

Decline in graduates reported Computer science shortages exist

By Doug Isakson
Staff Reporter

The number of students graduating with computer science degrees has declined at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and across the nation.

Statistics from the computer science department at UNL show that the number of graduates dropped from 87 in 1987 to 65 in 1988. Those figures include students who graduated in May, August and December in both the computer science and engineering departments.

Cecilia Daly, assistant professor and chief executive adviser of the UNL computer science department, said students are not as interested in the high-technology fields as they have been in the past.

"From my point of view, that's very alarming," Daly said.

Daly said the department also is not attracting enough women. Part

of the reason, she said, is that boys are more likely than girls to be attracted to computers at younger ages by playing computer games, which are mostly male-oriented.

Susan Wiedenbeck, assistant professor in the computer science department, said women often do not get the math background required to enter computer science fields.

Wiedenbeck said the department hopes to develop a plan to coordinate with high school students so they don't "... make choices that cut them off from the scientific fields of study."

The lack of interest in computer science also has become a concern on the national level. This concern has led to the formation of ADAPSO, the computer software and services trade organization.

The group of 800 computer and software companies has pooled resources in an effort to reverse the trend.

About a year ago the group, based in Arlington, Va., started a program called Success 2000.

"We hope to spark the interest of students at the high-school level," said Shelly Eckenroth, director of the new program.

Eckenroth said labor statistics show that openings for 335,000 graduates in the computer science field will occur by the year 2000, Eckenroth said.

"The lack of interest in computer science among students," Eckenroth said, "... has definitely affected the industry."

The program shows video tapes, featuring computer industry leaders, to teen-agers. Eckenroth said the videos answer typical questions students have at that age, such as what positions are available and how much they pay.

Eckenroth said the program has been well-accepted by both the students and the industry.

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VOTE from Page 1 on it.

None of the senators interviewed said they thought the regents' firing of former NU president Ronald Roskens would help students get an official student regent vote.

Bryan Hill, president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, said he thinks students should have an official vote because they have a special role in the state's higher education system.

Besides paying taxes, Hill said, students pay for a third of their instructional education costs.

Many other universities, including the University of Wisconsin-Madison, are allowed a student regent vote, he said. The University of Wisconsin-Madison is in UNL's peer group, he said.

The argument that students should not be given a regent vote because they have a small voting percentage in student government elections isn't valid, Hill said.

Only about half of the registered voters cast ballots in the governor's election, he said, while about 12 to 15 percent of the students vote in student government elections.

But, Hill said, the elections for regents, school boards and representatives for the public power districts, have gradually decreasing voter turnout rates.

Hill said the overall voting turnout in those elections also is inflated because it does not account for the eligible voters who aren't registered.

"Maybe if they gave student regents some authority," Hill said, "more students would vote in student elections."

Currently each of the three student regents from the campuses in the NU system are allowed to cast "student opinions" on regents issues, Hill said.

The student opinions are for accountability and do not count toward the regents' decisions, he said.

Human sexuality professor to speak

From Staff Reports

A nationally known speaker on acquaintance rape, Andrea Parrot, will speak in the East Union Great Plains Room from 7 to 8:30 tonight.

Parrot, a professor of human sexuality at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., has written a book titled "Coping with Date Rape."

The speech is free for University of Nebraska-Lincoln students and costs \$2 for non-students. Parents wanting free child care during the speech should contact the UNL Women's Resource Center.

The speech is sponsored by the University Program Council, Affirmative Action, the Home Economics Alumni Association, the Panhellenic Association, Residential Education, Student Affairs, the University Health Center, University Housing, UPC Talks and Topics, UPC Women's Words and Music and the Women's Resource Center.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENTS

ONE early registration meeting for ALL Civil Engineering students has been scheduled for Thursday, October 19, 1989 at 5:30 pm. Upperclassmen will meet in Room W357 N.H. Freshmen will meet in Room W347 N.H.

IF you have any questions please contact Mary Lou at 2-2371. Thank you.

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