Architecture

Continued from Page 1

Jeff Myers, a third-year architecture student, said only one hour per program per week was usually devoted to instruction on the software.

Myers said he heard administrators say they wanted to emphasize architectural design, not the particulars of how to run one program.

But Myers disagreed with that policy. He wants to learn the software.

"You've got to know how to use the software," he said, "or you're not going to be able to design with it."

The Daily Nebraskan survey also found that of the 39 Lincoln and Omaha firms, none used Form Z. Only three had heard of the software.

David Cronrath, architecture department chairman, said he had not heard of students having a problem with the computers or software.

He said the architecture department's policy was to teach students to be confident with using computers, no matter which kind of computer or software they use.

"No matter what hardware or software they're using," he said, "they have confidence that they can perform.

Cronrath said the architecture faculty made the decision in November 1994 to use Form Z. There was no disagreement about buying the software, he said.

Winston Yan, an assistant professor of architecture, agreed that it was easy for students well-versed in one software package to learn another quickly.

"If you are good at one software and you are employed by a company that uses a different software," he said, "you can get used to it in five days.

"If you're used to driving a Ford, it won't take you long to learn to drive a Honda," Yan said, "because the concepts are the same."

Yan said he understood students' concerns. Many students simply feel more comfortable with IBM's than with Macintosh computers, he said.

But that doesn't stop him from emphasizing this in his classes:

"Learn about the concepts of computer technology instead of the details of any particular software."

Architects at local architectural firms gave differing views of the computer issue.

Schleining Architects is one of two Lincoln firms that use Macintosh computers.

Don Schleining, an architect with the firm, defended his computer choice.

A study by the American Registered Architects, of which Schleining is a member, showed that the top 20 percent of the best-performing small architecture firms used Macintosh hardware, he said.

"I would say that it's a smart move by the college to use the Mac system," he said.
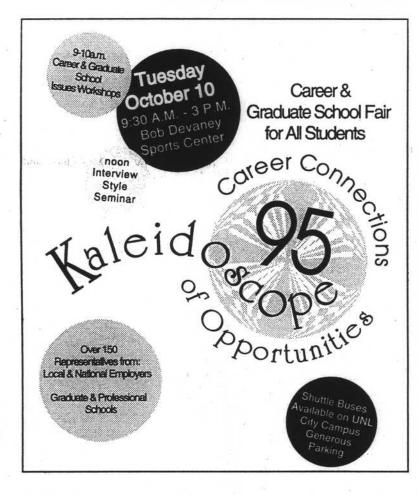
Another architect had a different view.

Curt Olson of Bahr, Vermeer & Haecker Architects said UNL's architecture department chose the most underused software and computer systems.

"I think the university does have the obligation to train students in something they might find useful out in the marketplace," he said.

Olson said he was familiar with Form Z.

"It's not that Form Z is bad software. It's just that nobody uses it."

Invest in Your Future..

Career Connections '95

CORPORATIONS HIRING PARALEGALS

by Karen Treffinger, Director of Career Development
Denver Paralegal Institute

If you think the typical paralegal's day is spent in a law office, drafting legal documents, attending client conferences, and researching legal issues in a law library, think again. Although the majority of paralegals still work in law firms, more and more paralegals are finding positions in corporate settings, working in such areas as insurance, banking, investigations, collections, publishing, and software development.

Illustrating this trend, recent graduates of Denver Paralegal Institute have landed positions with a wide array of employers, putting their legal training to use in exciting and challenging positions across the country. For example, during the last few months, several software companies in the metro area hired DPI grads for Research Associate positions, using legal research skills, and for Contract Specialist positions, involving drafting and helping negotiate contracts between buyers and manufacturers. One of these employers commented, "There's no college major that trains in contract work. Fortunately, we've found that the post-graduate training that DPI grads receive gives them the ability to step right into the contract work that is so essential to our business."

Another new graduate was snapped up by an investigations company which specializes in investigating insurance fraud. The DPI paralegal does surveillance with state of the art video equipment from her company supplied van. Back at the office, she puts her legal writing skills to use preparing reports and correspondence to law firm and insurance company clients.

Denver Paralegal Institute graduates seeking work outside of Colorado have been just as successful in landing jobs in corporate settings. A Montana native was quickly hired by a manufacturer of video lottery games. The DPI graduate drafts and files legal documents necessary for the company to do business in various states across the country. Another graduate returned to her hometown of Burlington, Vermont and went to work for a major computer hardware manufacturer in its litigation department.

As more and more employers recognize the valuable legal skills that paralegals can bring to the workplace it can be expected that more paralegals will find exciting careers outside of the law firm setting.

Find out more about this exciting profession from one of DPI's representatives at the Career Connections '95 Career Fair on October 10, 1995.

DENVER PARALEGAL INSTITUTE

1401 19th Street   Denver, CO 80202-1213

303/295-0550 • 800/848-0550 • FAX 303/295-0102