Beyond the preparation afforded by their academic careers, the SARN volunteers were required to attend training sessions at the beginning of the year to familiarize themselves with the array of academic services offered by the University.

"This model is based on constant training and updating," said Namrata Kotwani '06, a CSS/Economics double major who spends about three to four hours at the Information Commons each week. "We meet each week to discuss and update each other about our experiences with the students."

A lot of people are reluctant to ask for help or take the initiative to explore the support they can get on campus, according to Nguyen. SARN aims to serve as a facilitator between the students and the institutions that can best help them.

"Not many people know about the services [but] they should use more of the resources of the Info Commons," Nguyen said.

For all its ambitious aims, SARN has not found the degree of student receptivity it was anticipating. The amount of students who have used their services so far has been below expectations, according to Kotwani.

"It has been a little lukewarm as of now," Kotwani said.

Kotwani, who has worked earlier at the CRC for resume building and interview training, said that she decided to become a part of SARN due to the wealth of experience she has gained from her time at the University.

"I decided to do this because it was the most fulfilling job on campus I thought you can do," Kotwani said. "It allows you to share your experience [and] allows me to help people with my familiarity of campus resources."

So, for now, Kotwani and her fellow advisors at SARN are hoping that students will take advantage of their peers' familiarity with the rumble and tumble of academic life to make their own paths easier.