



High-tech:

Photo by David Corey

Spectra Physics prefers graduates from OSU for engineering positions, but more and more University graduates are finding jobs in high-tech industry.

A graduate's last best hope for a career

High technology industries can't get enough graduates in computer-related programs from the University and other Oregon schools.

But those companies say they still must recruit elsewhere because Oregon schools don't have the money for program expansion.

"From what I have seen for high technology, the University of Oregon is as good — if not better — than a lot of schools," says Randy Massengale, a recruiter for Tektronix, the Portland-based computer firm.

Out of 40 computer scientists hired at Tektronix last year, about 20 percent came from Oregon schools and half that percentage were University graduates, Massengale says.

So far this year, 40 percent are coming from Oregon schools, Massengale says. Freshly hired employees can expect a starting salary of \$24-\$25,000 — "a pretty substantial sum," he adds.

Tektronix prefers Oregon State University for its engineers, because the University doesn't have an engineering program, he says.

Massengale says Tektronix will continue hiring from the University "as long as the programs continue to grow." If programs are cut severely, professors may leave for the private sector, and equipment may grow outdated, he says.

His advice to students interested in some area of the high technology industry is to take related courses such as computer science.

"You have to interface with high technology people no matter what you want to do," he says.

At the University, that may be easier said than done.

Computer and Information Science department head Steve Hedetniemi says he expects 800 students to sign up for CS 201, the beginning computer science course.

"We're only going to be able to handle 160," Hedetniemi says. "We know the demand is there, but we don't know how to get the faculty and equipment."

While some computer science graduates are hired by Oregon high tech industries, such as Tektronix, Hewlett Packard and Intel, "a notable number" are recruited by firms in California's Silicon Valley, where "the demand is just tremendous," Hedetniemi says.

He estimates the CIS department would need about \$600,000 to hire nine new faculty members and eight graduate teaching fellows as well as to purchase new equipment.

"The state simply doesn't have the resources" to provide that kind of funding, Hedetniemi says. The state board did give the University, OSU and Portland State University, \$120,000 to be divided among the three for computer science and engineering program development, he says.

The University does a good job preparing business majors for high technology industries, Massengale says. "It's the only school in Oregon we recruit for MBAs (Masters of Business Administration)."

"The University stacks up well against some of the better, major business schools," such as Harvard and the University of Southern California, he says.

Hewlett Packard, located in Corvallis, also hires mainly computer science and business management graduates from the University, while recruiting engineers from OSU, says Patricia Moore, a personnel manager for the company.

Graduates with double-barreled credentials, such as a baccalaureate degree in a technical field and an MBA, have a better chance of finding employment with Hewlett Packard, which recruits for its nationwide offices, Moore says.

Hewlett-Packard is working with the University's

computer science department and the business school to develop closer ties with high technology, says Moore.

"I think there's a lot of interest and exchanging of information," she says.

Spectra Physics, which located in Eugene about two years ago, recruits more Oregon graduates in technical fields from OSU's engineering school, says Steve Bissell, employee relations manager.

But the company did hire a University computer science graduate, who had three years work experience, and recently, Spectra Physics recruited a University MBA as accounting supervisor, Bissell says. Another half-dozen Spectra Physics employees are taking University business or computer science courses, he adds.

He says the University was "definitely a benefit" in the company's decision to locate here.

Spectra Physics contracts with local manufacturing companies and plans to hire a summer intern, Bissell says. More high technology industries moving into the Eugene-Springfield area would generate increased personnel and information exchange of this type, he says.

Jim Crowder, of Wang Laboratories in Eugene, says the University needs to place more emphasis on attracting high technology industry.

Acknowledging the University's budget constraints, he says the resulting belt-tightening is a "vicious circle . . . that could give the wrong signals to high technology industries."

By Marian Green

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