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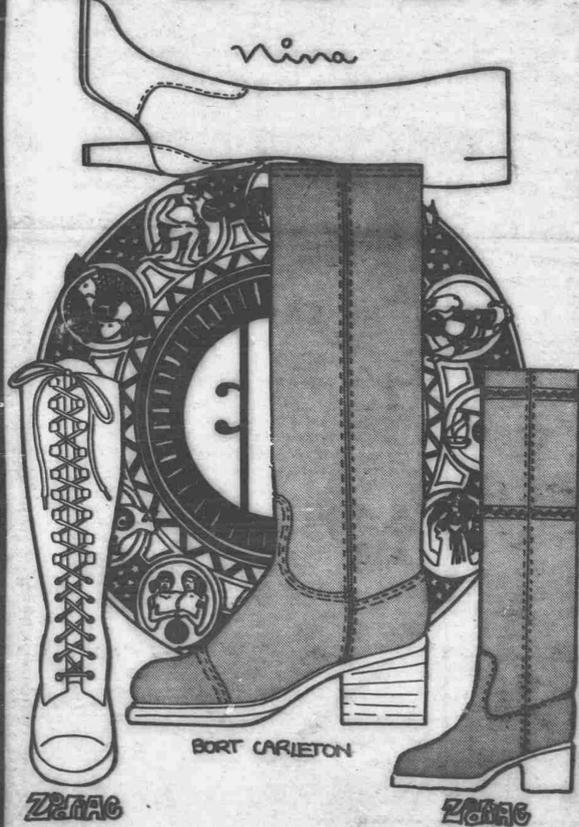
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Senior student dental program tries simulating private practice

Senior UNL dental students are practicing under a new program that simulates private practice. Senior dental students treat each patient, according to Richard Bradley, dean of the Dental College. Bradley said that in the past the students were required to complete a certain number of bridges, crowns and dentures per semester in order to graduate. The new program divides the 65 senior dental students into four units.

Mentors direct units. "Each unit is being directed by a mentor," Bradley said. "A mentor is a dental educator with extensive experience in general dental practice. He's responsible for all the work these blocks of 16 are going to do." The mentor's salaries are financed by a special continuing appropriation from the Nebraska Legislature of \$116,000 annually. Beyond this, the dental clinic is a self-sustaining program, Bradley said. The program, which began last week, is the result of three years of planning by a faculty committee. Bradley says he thinks the program will work. "Everybody is enthusiastic," he said. "And the students love it." Students 'more conscientious' Mark George, a senior dental student, said the program is "not only better for the student, but better for the patients. Instead of looking for re-



Photos by Kevin Higley
Story by E. K. Casaccio

quirements, they (dental students) can be more conscientious toward the patient. "The bad part is all the paper work we have to do." Bradley said there are problems in keeping track of what procedures students are deficient in. He said he is hoping for legislative financing for a computer to aid in organizing the records. The sophomore, junior, senior and graduate dental students staff the clinic, along with faculty members, dental assistants and dental hygienists. Expenses paid by fees Clinic expenses, such as dental supplies, dental assistant salaries and laboratory services are paid for with patient fees. "There is a kind of a misconception with the public and the students," Bradley said. "They think

the state subsidizes us to run the clinic, but they don't." Bradley estimates the fees at the clinic are "a little over half those of a private dentist." The clinic, at 40th and Holdrege streets on East Campus, is open to the public. Appointments are made through the college. Diagnosis comes first Each patient first sees the Oral Diagnosis Center at no cost. Each step of the treatment is checked by an instructor although Bradley said it sometimes makes the treatment longer. But he noted, "The excellence of the work is assured by this checking process." The dental clinic treated about 3,900 persons during 1975. Less than half were UNL students.

Dentists needed for rural areas

Job prospects are good for dentists in outstate Nebraska. NU College of Dentistry Dean Richard Bradley said the demand for dentists is high in Nebraska, particularly in the rural areas. The College of Dentistry has a preceptor program in which all students spend a week working with dentists, mostly in rural areas. Bradley said this way the students also can see the advantages of living in a rural community.

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