This year marks the golden anniversary for the Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences (ICS). Founded in 1968 as a department at UC Irvine, ICS continues on a path of unprecedented growth 50 years later.

As of fall 2018, undergraduate enrollment nears 3,500 students, more than doubling in five years. Our computer science major has become the third largest program on campus, and our data science major continues to be our fastest-growing program in the school with now more than 100 students. Graduate enrollment exceeds 600 students, with about 300 students pursuing a doctoral degree, and more than 150 new students each year enrolling in our professional programs in computer science and human-computer interaction and design. Despite their rapid growth, our programs are more selective than ever and continue attracting exceptional students, with three of them receiving National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowships and several others recognized with national awards in academic year 2017-18.

Mirroring student growth, our faculty has grown to record levels, with the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty and lecturers in the school surpassing 100 this fall. In recent years, faculty hiring has emphasized the broader space of data science, leveraging the school’s traditional strengths in the area of machine learning. We have also invested in the space of digital learning, advancing a new area of excellence for our school.

I am pleased to introduce the new faculty joining ICS this year. Advancing the school’s strategic priorities in the areas of big data, security, human-computer interaction, and digital media and learning, these outstanding researchers and educators will be instrumental in moving ICS forward, as it continues to lead the exploration of computing technologies and the ways in which they revolutionize the world around us.

Heading into 2019, ICS will continue to recruit exceptional candidates for multiple faculty positions in the departments of Computer Science, Informatics, and Statistics. For more information on ICS faculty recruiting, visit bit.ly/ICSFacultyRecruiting.

Marios C. Papaefthymiou
Professor of Computer Science
Ted and Janice Smith Family Foundation Dean
Itkhekar Ahmed
Assistant Professor, Informatics
Ph.D., Computer Science, Oregon State University

Ahmed’s research focus is on software engineering. In particular, he is exploring how to combine software testing, static analysis and machine learning to create better tools and techniques for improving software quality under real-world conditions. He has used static code analysis and mining project repositories to identify factors related to source code and develop processes that affect the quality of the software measured in terms of bugs and design issues. He is also examining the effectiveness of mutation testing in automatically uncovering bugs in complex real-world systems. He joined the ICS faculty in September 2018.

Stacy Branham
Assistant Professor, Informatics
Ph.D., Human-Computer Interaction, Virginia Tech

Branham’s research sits at the intersection of human-computer interaction and accessible computing, exploring how technologies mediate collocated interpersonal relationships and can inadvertently disempower marginalized people. Her recent investigations reveal technological threats to safety and well-being as people with vision impairments navigate public spaces, people with disabilities encounter law enforcement, blind parents care for their children, and transgender people encounter gender-recognition algorithms intended to assist blind people. She advocates technology designs that emphasize the interdependence and social integration of all people. She joined the ICS faculty in September 2018.

Qi Alfred Chen
Assistant Professor, Computer Science
Ph.D., Computer Science and Engineering, University of Michigan

Chen’s research is on network and systems security, addressing security challenges through systematic problem analysis and mitigation. His research has discovered and mitigated security problems in systems such as next-generation transportation systems, smartphone OSes, network protocols, DNS, GUI systems and access control systems. Currently, his focus has been on smart systems and IoT, including transportation and autonomous vehicle systems. Chen’s work has high impact in both academia and industry with over 10 top-tier conference papers, a DHS US-CERT alert, multiple common vulnerabilities and exposures, and over 50 news articles by major technology news media. He joined the ICS faculty in July 2018.

Sang-Woo Jun
Assistant Professor, Computer Science
Ph.D., Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, MIT

Jun’s research interests include systems and software for big data analytics, aiming to boost performance and lower costs for the field-programmable gate array (FPGA)-based application specific hardware acceleration and non-volatile memory (NVM) storage. He focuses on many applications, including graph analytics and bioinformatics. Jun also served as a software developer for interactive entertainment software company Nexon Inc. and had an internship at Oracle’s Big Data Discovery. He joined the ICS faculty in September 2018.

Stephan Mandt
Assistant Professor, Computer Science
Ph.D., Theoretical Physics, University of Cologne

Mandt was a senior research scientist and head of the Statistical Machine Learning Group at Disney Research, LA. Previously, he was a PCCM Postdoctoral Fellow at Princeton University, a postdoctoral researcher with David Blei at Columbia University, and a Ph.D. fellow of the German National Merit Scholarship Foundation. Mandt has three patents pending; over 14 publications in conferences such as NIPS, ICML, and CVPR; and nine articles in journals such as the Journal of Machine Learning Research and Physical Review Letters. His interests include scalable probabilistic modeling, Bayesian deep learning, variational inference, and applications in the sciences and digital media. He will join the ICS faculty in October 2018.

Jennifer Wong-Ma
Associate Professor of Teaching, Computer Science
Ph.D., Computer Science, UCL

Wong-Ma’s research interests are in architecture, wireless and distributed embedded systems, hardware intellectual property protection, and statistical optimization. Before coming to UCI, she was a teaching faculty member in the Computer Science Department at Stony Brook University, where she also served as an undergraduate program advisor and coordinator for the five-year joint BS/MS computer science program. While at Stony Brook, Wong-Ma also received the NSF Department Award for Undergraduate Education and the Award for Major Contributions to Undergraduate Education, showing her devotion to teaching sophomore- and junior-level systems and architecture courses. She joined the ICS faculty in September 2018.