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# College brings rigorous exercise

## COLLEGE from page 5

sciences - and they have the opportunity to attain six-year master's degree, according to Mark Hoistad, chair of the department of architecture.

For the first two years of the program students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average while working in the "Barn," an open space on the north side of the Architecture Hall's link.

As a controlled enrollment program, to enter the program's third year, Hoistad said students must pass reviews in which three faculty review each student's portfolio and transcript.

About 120 students start the program and 30 percent of them drop the major because they come to the realization that archi-

itecture isn't for them said Hoistad, who graduated from Houston University and won the state masonry award for the design of Security Financial Life's new headquarters in Lincoln.

"Secondary education does a good job of preparing students who deal with text and numbers - those two languages," Hoistad said, "but they do very little to prepare one for using form as a language."

As a result, the majority of students haven't had adequate preparation. That's why a large number of the students self-select out."

About 50 or 60 students apply to get into the third year of the program with only 45 spaces available, he said. Once students make this cut, they can stay in the program until their sixth year if they

maintain a 2.6 grade point average their third and fourth years and a 3.0 their fifth and sixth years.

Drummond, Rex and Hoistad recognize the long hours students are giving to the program, but each wonders if the situation is exaggerated.

Said Hoistad: "It has to do with the culture of the place. There's a kind of energy here that you love to hate - or hate to love."

Dean Drummond said the extended hours were a long standing tradition in schools of architecture worldwide, not just UNL or America's higher education institutions.

"The architecture building is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week," he said. "Does that make us better intellectually or better in terms of creativity? That's the real issue. The design process is open

ended.

"It's not like you can open the back of your history book and find that the battle of so-and-so took place on this date, and then you say to yourself, 'I know that date.'"

"You could continue to work months and months at a time on a project. I'm not really advocating the process (the all-nighter), but I do recognize it as a world phenomenon."

The field even has a term for working extensive hours - charette - the French word for "cart." The term refers to students working at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris who realized, in the past, they could continue working on their projects inside the cart that came along to collect them at deadline.

Said Professor Rex: "Charetting is when you're pulling all-nighters repeatedly. Often times, this stuff becomes a de facto fraternity, where students have a lot in common. They take a lot of classes together. They get to know each other really well and feel comfortable around each other."

"There's usually somebody en charette in this building, and it's a comfortable thing. It's an uncomfortable-comfort."

Hoistad said charetting could be an effective means of brainstorming and realizing the possibilities ahead during heightened intensity a week before a project's due, but didn't recommend it.

"Different students handle it more gracefully or less gracefully depending on how they've managed to develop time management skills," he said. "Some people are better at it than others. But there's no reason why you should be staying up all night because your productivity drops off so badly. It doesn't make sense."

Rex agreed with Hoistad. "A lot of students here see the lights burning too long for their comfort," he said. He also emphasized the pressure the students deal with.

"Students are here to train to be professionals," Rex said. "If you go over and look at the Med. School people in Omaha and talk to them about their hours, they work a whole lot more than we do. The difference is they (students) are very young when they start doing this. So there are a lot of weaknesses in terms of discipline, scheduling and understanding the priorities in their lives. Your asking very young people to do very mature work."

The degrees offered by the College of Architecture aim to be applicable to all areas of the social spectrum. Many students use their degrees for other fields of employment, said both Rex and Hoistad.

Hoistad said the critical thinking and problem solving skills embedded in the studio system prepared students to take on any problem they are confronted with.

Many graduates go into Web development, the movie industry, product design and landscape fields, he said. Hoistad even knew of an architecture graduate who began his career designing dentist offices and ended up becoming a dentist himself.

Rex said the program at UNL was ahead of others of the university's colleges in the amount of time professors spend with students.

"There's no other building on campus where so much personal attention by professors is lavished on students," he said. "It is a two way street. By the end of the semester, I've sat and talked and worked with every one of my students."

"Name me a program in the university where every student has at least 10 hours by the time they finish first semester second year of one-on-one contact with a university professor."

Rex said the students have the nicest facilities on campus as a trade-off for the work they perform.

"First, how many students have their own building?" he said. "Second, if they have their own building, how many have a photo lab, a computer lab, a wood shop, and their own library, solely dedicated to them?"

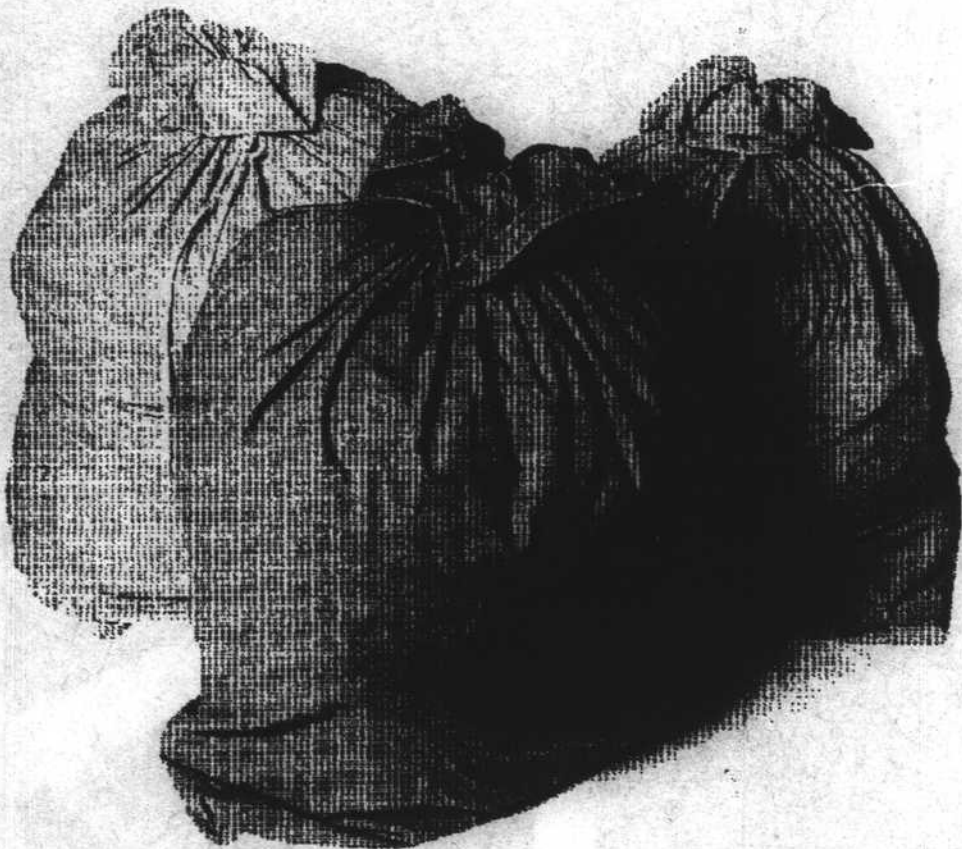
Hoistad summed up the program best.

"Within the notion of an architectural education, there's always been an emphasis toward establishing a good liberal foundation because we interpreters of culture," he said.

"It is our position to translate the wants, needs, desires and aspirations of the client. be it an individual or be it a collective, into a physical environment that hopefully will be meaningful to them."

It's nice to have good facilities, including studio spaces for almost every student, a wood shop, an immense library, exhibition galleries and classrooms, to work with. The college couldn't really do anything else to further accommodate the students it already has. This program is focused in all aspects.

"I think they (students) realize it's a very special environment," Drummond said. And they should.



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