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Rice/BCM merger [not] official

April 7th, 2009 Chris

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Looks like I'm a Rice student now. I'm a little annoyed that I haven't heard the news from BCM's leadership yet.

Update: Turns out that it's an April Fool's joke that's still getting circulated a week later. Sigh. Well played, Rice undergrads. If I had read the whole thing before posting, I'd have caught that.

From: president@rice.edu

Subject: Important news regarding Rice and Baylor

Dear Rice community,

Rice faces a changing world in its second century, and we must embrace the challenges of the years ahead not as individuals but as a community. Recent events have shown us that our future leaders will have to be concerned with the human element of the future, as well as the technological. It is for this reason that we have elected to move forward in our negotiations with the Baylor College of Medicine. We believe, and feel confident, that timely action will better allow us to prepare our students for the challenges ahead. It is thus with great pride, and with the backing of the Board of Trustees, that **I announce to you our great institution's merger with the Baylor College of Medicine.**

In addition to this important milestone in Rice's history, an addendum has been made to Rice's Vision for the Second Century. Although Rice has long been known for—and indeed committed to—providing quality education for tomorrow's scientists and engineers, we must continually look to the future in order to stay at the forefront of higher education. It is for this reason that a plan has been introduced whereby Rice University will transform, gradually taking upon itself another identity. As the global demands for healthcare continue to grow, we've chosen to make medicinal studies a priority—a priority that, unfortunately, requires sacrifice in other areas.

Although the details have not been finalized, a five-year plan has been approved by the Board of Trustees whereby the current undergraduate engineering curriculum will be gradually phased out to make room for promising medical fields. Our hope is that a focus on medicine will attract a host of creative, intelligent undergraduates to the Rice Premedical Institute. The plan also calls for modifications within other departments to emphasize this new direction. Although some might view these changes with resentment, we strongly believe that such changes are necessary if Rice's Vision for the Second Century is to be successful.

As is to be expected, the recent economic crisis has lent an urgency to Rice's planned changes. History has shown that maintaining competitive undergraduate programs in uncertain times is both financially risky and ethically impure. As demand for certain fields wanes, it is our responsibility as an institution of higher learning to ensure that Rice students study within areas that not only show promise but also are financially viable. As always, Rice will continue to adapt and grow as global demands shift.

Thank you for the suggestions and insight that have helped shape our decisions so far. We continue to welcome your ideas going forward and sincerely appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

With regards,

David W. Leebron
President

One Response to "Rice/BCM merger [not] official"

1. [Rick](#) Says:
[April 15th, 2009 at 12:31 am](#)

Hey there.

This is one of the undergrads who wrote and sent that e-mail. Sadly, we've been fined by the administration for our joke. Want a t-shirt to commemorate your mandatory matriculation into the Rice Premedical Institute? If you order by tomorrow around noon,

we'll probably be able to get it to you.

Thanks!

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About Me

Hi. I'm Chris Miller. Professionally, I'm a graduate student in my fourth year of a Computational Biology PhD program, where I use large scale data-integration to help understand the aetiology of cancer.

In my free time, I'm a techie, a Linux user, and I enjoy exploring the intersection of technology and culture. When not in front of a computer, you'll find me playing ultimate frisbee, jamming on my guitar, talking politics, or enjoying the great outdoors.

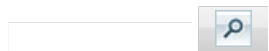
There are too many Chris Millers in this world, so I added my middle initial to get this domain name. I long ago gave up the pretense of web anonymity that many people cling to. To me, this is the natural corollary of all that "be yourself" advice you got in grade school.

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