CC preceptor dies of AIDS

Endowment fund planned in memoriam

By Tracy Connor

Contemporary Civilization (CC)
and philosophy department preceptor, Bruce Phillip Cooper, CC ’77
died of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) on May 11, ac-
cording to Executive Director of the
Capital Campaign Susan Hendrix.

An endowment fund in Cooper’s name is being established by the University but is still in the process of being arranged with Cooper’s family, Hendrix said. She added that before his death Cooper requested that any fund be used to benefit the Columbia College core curriculum program and its faculty.

After attending Columbia College from 1973 to 1977, Cooper also attended the School of International and Public Affairs and received an M.B.A. from Columbia Business School in 1979. Cooper worked as a preceptor from 1985 until last semester.

A friend of Cooper’s, Cathy Nepomnyaschhny, a former preceptor in the Literature Humanities department, said that Cooper hoped any endowment money would be used to create another class section in the Contemporary Civilization department.

Nepomnyaschhny said Cooper planned to teach last semester, but was too ill. She said he was nearly finished working on his dissertation when he died.

A memorial service was held for Cooper last week in Philosophy Hall, and the Columbia flag was flown at half mast.

According to Hendrix, the minimum total contribution needed
for a memorial fund is $25,000.

The Bruce P. Cooper fund will be the second instituted at Columbia in memoriam of a student who died of AIDS. A memorial fund was started last fall honoring Stuart Garcia, CC ’84, who died last July of AIDS. The purpose of the Stuart Garcia fund is to help maintain need-blind admissions, a financial aid program which Garcia fought vigorously to maintain as a representative to the University Senate, during his junior and senior years.

Cooper and Garcia are as yet the only two Columbia affiliates to have died of AIDS, according to University public statements. A University AIDS committee, headed by Senior Vice President Joseph Mullinix and designed to examine the problem of AIDS on campus and to develop a University policy on the illness, began meetings over two years ago. Last year the committee released a pamphlet to the University community detailing the illness and medical facts about how it is contracted. No University policy, however, has yet been composed.

Additional reporting by Lori Levy.