

emerald

Institutes assist research

By Ann Portal
Of the Emerald

Institutes that transcend the divisions between science departments are the key to the University's research success, a panel of scientists told visiting State Board of Higher Education members Thursday.

When University representatives recently traveled to Hewlett-Packard in Corvallis to tour the building, one question kept coming up, said Richard Hersh, graduate school dean. Hewlett-Packard personnel enviously asked, "How do you get your people to work within institutes?"

"In some ways, it's because we've felt an external invasion or a lack of support. We've done it here because it's a social form that's been created," Hersh told the seven board members.

University interdisciplinary institutes include the Chemical Physics Institute, the Institute of Molecular Biology, the Institute of Theoretical Science and the Neuroscience Institute.

Chemistry Prof. Virgil Boekelheide recounted the history of institutes at the University, which he said began forming 25 years ago to provide research structures outside the rigid boundaries of departments.

"If the department itself wouldn't change, then you had to work within it or around it," he said.

"The key thing you need is some key individuals who know how to do it," Boekelheide

said. "It's almost impossible to take a mediocre department and gradually improve it."

The other main ingredient for research growth is, of course, money, he said.

Gov. Vic Atiyeh is unrealistic to suggest taking \$500,000 to create quality science programs, Boekelheide said. A figure like \$5 million might help, he said, suggesting Atiyeh's proposal would be better put into existing programs.

John Moseley, director of the year-old Chemical Physics Institute, pointed out that his program of about 40 researchers and 30 employees received \$400,000 in start-up funds through private funding, and hopes to receive another \$400,000 to continue the progress that's been made.

That's nearly \$1 million to start a "small institute," Moseley said. "This puts Atiyeh's \$500,000 in the proper perspective," he said.

"You have to have the money upfront" to provide laboratories, faculty salaries, spare time for writing proposals, and cost-sharing money to balance federal support, Moseley said.

Six science institute and architecture faculty summarized their basic research for the board and explained how it can be applied to current issues, such as industrial safety, energy production and eye disease.

"You tell us so much that it makes it much harder to make the decisions (about cuts)," said board member Loren Wyss.

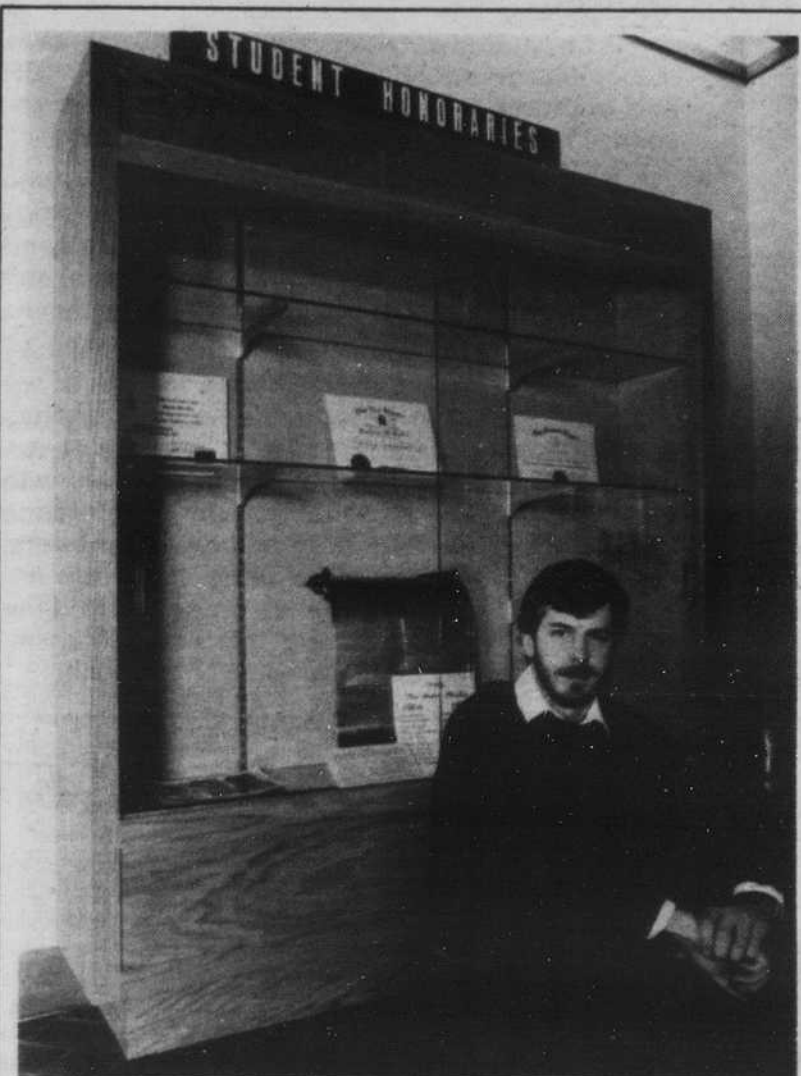


Photo by Duane Schrag

Bart Hill was responsible for the funding and construction of the Student Honoraries case.

Display of honor

A display case with the names of students honored by national and local organizations has been added to the decor at Oregon Hall.

The case contains the names of University students honored by groups like the Friars and the Druids, who recognize students for outstanding scholastic achievement. Signs by the students' names explain who can be part of the honorary organizations.

Bob Bowlin, the dean of students, first came up with the idea for a new display. "Not enough students were aware of who was honored," Bowlin says.

Bowlin passed the idea on to Bart Hill, a University sophomore majoring in biology. Hill was responsible for getting the funding and having the case made.

"I never really knew these organizations existed," Hill says. "Some people will qualify for them, and now they'll know they can be a part if they want to."

The case was built by Tommy Griffin, a designer at the University's art museum. The signs were made by Tom Urban, the EMU Craft Center coordinator.

The University Foundation paid half the \$900 cost of the case and signs, with the organizations contributing enough to pay for the other half.

Beside the case hang two plaques that list the names of the Hunter Leader Scholarship winners. The plaques were moved from the EMU because they have been vandalized frequently.

Education or job training?

By Harry Esteve
Of the Emerald

Sometime during the past few years, a line was drawn across the curriculum at most major universities, separating "a liberal arts education" from "professional training."

An ongoing philosophical debate ensued on which side is more important — and which should be given the most money.

Thursday, a panel of five University faculty rallied from both sides of the line, and then discussed ways of "integrating" the two philosophies. The panel's audience was members from the State Board of Higher Education, on campus as part of an all-day review of the University.

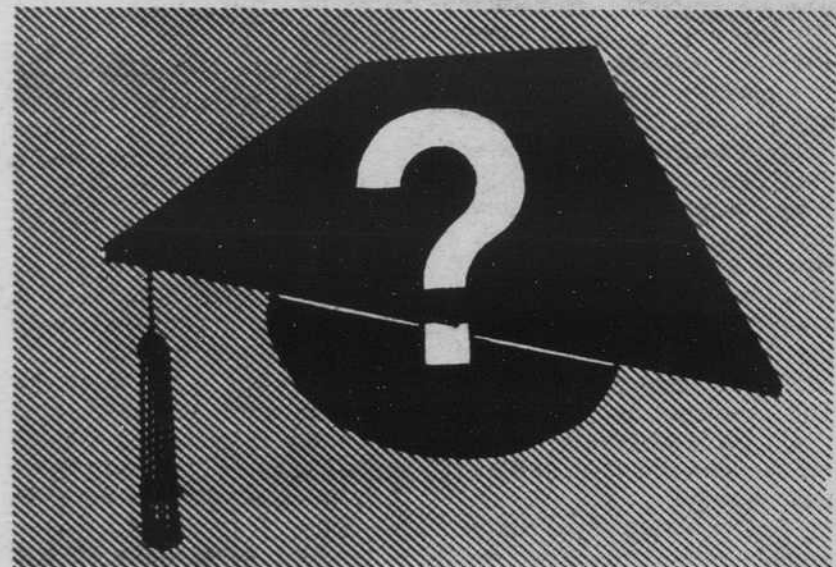
"We tend to look on education as training," said Robert Berdahl, dean of the University arts and sciences college. People see professional schools as "the core" and liberal arts as "the frosting on the cake."

That's backwards, Berdahl said. "Liberal arts is the cake." Professional training helps round out an education, he said.

"I think the economy had led to a heavier emphasis on being trained," Berdahl said. Then, paraphrasing former University Pres. Bill Boyd, Berdahl said education is "not for people's first jobs, but second or third jobs somewhere down the road."

But colleges are not producing enough specialists to meet the demand for qualified employees, said panelist Steve Hedetniemi, head of the computer and information science department.

Hedetniemi agreed with panelist Everette Dennis, journalism



Graphic by Max DeRungs

school dean, that "we live in the information age" and he stressed a need for more funds for computer programming sequences.

By the year 2000, one million skilled computer programmers will be demanded in the national job market, Hedetniemi said. Currently U.S. universities are only turning out approximately 10,000 graduates each year, he said.

About 800 University students wanted to take a CIS introductory class this year and out of those, 400 wanted to major in computer science, he said. "That's a potential of 1,600 majors. We can possibly handle 320."

Addressing the issue of integrating the professional computer science department with the liberal arts side of the University, Hedetniemi said he would "challenge almost anyone to name an area in human activity that is not affected by computers."

The most impassioned defense of the humanities came

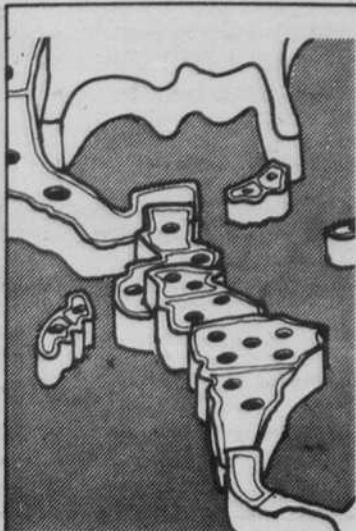
from panelist Barbara Mossberg, an assistant English professor. College should "teach students an appreciation of the depth, scope and possibilities of the human mind," Mossberg said.

Students should be taught how to write and how to think, above all else, she said. They need to be able to decide for themselves who to vote for and why, and be able to analyze complex social issues on their own.

"Isn't this a requisite for a free mind?" Mossberg asked.

The panel discussion came on the brink of a possible \$15.7 million cut in the higher education budget — cuts that may seriously affect some departments or schools at the University. None of the schools and departments represented on the panel were named in the state board's "hit list," which revealed schools and programs being considered for cuts or elimination.

That list has been discarded by the board.



National Security Conference

The Special Report in today's issue takes a look at a number of national security-related topics, including the civil war in El Salvador, the relationship between the superpowers and the possible use of chemical warfare.

The ASUO-sponsored National Security Conference continues through Saturday.