

Teacher's College software offers anything from math to 'Dewey football'

By Joan Korinek

UNL's Teachers College is packaging a "soft" approach to school subjects.

Ward Sybouts, director of services for the college, said the college is selling software written by teachers across Nebraska to be used on classroom computers.

The programs teach everything from mathematics and chemistry to state history and spelling. A solar system game teaches special education students to "deliver supplies to the inhabitants of a far away planet." A "Dewey football" disc teaches students library skills through a simulated football game.

In its second year, the Nebraska Clearinghouse for Micro-computer Software at the Teachers College has sold more than 600 discs to Nebraska schools. Sybouts said the discs are offered only to schools or school districts.

Each disc is sold for \$10, which covers the cost of the disc and mailing costs, Sybouts said.

The software packages are designed to stimulate interest and to make subjects available on a good economic basis, he said. They also give recognition to the people who wrote them, he said.

The educational disks are not intended to replace the teacher, Sybouts said, but to supplement teaching and give students another option for learning.

Sybouts said the making of the discs came about after the state's Committee on Utilization of Technology in Education found there is a need to help teachers with such programs.

Seven discs, each of which has up to 10 programs, were listed in the college's first software catalog. This winter a new catalog will come out with about 35 new programs, he said.

Besides this software, the Teachers' College also designs and packages three management discs for schools, Sybouts said. One package helps small schools do scheduling, while another helps principals keep attendance records, he said. The third program is an accounting system that keeps student activities records, he said.

Sybouts said 35 to 40 small schools in Nebraska use the scheduling program; 15 schools, the attendance disc; and 12 to 15, the accounting disc.

The scheduling disc sells for \$100, while the others cost \$50 apiece, Sybouts said. The money is used to defray the cost of writing them, he said.



Illustration by Dan Wondra

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Shorts

Dr. Marion Johnson, distinguished scholar of African History, will be at UNL Thursday and Friday. She is a member of the Center of West African Studies at the University of Birmingham, England. Thursday she will give an illustrated lecture called "Hats, Fans and Caravans: Ostrich Feathers From Africa to Ladies Fashions." The lecture will be at 12:30 p.m. in Oldfather Hall 638.

Johnson also will visit classes Thursday.

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