

Engineering computer step forward for college

By Bill Allen

At least two officials in UNL's College of Engineering and Technology see the purchase of the college's new computer as a big step forward.

The NU Board of Regents voted March 27 to purchase a \$460,000 computer for the college.

"I think it's one of the finest events that has happened in the college since I've been here," said Stan Liberty, engineering dean.

He said this was the first step in realizing the importance of computers in the college.

Don Nelson, a professor of electrical engineering and computer science, agreed, and said the computer is a "major breakthrough" for the college.

"It means we now have reasonable computer capability," he said "It will definitely make a difference in the quality of our program."

Engineering College served

Nelson said the computer will serve all areas of the college. The computer initially will have 60 terminals and eventually will have 120, its maximum amount.

The computer will allow instructors to teach accurate

computer management, Nelson said. This computer also has the ability to run several programs interactively at a reasonable cost.

Nelson said the college has not been hindered too much by not having this system in the past. However, if the college had continued much longer without the computer, the engineering program could have been in serious trouble, he said.

The Engineering College has complete control about how the computer will be used and what will be programmed in it, Liberty said.

Some engineering instructors expressed concern about whether the Engineering College or the university computer network would be in charge of the computer. The engineering computer is connected to the university computer.

Reports ungrounded

Ernest Kovaly, director of computer services, said reports of disgruntled engineering instructors are ungrounded and probably the result of a misunderstanding.

"It's blown out of proportion," Kovaly said. "We have within our organization people who have more experience in the technical aspects of the computer. We will be invol-

ved with it in only that respect."

Kovaly said the Engineering College will determine what is put into the computer. The computer services department will watch only for problems, such as possible overloads that need to be switched to a main system.

The computer will not be used for any college but engineering, engineering people will determine the priorities, he said.

Liberty agreed with Kovaly and said the Engineering College has reached a definite agreement with the university computer network. The computer network will provide a systems manager but will have no say in utilization.

Regents series delayed

Editor's note: Because of space limitations, part two of the series about candidates for the NU Board of Regents scheduled for today will appear tomorrow.

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