

WEATHER: Friday, windy and cooler. High in the mid-40s. Friday night, blustery colder with late night snow flurries. Low in the low to mid-20s. Saturday, cloudy and cold. High in the upper 30s.

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Number of computer science majors down

Students jump off technological bandwagon

By Dorothy Pritchard
 Senior Reporter

Enrollment in the computer science department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has dropped dramatically during the last five years, partly because students discovered that learning the nuts and bolts of a computer is a lot tougher than learning how to use one.

Some computer science majors balked at the theory and hard-core math classes while the department imposed higher entrance standards, said Roy Keller, chairman of the computer science department.

There were 665 undergraduates enrolled in computer science in the 1982-83 school year, according to UNL's Institutional Research and Planning Office. Now 370 undergraduates are enrolled.

Keller said that when many students jumped on the computer science bandwagon during the early '80s, there weren't enough faculty and resources to handle the increase.

"There were more majors coming in than we could handle," Keller said. As a result, UNL and many other universities across the nation put "controls" on computer science programs, Keller said. The controls include requiring a minimum GPA of 2.5 for undergraduates and "trying to

be more selective as far as who should be in" the program, Keller said. He estimated that before UNL placed some limitations on the computer science program, at least half of the students went into computer science for the wrong reasons.

Nationally, the percentage of college freshmen aspiring to careers as computer programmers or analysts declined by more than half in recent years, to 3.5 percent in 1986 from a high of 8.8 percent in 1982, according to a study done by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California in Los Angeles. The study was reported in a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal*.

Many students from the mid-'70s to early '80s had exaggerated expectations of the computer science field — when the industry boomed, students enrolled in computer science programs en masse. Students realized that they would be using computers more than ever before, Keller said.

What they did not realize was that they could learn how to use a computer without learning how it actually operates. Many students don't expect the hard-core math and theory classes, so they change their majors, Keller said.

"There is more nuts and bolts than they planned on," he said. "All the glamour has now worn off

and we probably get the kind of students we should," Keller said.

While the number of students enrolling in computer science classes has decreased, the number of students actually graduating with computer science degrees is increasing, Keller said. This is because computer science majors are more serious about the classes, he said. Fewer students drop out by their sophomore or junior year.

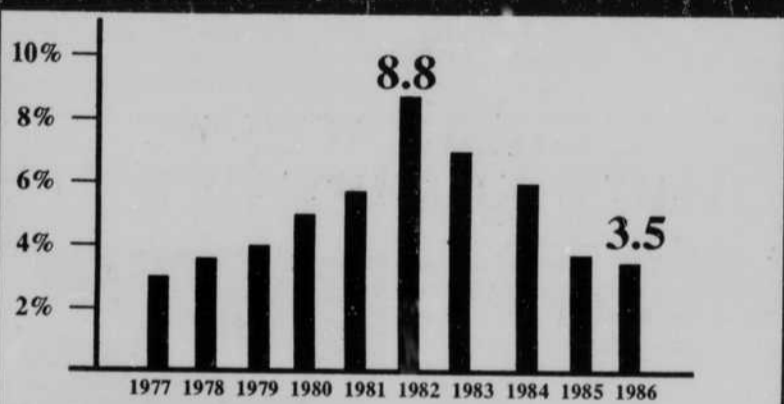
According to Institutional Research and Planning records, in the 1982-83 school year, 44 students graduated with computer science bachelor degrees. In 1986-87, 94 students graduated with bachelor degrees.

Despite the increase, there will always be a shortage of computer professionals, Keller said, because there has always been a shortage of people who can do problem solving, which is a large part of the computer world.

Dennis Stelzer, president of National Bank of Commerce's computer services department, said he also believes there is a shortage of computer professionals, although he has not had any trouble filling his computer jobs.

"When we have openings, I have had an abundance of resumes," Stel-

National percentage of college freshmen aspiring to be computer analysts



# of undergraduates enrolled in computer science at UNL	
1982-1983	665
1987-1988	370

# of UNL students graduating with computer science bachelor degrees	
1982-1983	44
1986-1987	94

Sources: UNL Institutional Research and Planning Office and Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA

Tom Lauder/Daily Nebraskan

zer said. Stelzer said part of the reason Lincoln companies can easily fill positions is because several community colleges and four-year universities here offer computer science degrees. However, there is still a short-

age of computer professionals overall, he said. "It's a different kind of person," Stelzer said. "It is very difficult to find and develop good problem-solving individuals. Most people don't aspire to it very quickly."

Some UNL professors decide to make available old tests

By Gretchen Boehr
 Staff Reporter

Because some students get copies of old tests from friends or fraternity files, some University of Nebraska-Lincoln professors have decided to make old tests available to all students.

Several professors have old exams on reserve in UNL libraries or for sale at Kinko's.

Kathleen Keeler, biology professor, said she provides copies of old tests and puts past finals on reserve in the biology library in Manter Hall to give access to all students.

Keeler said she doesn't use the

same questions year after year, but the old tests still give students an idea of what to study.

"The things I thought were important last year are important this year," she said.

However, John Hibbing, political science professor, said he does not make old exams available.

"One of the things students need to learn is what is important and what is not important," Hibbing said.

He said he doesn't make study guides for the same reason.

Kinko's, in conjunction with the math honorary society at the university, sells copies of math tests for 10 different sections of Math 104.

Mathematics and statistics professor Jim Lewis said the math department also sells the last semester's final exam at Kinko's.

But Lewis said he didn't think there had ever been a problem with students having an unfair advantage because they had copies of old tests.

"One cannot legislate fairness. There's more a fear of an advantage than reality," said Lewis, who is also UNL Faculty Senate president.

The math department sells the old tests to show students there will be no surprises on the final exam, Lewis said.

But Lewis said the math department does not make tests available for upper-level courses.

Making old math tests available to students may result in more difficult tests, Lewis said. Math professors will work harder on test questions so they don't repeat old questions, he said.

Keeler said it's sometimes difficult to make new questions that aren't on old tests.

Hibbing said he doesn't make past tests available to students so he won't have to make a new test every year.

"If you teach the same course for a while, you'd like to be able to use the same questions, the good questions you like from past tests," he said.

Keeler said requiring all teachers to provide students with copies of old tests would "probably be good teaching."

She said this would provide three angles for studying for a final: the text book, class notes and past exams.

Like Kinko's, the chemistry resource room sells copies of freshman Chemistry 109 tests.

Patti Lutter, secretary for the chemistry department, said students can buy a packet of old tests at the beginning of the semester for \$1.

The chemistry department sold more than 150 tests this year, she said.

Keeler said professor has their own quirks when giving tests. By allowing students to look at past exams, they will better know what to study, she said.

Pappas says low pay caused resignation

By Micki Haller
 Staff Reporter

State Sen. James Pappas of North Platte said the reasons for his resignation Thursday morning from the Legislature were "economic."

"It's hard to keep up the luxury of serving at \$400 a month," Pappas said.

Pappas called the Legislature a "rich man's club" or a "retired people's club." He said the low salaries deter many people from serving.

He said if the senators were paid minimum wage, they would be receiving \$10,000 a year, more than double the present \$4,800 a year.

Pappas said that as a "political junkie," he would have liked to continue serving in the Legislature, but accumulative factors forced him to resign.

"You can live down here on a

meager existence," Pappas said.

As he was driving from Lincoln to North Platte last Friday night, Pappas said, he decided it was time to "live like other people, have boats, go hunting and fishing."

"I'm looking at a variety of things," Pappas said about his plans.

He said he'd like to do research work for businesses, associations or the government — in jobs he said would have been a conflict of interest while serving in the Legislature.

Robert Sittig, a political science professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said Pappas' resignation was "much more complicated than the usual resignation."

Pappas is appealing to the Nebraska Supreme Court a conviction of aiding and abetting to false swearing of a petition circulator's signature.

Sittig said the resignations happen "a lot more frequently than people think," but the rash of resignations by Bill Harris, Lee Rupp and Pappas in the last six months is "quite unusual."

Harris resigned last spring to become Lincoln's mayor, and Rupp resigned earlier this week to become a lobbyist for the University of Nebraska.

Sittig said the resignations were not necessarily a trend or the result of low salaries.

"I'm sure it's a hardship for (Pappas) like everyone else," he said.

State Sen. Lorraine Langford of Kearney said she talked with Pappas Thursday morning.

"Of course, it's always sad to lose a colleague," she said.

Langford said legislators must have other income to survive a term. And it is especially hard for

younger people who don't have money, she said.

"People in the Legislature, of course, can't live on their salary," she said.

Langford said the salary was probably one reason Rupp resigned.

Langford said she didn't know of any other resignations.

State Sen. Chris Abboud of Ralston said Pappas and Rupp were elected to the Legislature in 1982, the same year as he was.

"It's a sacrifice being in the Legislature," Abboud said, "a financial sacrifice."

Abboud said each state senator has to make his own decision about serving.

"If anything else, (the recent resignations) show the high turnover in the Nebraska Legislature," he said.

Abboud said he's concerned

that the resignations will cause a lack of experienced legislators.

Abboud said it is important to have experienced legislators who remember what the Legislature has done in the past and know how things work.

Abboud himself is running for the 2nd District seat in the House of Representatives.

Abboud said the low salary has no bearing on his decision to run for Congress. Rather, he said, serving on the House will be a "different type of challenge."

Abboud said there has been some discussion at the Capitol about resignations.

But he said he doesn't foresee any other resignations this year.

Abboud said he doesn't plan to introduce any legislation to increase the senators' salaries. But he said some might be introduced as a result of the resignations.