



# New Faculty Spotlight



**Dr. Vung Pham**

Department of Computer Science

The College of Science and Engineering Technology at Sam Houston State University proudly welcomes Dr. Vung Pham as a new faculty member for the Department of Computer Science. This spring, Dr. Pham will be teaching two courses for the department: Database Management Systems and Digital Systems Designs. Along with instruction, Dr. Pham has intentions of contributing to research here at SHSU; his areas of interest include data analytics, data visualization, machine learning, deep learning, and programming. Dr. Pham “looks forward to working with students interested in research as well as getting into the lab and applying for funding”. Additionally, he intends on organizing an extracurricular club for those interested in coding.

When asked how he became attracted to this field of study, Dr. Pham replied, “the first time I worked with a computer, I tried to insert a floppy disk incorrectly, but the machine did not allow for this. I also pressed buttons on the case because I did not know [the function], however, the OS asked for confirmation before carrying out the actions. The equipment was smart, and I felt safe exploring it without the risk of damaging the device”. These early experiences led him to explore programming and eventually pursue a career in the computer science field. Dr. Pham obtained his Bachelor of Science in Information Technology from President University of Indonesia. He then went on to obtain his Master of Science in Computer Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Milan (Politecnico di Milano) in Italy before earning his Ph.D. in Computer Science from Texas Tech University.

Dr. Pham's love for teaching and research drove him to apply for an academic position at SHSU. Dr. Pham stated that he is "very happy" with the teaching and research opportunities offered to him as a faculty member. He also had a "great feeling" about the open and friendly working environment within the Department of Computer Science. In addition, there were many activities that helped him to acclimate as a new faculty to the university.

Lastly, Dr. Pham wanted to share the quote "Think big. Start small. Move fast."; this quote comes from his previous mentor and founder of the institution where he obtained his bachelor's degree. Dr. Pham also wanted to share two pieces of advice to computer science students:

1. "Students should spend some time every day practicing coding exercises for coding interviews (e.g., doing one or two problems on leetcode per day). This practice would be helpful if you would like to work with big tech companies (e.g., FAANG)."
2. "Self-studying skills are critical for CS students because this field requires a life-long learning mindset." There are many online resources (e.g., Coursera) available for free to help obtain the aforementioned skills.

# Fun Facts

If you were to study or teach a different area of academia, what area would it be?

“It would probably be mathematics. Learning/researching in CS (especially in higher education) makes me appreciate the importance of mathematics.”

What is your favorite food or cuisine?

“I am of Vietnamese origin, and thus, I love Vietnamese Pho.”

Are you an early bird or night owl?

“I am an early bird.”

What do you enjoy doing on a rainy day?

“Coding, writing, or reviewing papers.”

